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# MarinaTimes

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## SUPERVISOR'S CHAMBERS



Poor road conditions and derelict buildings are among the issues plaguing Lombard Street PHOTO: STEVEN FROMTLING

# Saving Lombard Street

A long-term vision for one of San Francisco's busiest streets

by supervisor mark e. farrell

ANYONE WHO DRIVES DOWN Lombard Street between Van Ness and Lyon Streets knows there is much work to be done. This area of Lombard Street is an entryway into our beautiful city, surrounded by famous landmarks such as the Golden Gate Bridge, the Palace of Fine Arts, and the Presidio, yet it is an absolute eye-

sore. The improvements needed in the corridor range from pedestrian safety to beautification to overall paving conditions and plenty more. To set the stage, the Lombard street corridor (also known as Highway 101) is right in the middle of two major transportation projects – the Presidio Parkway Project (Doyle Drive) and the Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – that will transform their respective areas for

the better. As we all know (and have been living through), Doyle Drive is under major construction and has been re-envisioned as the Presidio Parkway. While undergoing much needed seismic improvements, the Presidio Parkway will also create a beautiful regional gateway between the Golden Gate Bridge and the city. Much progress has already been made, and construction is expect-

LOMBARD, continued on 6

## REAL ESTATE INVESTOR

# Mayor Lee's action plan for affordable housing

by john zipperer

AFTER MONTHS OF INCREASING POLITICAL HEAT generated by concern about a growing lack of affordability in San Francisco, Mayor Ed Lee addressed the issue with a plan to retain and increase affordable housing in the city, as well as lobby Sacramento to make changes to the state's eviction law, the Ellis Act. The federal government even kicked in some money. But will any of that be enough?

While residents await clues about how those plans will be implemented, the temperature has continued to rise, with activists disrupting business transit programs and public hearings alike. Lee, who has staked much of his reputation as mayor on his stewardship of the city's explosive growth coming out of the Great Recession, is likely going to find that the next phase of his time in office will be judged by how well he shepherds the city through the dislocations caused by that fast growth.

In late 2013 and early into the new year, housing prices began to moderate a little in the city, but there has not been a dramatic or noteworthy decline in prices. They remain at lofty levels.

Consider: In late January, HGTV's reality series *House Hunters* featured a retired stockbroker who wanted to move from down on the peninsula into the city. His budget for a home was \$3-\$4 million, which,

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# Willie at 80

Former mayor introduces new women's IT employment program

by m.d. caprario

ONE CAN ONLY IMAGINE THE SMILE ON FORMER San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown's face as he plans for his upcoming 80th birthday, and contemplates all of the anything-but-ordinary adventures during his years of political service in California.

Born in Mineola, Tex., marrying Blanche Vitero in 1957, and then receiving his J.D. from the University of California Hastings College of Law the following year, Willie Lewis Brown Jr. says, "the best free advice I ever got [was] 'leave Texas and come to California.'"

The rest, as we all know, is history.

"The best career advice I've ever given anybody," Brown says, "is [to] simply prepare yourself for the worst and you'll survive the best." His life rose from and was prepared to endure the hardships of racial discrimination and eventually the gossip and fickle loyalties of public office. Serving over 30 years in the California State Assembly as the first African American from San Francisco, he was elected the 41st mayor of the city, becoming the first African American to claim that honor and duty twice. He became a legend as chairman of the State Assembly Ways & Means Committee, and

WILLIE BROWN, continued on 4

## NEW & NOTABLE



Verbena main dining room and bar PHOTO: COURTESY VERBENA

# Verbena: Eclectic and delicious

by julie mitchell

VERBENA ON POLK Street opened its doors in mid December, and it's already difficult to obtain a reservation at this hot new spot unless you care to dine

very early or late. But take heart; the restaurant deliberately keeps tables open for walk-ins, aiming to become a neighborhood favorite. So persevere, as this lively, beautifully designed restaurant — sister to Berkeley's ultra-pop-

ular Gather — is worth it. Executive chef and partner Sean Baker, known for his vibrant menu at Gather, heads up Verbena's kitchen. The menu reflects the same emphasis on dishes meant for sharing with seasonal, fresh ingre-

redients paired in unusual and mostly successful ways. Verbena also has a full bar with a creative and eclectic cocktail and wine selection. The restaurant seats 62 in the main dining room, 12 upstairs in the mezzanine, and 16 outdoors — weather permitting. The decor features high ceilings with high-tech pendant lighting; a black walnut bar and countertops; and a fun, funky illuminated "pickle wall," displaying jars of house-pickled goods. Verbena has an intimate feel, and the acoustics and lighting are much better than in some of the new, recently opened pub-like spots.

The kitchen's focus is on small plates, such as the restaurant's moist, flavorful house-made sprouted seed bread served with chevre and beet sauerkraut, and the slightly larger choices such as turnips and sun-

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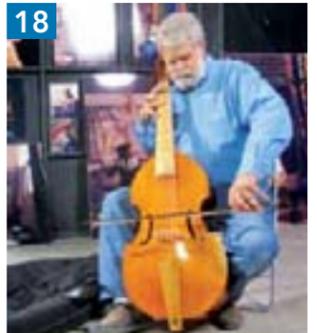
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## TOP TEN STEAKS IN AMERICA

- 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

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### ONLINE SPECIALS

Michael Snyder explores an LA-San Francisco relationship, plus extended calendar listings, extensive restaurant review archives, and much more **on www.marinatimes.com**

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REYNOLDS RAP : From here for eternity

# Riding the rolling cubicles, tech workers are tourists in their own town

by susan dyer reynolds

FOR MORE THAN A decade, private buses have carted workers south from San Francisco. They were barely noticed until the latest tech boom hit and companies like Twitter took Mayor Ed Lee up on his generous tax breaks. Activists, upset that long-time residents are being pushed out by rising rents and record Ellis Act evictions, started protesting by blocking the

get up, and do it all over again. I know a little about this because I was once a worker squirrel on a golden treadmill myself.

The Silicon Valley and I grew up together, and during college I took a summer job at Apple (I'm dating myself here, but it was called Apple Computer then, and The Steves were still padding the hallways). I liked it, so I returned each summer and eventually worked full time for several years. Youthful hormones got the

One Saturday night some friends from the Valley came up to celebrate a birthday at the House of Prime Rib. I was so proud being "the city girl," driving myself to the restaurant and valet parking. After a wonderful evening I hopped back in my car, made a wrong turn, and promptly got lost in the Tenderloin. I kept driving in circles and finally wound up in SOMA. My ex-boyfriend had been a bouncer at a club there and I had visited him often when I still lived down south, so I knew how to get to the freeway. I got on heading south, got off at the nearest exit, and got back

on going toward the city, which was the only way I was able to find my way home. I realized that night that I didn't know the city I called "home" at all.

When a dot-com startup called LookSmart offered me a position as lifestyle editor, I took it. Don't get me wrong: Apple was a great experience, it's still a great company; I kept my stock because I believed in The Steves, and I still believe in the products (I am typing this on a MacBook Air). Like the boyfriend, LookSmart didn't work out. That was the first San Francisco tech boom, which went bust as all booms, from the Gold Rush to this latest tech explosion, eventually do. The city can be a beautiful but cruel mistress: Of the six friends who moved together, I'm the only one

buses. They also brought attention to the fact that multibillion-dollar companies were paying zero to pick up passengers at city bus stops, so last month the Metropolitan Transportation Agency levied a \$1 per stop fee on the private buses, claiming that's all the law allowed. That's ridiculous, of course, because whenever city leaders want to raise money in "creative" ways, from selling off Golden Gate Park to the highest bidder to adding Sunday parking meters, they just rewrite the laws to suit their needs. Watching Mayor Lee tiptoe on eggshells around Twitter and other tech-boom-come-lately corporations is like watching a kid in a sandbox suck up to the kid with the best toys so he doesn't take them home.

While I understand the frustration of a disappearing middle class dealing with yet another influx of young, affluent techies, the workers on those buses are the wrong targets for their wrath. They're just the worker rats, or should I say worker squirrels — as Carrie Bradshaw once said, squirrels are just rats with better outfits — and those smoky-windowed chariots are really just rolling cubicles that allow companies to squeeze out an additional two to three hours worth of work. Tech commuters don't even know San Francisco; they're tourists in their own town, coming back to their overpriced apartments to sleep,

better of me and I moved to San Francisco for a guy (don't judge). I rented a two-story Victorian flat in the Haight-Ashbury for \$1,500 a month with five college friends who also wanted to live in the city for various reasons.

There weren't chartered buses then, so I carpoled with a few other Apple folks, mostly natives who refused to trade in their city by the bay for the valley of the Olive Garden. We bonded over Peet's Coffee runs, breakfast stops, and, in a pre-iPhone world, stimulating conversation. On the way home we sometimes stopped for happy hour or dinner to wait out the traffic. One of my occasional carpool mates was a young engineer making six figures who often stayed on a cot in his office. He once did

## The first tech boom went bust as all booms, from the Gold Rush to this latest tech explosion, eventually do.

the math, dividing his salary by the crazy hours he worked, and realized he was making less per hour than a fast food employee. I didn't work those crazy hours, but by the time I got home I was too exhausted to join my roommates, who all worked in the city, on any social excursions. Breakfast and lunch were consumed in the car or at the office, and dinner, if not with my fellow carpoolers, was whatever I could throw together fast so I could hit the sack.

still living here. I eventually bought that two-story Victorian flat from the landlord and parlayed my passion for writing into a full-time gig.

Sometimes I miss Apple, but I don't miss the squirrel race. I love that I can take a break from writing, drive to the beach, and watch the sun set over the Golden Gate Bridge — and I'm happy to say I have no problem finding my way home.

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

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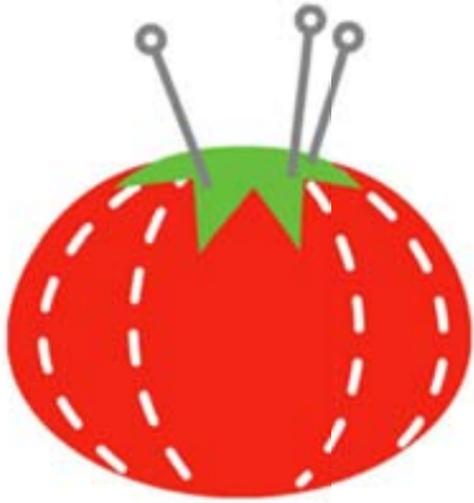


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Still going full steam, Willie Brown is ready to “step it up” PHOTO: RIKKI WARD

## WILLIE BROWN

CONTINUED from page 1

his breadth of experience in city and state politics is more than noteworthy: 1996–2004, mayor of San Francisco; 1980–1995, Speaker of the California State Assembly; 1964–1995, member of the California State Assembly. In actively engaging in the duties required of these positions and embracing them with his unique style and, what some might call flamboyant, outlook on life, he also became both a highly controversial political figure and a beloved hero of the people of the city with a big heart.

Retired from formal office, Brown stays vocal on political and social issues via his column, “Willie’s World” in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He is also co-host of the periodic video and radio *Will and Willie* show with local comedian/political satirist Will Durst, and is seen and heard from time to time on KPIX-TV Channel 5/KCBS-AM (740) with *Chronicle* “Insider” Phil Matier. Demonstrating further his capacity to fully engage with his constituency and the world at large, he has even had roles in several major motion pictures, including *The Godfather III*, *The Princess Diaries*, and *George of the Jungle* — all of which qualify him for a rating on the entertainment industry’s coveted IMDB site.

Brown has weathered much but also won much from and for our city. After graduating from a prestigious law school, he took on a 1950s San Francisco that was rife with racial prejudice. Passed over by established law firms not hiring African Americans, he started his own, focusing on the needs of his church, Jones Memorial United Methodist, and the needs and social issues of the African American community. In May 1961, Brown and his young family had endured as much as they could — and more than anyone should — of the prevailing discrimination so ingrained at the time: He and other black families were refused showings of an open home in a prominent neighborhood. His and other young families — many from his church — and now-U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, revisited the housing development and were again refused. Eventually, with the media’s involvement Brown prevailed, discovering the power in shaping public opinion to include fairness to all, a tactic with a theme that has continued throughout his personal and political career.

This theme is strong in Brown’s approach to inclusiveness in social programs. He is praised for his San Francisco Mayor’s Summits for Women, gatherings that provided otherwise impossible inspiration to unemployed and underemployed women via workshops and appearances by inspiring public figures such as Oprah Winfrey, Suze Orman, and Hafsat Abiola.

Brown is currently engaged in a similar civic program, the Step IT Up, America project, enjoining mayors and corporate industry leaders from across the coun-

try. The brainchild of UST Global, Step IT Up, America seeks to train inner-city minority women to secure careers in “STEM” jobs: science, technology, engineering, and math. The group’s end goal is to create 5,000 jobs for women who will be trained and ready for entry in tech careers by 2020. The group is targeting 10 major U.S. cities: Philadelphia, Atlanta, Detroit, Newark, Chicago, Indianapolis, New York, Los Angeles, Dallas, and Oakland, ideally to reach 50 communities and to provide jobs for hundreds of minority women each year. The idea of placing women in secure, economically stable jobs as a catalyst for improving family stability spoke to Brown, and he was in Atlanta in December 2013 for the launch, calling the program a “ground-breaking and earth-shaking movement.”

Brown is passionate about Step IT Up, America. He says that after 31 years of service in the California Legislature he realized that no matter who was in political office, work-training programs designed to assist people in positive life changes were inaccessible to certain constituencies. “It was painfully clear — painfully clear — that there was no real emphasis on that huge volume of people who are outside of the normal consideration of operations,” Brown told his audience at the program’s launch event. “Clearly, the programs were designed for those who could access them with very little assistance from anybody. They were not designed for the people who are at the outer edges; and I didn’t do anything very much about it in my capacity of leader of the House at that time.”

“When I became mayor ... I became the CEO of San Francisco,” he continued, “that’s usually the role of a mayor, and lo and behold it was front and center for me, with a huge volume of people of color, mainly who are outside of the delivery system in any aspect of opportunity for improvement of their lives through employment, through training. And here I am in the mecca, I’m in the place [San Francisco], where the world of technology lives ... yet there were double-digit exclusions of people of color from within that framework.”

Brown’s frustration with so much technology within reach but the inability to fully deploy its benefit will be remedied: Step IT Up, America creates connection and opportunities and puts them squarely into a delivery system that is realistic for those needing them most. And Brown’s excitement about opportunities for Harlem, central Los Angeles, and our own West Oakland is obvious. He told audiences at the launch event that he is “frankly looking forward ... to the smiles that are gonna come from the faces of the people who get the opportunity ...”

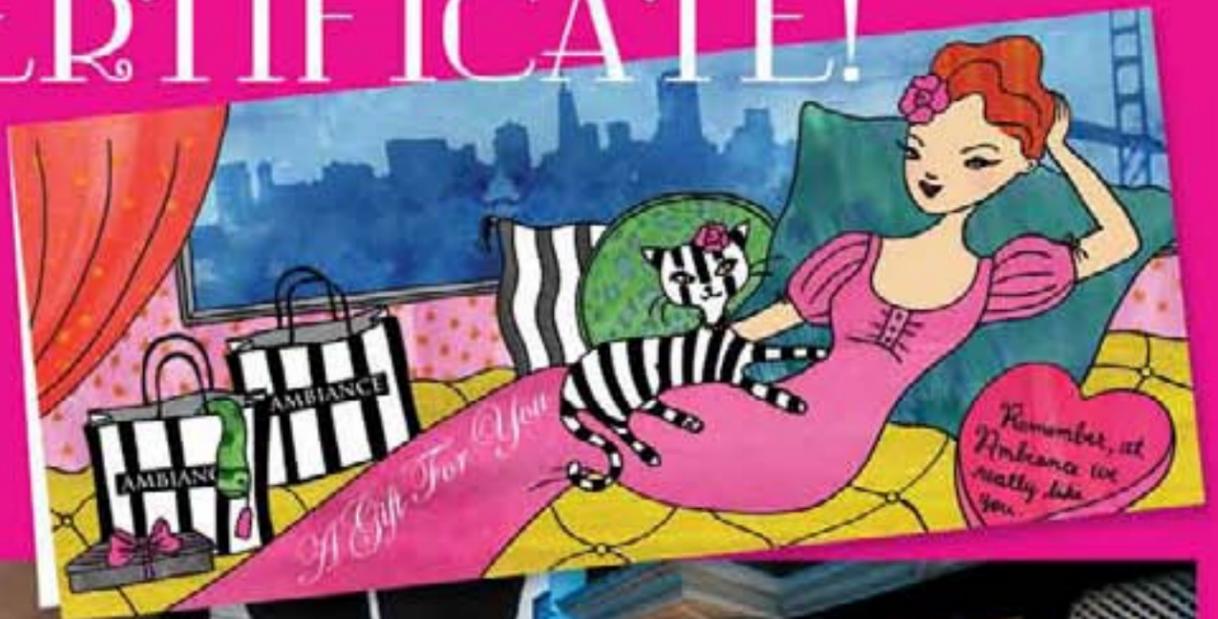
So it seems, along with our good wishes from the Marina for his upcoming landmark birthday, former Mayor Brown has many things to smile about these days, including all the other smiles he will see via Step IT Up, America as the legacy of his Mayor’s Summit continues across the country.



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LOMBARD

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ed to be complete on the entire project in 2016.

At the other end of Lombard Street, the Van Ness BRT is progressing through its final approvals, with construction likely to begin in 2016 and service starting in 2018. The project itself calls for dedicated bus lanes separated from traffic from Lombard to Mission Streets. Dedicated bus lanes will flank center landscaped medians along Van Ness Avenue. In addition, pedestrian improvements, signal upgrades, new streetlights, new landscaping, and roadway resurfacing will be implemented throughout the corridor, creating a safer and better utilized thoroughfare. To leave Lombard Street in its current condition in the middle of these two major transportation projects is quite frankly absolutely unacceptable.

plementary neighborhood-serving retail. The sidewalks are very narrow and the majority of pedestrians are crossing the street and not walking along it. It also serves as an important transit connection for Golden Gate Transit and various Muni lines.

We need to evaluate how we can transform this freeway throughway/off-ramp into a livable corridor that attracts residents and visitors while improving existing traffic and pedestrian concerns, public safety issues, and overall economic vitality concerns. We must also recognize that this “freeway” resides within a major urban area with residents, merchants, pedestrians, bus riders, and bicyclists who all need to be consulted as we rethink any redesign of the street.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

When Lombard Street was constructed, it was designed to be a freeway off-ramp, intended to move traffic coming off

the Golden Gate Bridge. Lombard Street is also a car-oriented commercial district whose dominant feature is the concentration of hotels and motels, along with some com-

COORDINATION

Because Lombard Street is a state highway, most of the transit decisions fall under the jurisdiction of Caltrans. So decisions aren't made in a vacuum, I have pulled together all relevant city departments and Caltrans to create “A Vision for Lombard Corridor Planning” team to leverage city funds,

state dollars, and expertise of all agencies to address the problems head-on, in one project, and in a way that allows for community input to all departments and agencies at one time.

Through City Hall's Invest in Neighborhoods initiative, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development will lead the planning team while working with the SFMTA, the Transportation Authority, the Planning Department, the Department of Public Works, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, and Caltrans. Currently Caltrans has two projects on Lombard Street in the planning stages that include a paving project to resurface the street and to also upgrade a handful of curb ramps. The timing is very opportune, as we pull together the commu-

To leave Lombard Street in its current condition in the middle of two transportation projects is unacceptable.



Plans for Lombard will address traffic, retail, and road conditions PHOTOS: STEVEN FROMTLING

nity, funding sources, and necessary city departments to work together to create a vision for Lombard of which we can all be proud.

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING

To do this right, we need to consult with and hear from our local neighbors. I'm a big believer in our neighborhoods participating at all levels of our government, and any revisions to Lombard Street must have their input. Besides being an unattractive entrance

to San Francisco, there are many other issues, including poorly developed sites, unsafe traffic-pedestrian conflicts, suboptimal transit, public safety worries, and vacant properties. To get a deeper understanding of the improvements needed and desired, our office

tation, streetscape, and public space deficiencies along the corridor, as well as any other concerns.

Our first community meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at 6 p.m. at the Moscone Recreation Center (1800 Chestnut Street). My office and all the departments

The timing is opportune to create a “Vision for Lombard” of which we can all be proud.

will be working with the community to conduct a needs assessment and to identify specific transpor-

mentioned will be present to share ideas and, most important, to hear from you. Together, let's invest the time

to develop consensus ideas for Lombard and transform the street for generations to come.

POLICE BLOTTER From the Officers of 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.

I WANT MY FOUR DOLLARS

Sunday, Nov. 17, 12:45 p.m.

Polk Street at Cedar

A street person approached a woman he knew. She was on the 1000 block of Polk Street with her boyfriend. The subject demanded money he said the boyfriend owed him. They argued and the subject pulled out a razor blade-type knife and demanded of the boyfriend, “Gimme my money.” The subject then grabbed the female and pushed the knife at her face, adding, “Gimme your backpack, you have a kilo of my drugs in that backpack.”

The subject pushed her up against a wall, and the boyfriend began yelling at the subject. The female fell over and managed to break free of the subject's grasp. She ran to a nearby homeless shelter and was able to get behind the locked door of the shelter. The subject left the area.

When police arrived, the female told them the subject had gone through her pockets and tried to steal the backpack. The male victim spotted the subject, who was detained by police and later booked at Northern Station. The subject stated that this all happened because the female owes him four dollars.

TWO FOR ONE

Tuesday, Nov. 19, 12:14 a.m.

Larkin Street at Ellis

A uniformed officer spotted a vehicle driving without headlights despite the darkness. The sergeant ran a records check and learned that the vehicle was stolen. The officer stopped the vehicle and arrested both male occupants. Inside the car was a large amount of narcotics and stolen property. Both males were booked at county jail.

TABLE SERVICE

Thursday, Nov. 21, 3:54 p.m.

600 Block of Van Ness Avenue

An officer arrived at a restaurant in response to a call about a male subject refusing to pay his bill or leave the establishment. The manager said he didn't care about the loss; he just wanted the subject to leave. But the subject refused the officer's request to leave. The manager then signed a citizen's arrest for trespassing. The officer then ordered the subject to leave or face being cited for trespassing, but the subject continued to refuse.

The officer told the subject he would now be arrested for trespassing and refusing to obey an officer's order, but the subject would not budge and instead stared off into space. After a short wrestling match that included both of them

falling onto a nearby table, the officer got the male to his feet, handcuffed him, and transported him to Northern Station, where he was booked.

NICE LUGGAGE

Thursday, Nov. 21, 9:23 p.m.

Geary Street at Webster

Plainclothes officers observed several male subjects they recognized from past auto burglary arrests or incidents. The subjects were carrying several large, expensive pieces of luggage; the officers believed they had possibly committed an auto or residential burglary. The subjects, possibly spotting the unmarked police car, attempted to hide the luggage under a van, likely to return to get it later. Officers approached the subjects, who ran in several different directions.

The officers were able to detain the subjects without further incident. They were also able to locate the victims and their burglarized vehicle; the victims identified their luggage. The subjects were arrested for theft and possession of stolen property.

THOROUGH SEARCH FINDS MUCH TO CAUSE WORRY

Saturday, Nov. 23, 1:20 p.m.

California Street at Van Ness

Patrol officers spotted a vehicle without a license plate lamp, a violation; they stopped the driver, and a computer check showed that the driver was on a felony probation and had a search condition.

A female officer searched the driver and located a baggie of methamphetamine on her. The officer also found a passport, checks, and a Social Security card that did not belong to the driver. At Northern Station, further investigation uncovered other victims' property, such as wallets, ID cards, and credit cards. The driver was booked at county jail.

WHO WAS THAT MASKED MALE?

Wednesday, Nov. 27, 8 p.m.

Clay Street at Polk

Patrol officers spotted three individuals wearing masks. The individuals circled a female, and walked away. The officers made contact with the masked individuals, identified them, and sent them on their way.

A short time later, a citizen ran up to the officers and told them someone was in his tradesman's entrance around the corner. As the officers rounded the corner, they observed one of the individuals with whom they had just made contact — he was running out of the entrance, discarding his clothing and mask as he went. The officers were able to detain him again, but he gave them the runaround about what he was doing and where he was going. The officers contacted the subject's parent, who gave officers his real name. They learned that the subject had lied about who he was, and he had an outstanding warrant for his arrest; the warrant was for a probation violation and had no bail. The juvenile was arrested for the warrant and for lying about his identity. He was booked at juvenile hall.

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SKETCHES FROM A NORTH BEACH JOURNAL

# An idler's perfect day in the neighborhood

by ernest beyl

**T**HE OTHER DAY IN North Beach, I put my head on shuffle and wandered around aimlessly — a flaneur, if you will. No set destination or mission, nothing on my mind. And I had one of those perfect days — a day when everything seems like magic, a day when everything works. Here's how it played out.

On that fine morning, I sauntered down Grant Avenue from Telegraph Hill. At the corner of Grant and Gerke Alley, I paused and peered at the apartment where Woody Allen staged the movie *Play it Again Sam*. I looked up and there looming in the sunlight was Coit Tower. That's when I knew it was going to be a good day. Blue skies and Coit Tower. I moved on.

**PIZZA FOR BREAKFAST**

My next stop was Golden Boy Pizza on Green Street for a slice topped with tomato and Italian sausage — breakfast. Doesn't everyone have pizza for breakfast? Walked over to Washington Square and sat on a bench to eat my pizza and watch the old Chinese "aunties" doing their Tai Chi. Synchronized exercise. Synchronized beauty, like a ballet.

Stopped in at Caffe Puccini on Columbus Avenue for a cappuccino and then continued down Columbus and across Broadway to City Lights. Browsed around in the basement and main floor for a bit, then mounted the stairs to the Beat literature and poetry room. Spent an hour trying to fathom some of Ezra Pound's *Cantos*. Headway: minimal.

**THE TUESDAY SPECIAL**

Then it was off to Capp's Corner at the corner of Powell and Green, for a glass of the house red and some first-of-the-day conversation with my fellow saloonists. Topics ranged from Niners to nooners. Scores and scores.

At noon, I began thinking about shoulder of lamb and lima beans. It was Tuesday so I headed over to the U.S. Restaurant on Columbus and sat at the counter. The estimable

Renee Sammon knew just what I wanted — Tuesday's special — roast shoulder of lamb with lima beans, of course.

After lunch, it was time for my ritual call on Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store Cafe, Columbus and Union, for an espresso and to exchange small talk with counter-aces Jacob and Alby (see more on Alby below). Miscellaneous music conversation from Israeli pop

Mare on Green to see what was on the blackboard that I could take home for dinner. Found Branzino sea bass — what the Europeans call Loup de mer. It looked good. Took two thick chunks and checked out.

Up Grant to Little Vine and bought a loaf of Acme Bread sourdough.

**VITAMIN V**

Walked back up to Grant Avenue to Telegraph Hill and stopped at the corner of Gerke Alley and stared up at Coit Tower again, now lit by the setting sun.

Reached my apartment, put *The London Chuck*

*Berry Sessions* on the CD player, listened to "Johnny B. Goode" and the "London Berry Blues."

Prepped dinner and it was time to pour myself a Vitamin V on the rocks and wait for Joan to arrive so we could talk about what kind of day each of us had. A good day for both of us. Another vodka. Changed from Chuck Berry to Keith Jarrett, Jack DeJohnette and Gary Peacock — *The Great American Songbook* — turned volume to low and continued to discuss the day. Nothing new in the neighborhood. Nothing new in the office.

Sat down for dinner: sautéed sea bass, steamed white rose potatoes with butter and chopped fresh dill, tossed romaine lettuce salad with olive oil and wine vinegar, hunks of Acme sourdough, and a glass of the house white.

A perfect day in the neighborhood. Try it sometime.

**ALBY'S NEW CHAPTER**

Albert Adams, whom North Beach denizens will recognize as Alby — manager and counter-ace of Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store Cafe at Columbus Avenue and Union Street — is packing it in after almost eight years and moving on to check out new opportunities. "It's about time to get on with a new chapter in my life," Alby says. He's remaining in San Francisco, but taking a few months off to "travel and smell the roses." I'll miss Alby, but wish him well.

*Ernest Beyl may be reached at ernest@marinatimes.com.*

**I had a perfect day — a day when everything seems like magic.**

**FOCUS GALLERY AND LIVE WORMS**

At the Focus Gallery, I stopped to talk with proprietor-photographer John Perino and to look at his perceptive black-and-white photos from his travels around the world. Considered buying one. Perhaps one of these days. The Focus Gallery is also full of marvelous junk — collectibles we call them. Ancient Brownie box camera, old posters from long-gone events. Also lots of old books on the Beats and original watercolors, oils, and drawings by local artists.

Then it was down the street to Live Worms to see painter Kevin Brown. I like him. A former airline pilot and now a fine painter. Which brings me to the left brain/right brain business. Kevin illustrates the concept. He flew 747s as a captain. That's left brain stuff — logical, analytical, good at math. Now he's a painter. That's right brain stuff — creative, artistic. Kevin Brown is all of that.

**CHUCK BERRY AND BRANZINO**

Over to Tommy's 101 Music to browse for obscure blues records. Found an old CD of *The London Chuck Berry Sessions*. Snapped it up. Tommy's has everything from hard-to-find 33½ disks to blues harmonicas. And a blues harmonica is a must in this neighborhood.

Now I was starting to think about dinner. Stopped in to Gigi's Sotte

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# Will you stay or will you go?

by john zipperer

## THE END OF E'ANGELO

After a 35-year run, Italian restaurant E'Angelo signed off Wednesday, Jan. 15. Chef and owner Claudio Marchesan closed the establishment he purchased in 2003 from original owner Ezio Rastelli, who had opened it with a partner back in 1978. Located at 2234 Chestnut, E'Angelo Trattoria featured classic Italian cuisine in a family-friendly atmosphere.

With Marchesan's lease up, he decided to pull up stakes and do something different, telling the *Chronicle's* Paolo Lucchesi that he estimates he has "10 good years" left to do one more restaurant before retiring, and he will "put everything I've learned in my career into this swan song." Stay tuned.

## OVERHEARD AT DOSA

Customer: Is that hot?

Waiter: It is hot.

Customer: But is it *hot* hot? Hot?

Waiter: It is somewhat hot, yes.

## MR. MARINA

Did you just brush past the future Mr. Marina while walking down Chestnut? Maybe you did, and you can find out in March when the Third Annual Mr.



Clockwise from top left: A quick snapshot of well-wishers enjoying a toast in honor of E'Angelo during the establishment's closing party. Standing (center) is owner Claudio Marchesan; to his right is Izzys owner Sam Duval; directly in front of Claudio is defense attorney David Goldstein; at front left is Lawrence D. Buck of Mission Street Films, and front right is Fontana's Restaurant GM Davis Horton; chef Annie Somerville of Greens; meet our newest reader in the Marina: 9-month-old Savanna Josephine Sanchez PHOTOS COURTESY LARRY BUCK; GREENS; JASON SANCHEZ

Marina Competition takes place, with 12 finalists participating in talent, swimwear, and "Marina-wear" Q. & A. competitions. The light-hearted competition benefits the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Each contestant will be rated on how well he fundraises

for the Society. They must also embody Marina District values (defined as "social, fun-loving, generous, manly"). It takes place March 19, at the Regency Center on Van Ness, but early-bird tickets are already on sale: <http://mrmarina.eventbrite.com>.

## GREENS WITH ENVY

Annie Somerville, the executive chef at Fort Mason's Greens Restaurant, is getting national exposure. The March 2014 issues of *Prevention* and *Fitness* magazines will highlight the chef. In *Prevention*, she'll be talking about

changes in her cooking, and *Fitness* will focus on her advice for healthful eating when dining out at restaurants. Greens is on a good-PR streak. Eater SF included the establishment in its list of "The 38 Essential San Francisco Restaurants," and Somerville also appears in two new cookbooks, *San Francisco Chefs at the Table* (Globe Pequot, 2013) and *The Vegetarian Flavor Bible* (Little, Brown, 2014).

## MORE MAMA'S

Mama's of Washington Square Park is expanding, reportedly looking at Vallejo and Columbus for a second location of the popular restaurant. More next issue.

## GET YOUR COFFEE ON AT PEET'S

You can grab some free coffee and food samples on Saturday, Feb. 1, at the brand new Peet's Coffee & Tea on 2080 Chestnut St. The first 50 customers through the door will also receive a Peet's limited edition CamelBak tumbler and \$25 gift card, and KFOG's Renee Richardson will broadcast live from the store with, we're told, a "special, mystery guest."

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

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**ACTUAL RESULTS**



**FINANCE** :: Apple and the original Tea Party

# Representation without taxation

by alan silverman

**O**N DEC. 16, 1773, demonstrators boarded ships in Boston Harbor and threw chests of tea into the water. This was the culmination of the resistance movement against the taxation of the colonists imposed by the British Parliament. Their rallying cry was “No taxation without representation.” In the recent budget discussions in Washington, we have heard the members of the modern day Tea Party protest about the evils of taxation and about the negative effects of high taxes on our economic recovery. In particular, they complain about the 35 percent corporate income tax.

In July 2008 the U.S. Government Accountability Office published a report on the tax liabilities reported by U.S.-controlled corporations. They studied the tax returns of more than 1,250,000 U.S. corporations for the years 1998 through 2005. During those eight years, between 60 percent and 70 percent of those companies paid no U.S. taxes. A further study prepared in September 2012 for the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations looked at the contribution of corporate taxes to the U.S. budget since 1952. In 1952 corporate tax generated 32 percent of all federal tax revenue, while individuals contributed 42 percent. In 2010 corporations contributed 9 percent and individuals still contributed 42 percent.

A casual study of this data might prompt one to ask whether high corporate taxation is really a major cause of our budget problems, or whether the ingenious methods that corporations have found to avoid taxation are not also contributing factors. The Senate Permanent Subcommittee studied this question further in hearings in September 2012 and May 2013. In particular they looked at Apple, Microsoft, and Hewlett Packard — not because these companies were especially egregious, but because they illustrated some of the more creative ways in which corporations avoid U.S. taxation. It must be emphasized that these tax avoidance measures are perfectly legal, and the corporations spend millions of dollars on lawyers, accountants, lobbyists, and political contributions to make sure that they stay legal.

A look at Apple might illustrate how the game is played. Apple has about 80,000 employees, of which 52,000 are in the United States. Almost all of Apple's research activity is conducted in California, where the vast majority of the engineers, designers and technical experts reside. Many of the components of Apple's new products are designed in the United States and then manufactured by third parties elsewhere. Most of the finished products are assembled in China.

In 1980 Apple created Apple Operations International (AOI) as its primary offshore holding company. AOI is registered in Ireland but has no employees, no physical presence, and declares no tax residency anywhere. AOI has three directors, two of whom are located in California and one in Ireland. From May 2006 through December 2012 it held 33 board meetings, of which 32 were held in Cupertino. The one Irish director failed to participate in about half of the board meetings. AOI's assets are held in bank accounts in New York, and its accounting records are maintained by Apple in the United States. AOI received \$30 billion in profits from 2009 through 2012, and accounts for about 30 percent of Apple's worldwide net profits on which it has paid no tax to any government.

Apple Sales International (ASI) is another Irish company, which is a subsidiary of Apple Operations Europe (AOE), which is in turn a subsidiary of AOI. As with AOI the majority of directors of ASI reside in California and all board meetings for a six-year period were held in Cupertino. In 2010 and 2011, ASI paid \$17 million in global taxes on \$34 billion of income (about .05 percent). ASI contracts with Apple's third party manufacturers in China to assemble products and acts as the initial buyer of those finished goods. ASI then resells the finished product to other Apple entities for sale in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, India, and the Asia-Pacific region. ASI charges the other affiliates a higher price than it paid for the goods, thus effectively shifting profit from the country where the product is sold to ASI, some of which ASI passes as a dividend to its

parent AOE, which in turn passes as a dividend to AOI.

If the reader is confused by all of this, then the tax lawyers have achieved their objective. The harder it is for the IRS to understand, the less likely they are to question it. Techniques such as acquiring finished goods through an offshore subsidiary located in a tax haven and then reselling them to the wholly owned sales subsidiaries at much higher prices are not unique to Apple and are widely used to shift profit from high tax countries to lower tax countries. Similarly, assigning intellectual property rights (such as patents and trademarks) to subsidiaries in tax havens, so that sales subsidiaries must pay a “royalty” to the tax haven upon sale of the product, is also used by companies other than Apple to shift profits to lower tax countries.

It should also be emphasized that Apple is not a “bad apple” and is not one of the 60 percent to 70 percent of companies mentioned above that have paid no U.S. taxes for several years. In fact, for the three fiscal years 2009, 2010 and 2011, Apple paid a total of \$5.3 billion in U.S. corporate income tax. Apple's total sales for the three years were over \$216 billion — for an effective tax rate of less than 2.5 percent.

So when you next hear someone complaining that the 35 percent corporate tax rate is strangling our economy, think of all the lawyers, accountants and lobbyists who are kept employed helping corporations avoid those taxes. Also think of those poor countries such as Bermuda or the Cayman Islands where the tax-sheltered profits of U.S. companies are parked, and where those profits amount to more than 500 percent of the country's GDP. Think also of the Michelin 3-star restaurants in Washington, D.C., who would have to close if lobbyists were not to invite politicians to dinner.

A few years after the Boston Tea Party, when the framers of the Constitution included in the preamble “in order to create a more perfect union,” little could they have thought of the day when American ingenuity would almost reverse the British Parliament and produce an almost perfect union yielding “representation without taxation.”

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Indy car driver JR Hildebrand behind the wheel PHOTO BY STEVE HERMANOS

## He'll blow your doors off

### An interview with local Indy car racer J. R. Hildebrand

by steve hermanos

**J**. R. HILDEBRAND WAS LEADING THE 2011 Indianapolis 500 in the final turn when he swung wide around a slow car and skidded into the wall. Though the side of his car was destroyed, Hildebrand coasted to a second-place finish, a fantastic result for a rookie.

Hildebrand grew up in Sausalito. He played baseball in middle school and is a big fan of the Giants. But he grew up obsessed with car racing. Having turned 26 in January, Hildebrand awaits the start of his fourth Indy car season, which begins in March.

#### How does a kid growing up in an affluent part of Marin County become a race car driver?

My dad raced classic cars. He had a '68 Camaro and would race it six or seven times a year at Sears Point and Laguna Seca. Growing up, I played a lot of different sports. At 13 or 14 it all converged when they opened go-kart racing at Sears Point.

#### What's your favorite race?

Indy [The Indianapolis 500] is the obvious answer. It's so hard to drive. It's got very long straightaways and narrow corners. It's the fastest track that we go to. The rules at Indy in terms of aerodynamics are relatively open. The teams are allowed to remove downforce on the cars. You have to ask yourself, *How brave are you?*

#### How do you deal with the fear that comes with racing at 200 mph?

You have to separate the feeling from the fear. You've chosen at that point that you're going to try to qualify. You rid your mind of any distraction, the fear of "what if." What you have to do is allow yourself to separate your thoughts. It's a matter of having an ultra-sensitive focus on what is happening this second. When accidents happen, they only solidify [that racing] is what I wanted to do — and that ends up outweighing the risks at play.

#### You had a 4.12 GPA at Redwood High School in Corte Madera, and you were accepted at MIT. Do you find that any of the other drivers are jealous of how articulate you are, or of your brains?

You don't get to that level [Indy car driver] without being really switched on,

really smart. In school, advanced calculus was directly applicable to something that was happening at the racetrack. That made science and math extremely important, just to understand what's going on [at the racetrack] for my own sake. Once in the car, everything becomes much more physical and subconscious [rather than intellectual].

We can make a few adjustments in the cars: the roll bars, the cross weight, engine maps, the gears. It's a little bit like chess at 200 miles per hour.

#### How much training do you do?

During the offseason, I work out quite a bit. In a week I'll bike 70 miles three or four times, with 7,000 feet of elevation. In the car, you have very high-intensity heart rates. I do a lot of hill work and treadmills, a lot of core strength to deal with G-forces, a lot of work on my shoulders and back.

#### What's your favorite car-racing movie?

Steve McQueen in *Le Mans*.

#### What about last year's car movie *Rush*?

That was the first movie in a long time that captures a little bit of the essence of what's really going on in the car. I've had the chance to drive some of the cars from that time. It was a much more raw time period. The cars then were not as sensitive as modern cars. You had to take the bull by the horns.

#### What's your goal?

It's about going to Indy and drinking the milk. [The winner of the Indianapolis 500 drinks from a quart jug of milk.]

#### What kind of car are you driving these days?

I drive a Cadillac CTS-V station wagon.

#### What's the fastest you've driven in Sausalito?

I've never gotten a ticket in Sausalito.

#### What's the fastest you've driven in San Francisco?

I don't want to put a number on it. I've definitely driven some fast cars and tested the limits of their velocity — usually on the way to the airport.

Steve Hermanos is the author of *Orange Waves of Giants! The 2012 Championship Season*. E-mail: [steve@marinatimes.com](mailto:steve@marinatimes.com)

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# Brunch Across the Bay...



IT'S TIME TO HEAD OVER to Sausalito for a weekend brunch. **Salito's Crab House & Prime Rib** is the ideal destination that's just minutes from the city. For \$9.95 you can get three eggs with bacon and spicy sausage and iron skillet open face omelets all come with house made kettle toasted bread.

Specialties include bacon bruschetta benedict and crab benedict, served with crispy potatoes and toast. There are other options and if you start with a chili

mary, a blood orange mimosa or a peach bellini, you will think you are truly on vacation.

If you're not in the mood for breakfast, the full menu is offered as well with a selection of cheeses and salumi with kettle bread to a full-blown feast of whole roasted Dungeness crab and prime rib. The menu is accessible. It's simple food, well-sourced, abundant and comforting yet sumptuous.

You can craft your dining experience by begin-

ning 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.

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Brunch is served on the weekends beginning at 10:00 am.

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# Secret Asian Man's top 10 restaurants for 2013

by tony ching

**Coqueta**

Pier 5, The Embarcadero (near Pacific), 415-704-8866, www.coquetasf.com

Coqueta means "infatuated" in Spanish, and I have been infatuated with chef Michael Chiarello's new-ish restaurant since the day it opened. This is Secret Asian Man's kind of place: A Spanish joint run by an Italian chef who makes better rice than my Chinese mom. Don't miss the octopus — tender, smoky, and grilled to perfection. The whole branzino (European sea bass) has delicate, crispy skin and the flesh is toothsome but flaky. The Gaucho ribeye for four is a behemoth of a steak, aged and cooked to rival the best steakhouses in the country. The signature dish, though, is the Iberico Secreto (see recipe, page 14), slices of medium-rare pork from the free-roaming, acorn-eating Iberico species native only to Spain.

**Rich Table**

199 Gough Street (at Oak), 415-355-9085, www.richtablesf.com

Chef Evan Rich always uses the very best seasonal ingredients, and the menu changes frequently so I never get bored (even when I visit multiple times in one week). When available, I always order the sea scallops — large and plump, seared to caramelized perfection and cooked just beyond translucence inside. The pasta is house made, including one Rich created and named for himself, the Richilini, sort of a fettuccine with notches down the sides. The sardine chips (a whole sardine enrobed in a house-made chip and then fried) is as addictive as it is clever. The New York strip consistently rates as my favorite version of a New York steak in San Francisco; so simple, but it's an impeccable piece of meat. This is also my first-date-go-to place (ask to sit at table 11 — it's the most romantic in the house).

**Akiko's Restaurant**

431 Bush Street (at Claude), 415-397-3218, www.akikosrestaurant.com

As long as it's sustainable, owner Ray Lee gets every exotic seafood from Japan you could imagine (he could probably get Godzilla sashimi if you asked for it). Even a common Japanese classic like tempura is special in Lee's talented hands.



Coqueta's signature dish, Iberico Secreto

Everything is seasonal, but when available try the ikura marinated in truffles; unprocessed Hokkaido uni (Japanese sea urchin simply cleaned and put back in the water it came from); the sous vide monk fish liver; and the 28-day aged Japanese wagyu beef dusted with autumn truffle.

**TBD**

1077 Mission Street (at Sixth), 415-431-1826, www.tbdrestaurant.com

The owners of TBD named their first restaurant AQ. Two stupid, uncreative names in a row would be unforgivable if the food weren't so ridiculously creative and delicious. The tables have pullout drawers that hold napkins, silverware, and a menu (a nice touch). The best dishes: ribeye steak topped with pastrami; roasted potatoes topped with uni and slices of jalapeno; and beef tartare served with raw mustard greens (you roll it up like a lettuce wrap).

**Benu**

22 Hawthorne Street (at Howard), 415-685-4860, www.benusf.com

For special occasions like Valentine's Day, you must check out the 13-course extravaganza from chef/owner and James Beard award winner Corey Lee at Benu. Formerly chef de cuisine at Thomas Keller's renowned French Laundry, Lee is a master of innovative, visually striking dishes with equally stunning flavors. The thousand-year-old quail egg is a take on the

ancient Chinese tradition (but much better); the lobster xiao long bao — Lee's version of a Shanghai soup dumpling with lobster filling and a rich, warm broth inside that explodes when you take a bite — is a must; but the faux shark fin is probably the most unique item. Though Lee serves the "fin" other ways, my favorite preparation is in a soup with black truffle custard and crab meat.

**Keiko à Nob Hill**

1250 Jones (at Clay), 415-829-7141, www.keikoanobhill.com

Keiko is one of the few restaurants left in the city offering a truly romantic fine dining experience replete with patrons dressed to the nines and black napkins so your date won't get white fuzz on her little black dress. The tasting menu changes frequently, but after over a half dozen visits, every course has been memorable. My favorite is the caramelized onion mousse with Osetra caviar, sea urchin, scallop tartare, and dashi gelee served in a clear glass vessel filled with cherry blossom smoke.

**B. Patisserie**

2821 California Street (at Divisadero), 415-440-1700, www.bpatisserie.com

I grew up with Belinda, so I was lucky enough to grow up eating the pastries that would eventually lead to jobs at top restaurants like Gary Danko and Manresa, critical accolades, and finally a bakery of her

TOP 10, continued on 13

## TOP 10

CONTINUED from page 12

own. If you've gone all the way to Union Square for the pastries at Tout Sweet or schlepped to the Mission to the trendy Craftsman and Wolves, don't bother — the best bakery is right here in the Northside. Her kouign-amann (pronounced "kwee nwa-man") — a round, crusty cake made with bread dough containing layers of butter and sugar folded in and then slowly baked until the butter puffs up and the sugar caramelizes — is hands down the best you'll ever eat, but even more common pastries like croissants and scones are elevated.

**Tony's Pizza Napoletana**  
1570 Stockton Street (at Union),  
415-835-9888,  
[www.tonyspizzanapoletana.com](http://www.tonyspizzanapoletana.com)

In my opinion, Tony Gemignani makes the best pizza in the Bay Area, but some of the best dishes aren't even pizza. I love the giant meatballs made with veal and beef, as well as the house-made pastas. For pizza, the classic Margherita is a great place to start, and the honey pie made with honey from Tony's own rooftop beehives,

Calabrese peppers, scallions, mozzarella, and caramelized onions is completely unique. I know you're wrinkling your nose ("Ewww! Pizza with honey?"). Trust me, it works.

**Golden Lotus**  
631 Larkin Street (at Eddy),  
415-345-1355

The trendy Vietnamese favorite Turtle Tower has moved down the street, and it seems they left their quality ingredients behind with the new occupant, Golden Lotus. Not only is the food better at Golden Lotus, the prices are far more reasonable, the place is clean, and the service is fast and friendly. Northern style phở uses a slightly wider rice noodle, and while Turtle Tower's broth lately seems watered down, the broth for both the beef and chicken versions at Golden Lotus are rich and redolent with spices like clove and star anise. Phở gets much of its flavor from the bones, and because the owner is a butcher, he uses the best cuts of Wagyu beef and free-range chicken, which is unusual for most hole-in-the-wall Vietnamese spots. The lotus root salad with pig ears and shrimp and the grilled pork rice rolls with cilantro are also hits.

**Elmira Rosticceria**  
154 McAllister Street (at Hyde), 415-551-7332

Former Fairmont Hotel chef Marc Passetti serves up an elevated twist on the rustic Italian food he grew up with. He buys a whole pig each week, which is spit roasted and used to make, among other things, his signature porchetta sandwich — unctuous loin and belly rolled around herbs with a golden brown, crisp exterior on a light, airy Acme ciabatta roll topped with a citrusy salsa verde, and if you're lucky, you'll be there on a day when he tops it with crunchy chicharrones. Passetti likes to change things up, often on a whim (I wish he'd bring back the lampredotto sandwich, which was the best thing on the menu), but there are still plenty of seasonal dishes worth a visit, like the crispy pork salad with grilled nectarines; roasted red potatoes; and lightly battered and fried fresh calamari replete with the best part — the tentacles. The daily pasta is also a winner, especially the squid-ink fettuccine with calamari and clams in tomato sauce.

Contact: [www.tony1andonly.com](http://www.tony1andonly.com)

# It's Crab Season...



**T**HE TOURISTS HAVE left for home and the **Franciscan Crab Restaurant** is the best place to "get your crab on!" It's all about the crab and no matter how you like it, you will find it there. Start with crab

chowder, followed by crab Caesar salad, move on to a crab enchilada, crab Alfredo or the

big boy—two plus pounds of whole roasted Dungeness crab!

But there is more than just crab on the menu for those who may desire an alternative—there is artisanal salumi and burrata, a shredded short rib sandwich and filet mignon, among many other possibilities.

Things are quieter now that fall is finally here so parking is easier and more plentiful. You can grab a banquette and look out the twenty foot windows at the beautiful bay, watch the boats come and go and gaze at the beauty of the city that we

all treasure.

**Grab a banquette and look out the twenty foot windows at the beautiful bay.**

The chilly weather is perfect for the Franciscan's other seafood options like

garlic-steamed clams and 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 ½, 415.362.7733

[franciscan crab restaurant.com](http://franciscan crab restaurant.com)

Open daily at 11:30 am



The entrance to Verben PHOTOS: COURTESY VERBENA

## VERBENA

CONTINUED from page 1

chokes with black trumpet mushrooms, red hummus, and faro; and artichoke with pickled green tomatoes, garlic, and pine nuts. These portions, ranging from \$7 to \$14, are attractively presented and tend to combine something mild or sweet with an intensely savory or tart note, making each bite better than the last.

This is especially true of one of Verben's mid-sized plates, duck meatballs with black mole, collards, hominy, and whey (\$15). Not only are the meatballs decadently tender and rich, but also the explosion of smoky mole and creamy hominy in your mouth is almost indescribable. Larger plates (\$23-\$28) include Koji quail with grains from Sonoma, hedgehog mushrooms, and pumpkin juice; and swordfish with a brilliant, savory cioppino verde, fennel, and potato. Desserts (\$8-\$9) include molasses ginger cake with

carrot sorbet and IPA caramel; and chocolate and parsnip, ice cream, custard, and cranberry gelee.

The bar menu is just as eclectic, featuring cocktails such as Vodka and Brightness, with gin, lime, grapefruit shrub, jalapeno, and orange bitters; and Beekeeper's Folly made from Pisco, chamomile hop honey, sherry, absinthe, and an olive. The international wine list is bountiful, and

the well-stocked bar also features four local draft beers.

Verben is presently open only for dinner, but they're giving us something to look forward to: they plan to start serving brunch this spring.

**Verben:** 2323 Polk Street, 415-441-2323, [www.verbenarestaurant.com](http://www.verbenarestaurant.com); Sunday-Wednesday 5:30-10:30 p.m., Thursday-Saturday 6:30-11:30 p.m.

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

**The bar menu is eclectic, featuring cocktails such as Vodka and Brightness and Beekeeper's Folly.**



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## LA VITA DELIZIOSO :: Recipe



Searing over high heat: One simple method for duck breast, Iberico Secreto and Kobe beef

## Fat that's good for you — what's sexier than that for Valentine's dinner?

by susan dyer reynolds

**I**F YOU'RE THINKING OF making dinner for that special someone for Valentine's Day this year instead of eating out, you'll want to be sure the meal is restaurant quality. Because it's a splurging occasion, I've included three special protein choices — duck, pork and beef — of varying price ranges. All three are simple to cook by searing over high heat as long as you watch them carefully (they'll be ruined if overcooked), and all three have an extra sexy component: fat that is actually good for you.

### DUCK BREAST

At \$12 to \$14 per eight-ounce serving, duck is my choice for a moderately priced splurge this Valentine's Day. Mostly dark meat, it can be cooked medium rare and has a texture and taste more similar to beef than chicken.

There are also health benefits: Duck fat, like olive oil, is high in heart-healthy monounsaturated fats. Studies have shown that Mediterranean-style diets high in these fats reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Duck fat also contains a high amount of linoleic acid, an essential fatty acid that fights cancer, prevents atherosclerosis, boosts calcium absorption, and aids kidney function.

You can find duck at Nijiya Market in Japantown, Marina Meats on Chestnut Street, and at better markets like Whole Foods and

Bryan's. As always, make sure you buy organic, humanely raised duck. I like buying from Whole Foods because of their 5-Step Animal Welfare Rating Standards — they know everything about where their meat comes from and how it's raised, and so should you.

### JAPANESE KOBE BEEF/ AMERICAN WAGYU BEEF

Most people know Japanese A5 Wagyu as Kobe beef; but while all Kobe beef is Wagyu, not all Wagyu is Kobe. Like French wine, Japan produces beef by region, or prefecture. Kobe was known as Tajima in ancient times (connoisseurs still refer to the meat as Tajima beef) and the cattle are descendants of kuoge Wagyu, or black-haired

Japanese cattle. Even today, true A5 Kobe beef is a rarity, raised on less than 300 small farms that pasture fewer than 5 cows (the largest has between 10 and 15 at any given time). You can purchase Japanese A5 online at high-end butcher shops like Debragga (www.debragga.com), but the pricetag (\$100 for a 12-ounce ribeye not including overnight shipping) takes it out of the mid-priced splurge range.

The other choice is American Wagyu — a cross between Wagyu and Angus. You can purchase sustainable, humanely raised Snake River Farms American Wagyu (found in many restaurants) at Nijiya Market and occasionally at upscale markets for around \$25 per pound. (On the last Friday of each month, Nijiya has a 20 percent off meat sale.) You can also order online (www.snakeriverfarms.com), where two eight-ounce ribeyes will set you back \$70 not including shipping. Again, this starts to creep out of our mid-

DELIZIOSO, continued on 15



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# I hope there's room on your dining dance card

by marcia gagliardi

**A** NEW ADDITION THAT HAS RUSSIAN Hill all a-twitter is **Verbena** (2323 Polk Street, 415-441-2323), in the former Marbella/Rex Cafe space (see cover story). The project is from Berkeley's Gather team, with chef Sean Baker leading the kitchen. The contemporary and seasonal California menu has some bites (\$5-\$7), an extensive, six-choice vegetable section (\$10-\$13), and both smaller and larger seafood and meat dishes (\$15-\$28), like sardines, quail, swordfish, and duck meatballs. Yup, this is a perfect place for vegetarians and carnivores to coexist nicely at the dining table.

## Verbena is the perfect place for vegetarians and carnivores to coexist nicely at the dining table.

You'll also notice the gorgeous pottery: most, but not all, is custom from Jared's Pottery, as is one of the chandeliers. Michael Ireland (French Laundry, Quince, Meadowood) is behind the producer-driven (and international) wine list; there's also a full bar, with cocktails ranging from \$11-\$12, and four beers on draft (including Green Flash West Coast IPA and Linden Street Urban People's Lager). Abueg Morris Architects (Nopalito, Comal, Hi Lo, Roam) designed the space with room for 62 in the dining room (including bar seating). Also, an upstairs mezzanine has room for 12 guests, and the sidewalk tables seat 16. There's an exposed brick wall, plenty of wood, and a splash of bright cobalt on the back wall. You'll also notice quite the stash of backlit pickled items on the wall flanking the bar — no trying to sneak up the ladder to get your own, OK? Verbena's

hours are Sunday–Wednesday 5:30 p.m.–10:30 p.m. and Thursday–Saturday 5:30 p.m.–11:30 p.m. Weekend brunch will begin in the spring.

### COW HOLLOW/MARINA

Some tasty tidbits for you: **Sabrosa** (3200 Fillmore Street, 415-638-6500) in the Marina is now serving **brunch** on Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m.–3:30 p.m. The menu includes raw bar offerings, two chilaquiles varieties, and fideo seco (fried angel-hair pasta) with shrimp and egg. And yes, they have that full bar.

The very tiny, very charming **Le Marais Bakery** (2066 Chestnut Street, 415-359-9801) is

expanding into the other half of their building. The new space will allow them to add some additional seating (about 11 seats in all), plus it will give them the opportunity to add some savory options to their menu. Eventually, they also hope to hire a chef and start offering bistro-style fare at dinnertime.

### NORTH BEACH

**Comstock Saloon** (155 Columbus Avenue, 415-617-0071) just rolled out a lunch counter in their new second bar area, with a variety of sandwiches (including a fried chicken sandwich, rabbit currywurst, and the Comstock burger), some salads (beets or Brussels sprouts), and more (like potato leek soup) from chef Ronnie New, but don't fall in love with just one thing because the menu is subject to change. You can

TABLEHOPPER, continued on 17

## DELIZIOSO

CONTINUED from page 14

priced splurge range).

The fat of Wagyu is more healthful than other beef. It's still a caloric disaster, mind you, but Wagyu contains 30 percent more monounsaturated fatty acids than American Angus. It is also higher in Omega 3 fats (most commonly associated with wild salmon), known for heart-healthy benefits such as raising good and lowering bad cholesterol. It's not fair to compare it to other steak because it's more like beef foie gras — meltingly tender with a velvety texture and intense, rich flavor.

**How to cook:** Season all sides with salt and pepper. Heat a cast-iron or other heavy pan over medium-high heat (again, a drop of water in the pan should madly sizzle). Reduce heat to medium and place steaks in pan. The rule with beef is to cook it five minutes per inch, but the high marbling in Wagyu melts quickly and if cooked too long turns

shoe-leather tough. To achieve medium-rare succulence, I suggest searing both sides until you get a nice, brown crust (a minute or so on each side) and then resting for a few minutes under foil. Serve with my Best Mashed Potatoes Ever (find the recipe at [www.marinatimes.com](http://www.marinatimes.com)) and spinach or baby kale sautéed in garlic and olive oil.

### SECRETO IBÉRICO DE BELLOTA PORK STEAK

My big splurge is also the hardest to come by: You won't find it in the United States, so you have to order it from Spain ([www.tienda.com](http://www.tienda.com)). The cost isn't prohibitive (\$40 for two half-pound steaks), but the second-day air shipping can be as much or more than the steaks. Still, if you've ever had this cut at Coqueta on the Embarcadero, you will likely agree that it's worth it for a very special occasion.

The secreto ("butcher's secret") is a small, thin cut that is hard to locate on the pigs, thus the name. Ibérico de Bellota pork is renowned

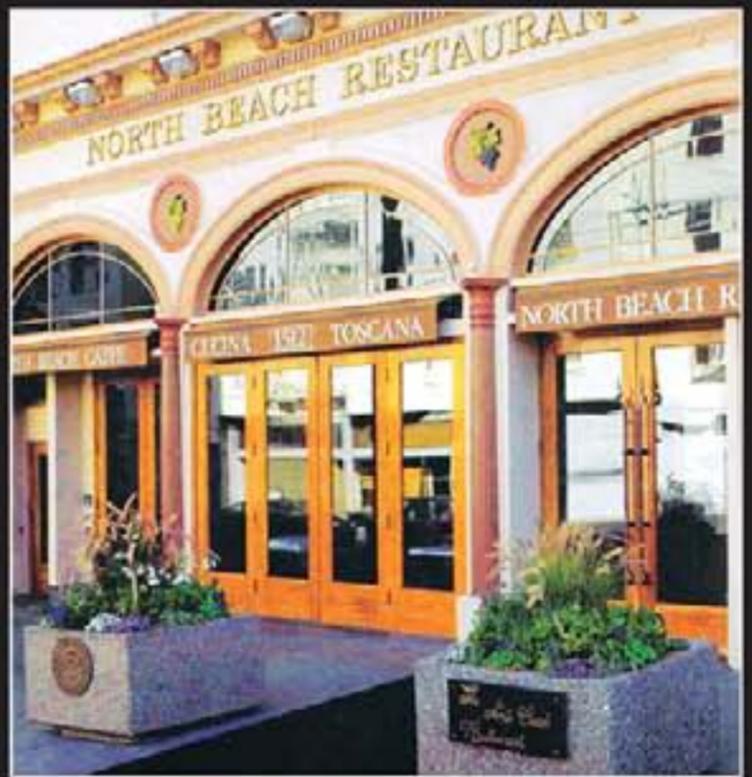
for its beautiful marbling, especially the secreto. Indigenous black Ibérico pigs wander freely through the dehesa forests of southwest Spain munching on herbs, grasses and most important, acorns, which create its distinctive flavor (a cross between bacon and beef steak). This acorn-and-herb-flavored pork is high in monounsaturated fats so it's more healthful than the fat from normal pork. Because of the humane way they're raised and their special diet, Ibérico can also be eaten rare to medium rare, just like good beef.

**How to cook:** Secreto Ibérico is a thin cut (similar to skirt steak) that is highly marbled so it should be dealt with the same as Wagyu beef — sear quickly on both sides in a very hot pan to form a nice, brown crust, then rest for a few minutes under foil. Serve with saffron rice with peas and a simple salad of arugula with homemade lemon vinaigrette.

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

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**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.



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McCourt brothers: Malachy, Alphie, Michael, and Frank PHOTO: FREEREPUBLIC.COM

# Michael McCourt: The quintessential Irish bartender

by ernest beyl

IT'S GOOD TO LIVE IN A CITY WHOSE foremost citizens include a bartender. We refer to Michael McCourt, the Irish superstar behind the plank at Original Joe's in North Beach, who will celebrate his 78th birthday Feb. 24. McCourt's birthday should be a national holiday, and we hereby so proclaim it.

In an age that bestows meaningless celebrity on politicians, tycoons, movie and TV personalities, and social twits, a bartender with skill, wit, and wisdom is to be highly valued.

To judge Michael McCourt as simply a bartender is to miss the point. He is a populist philosopher and storyteller who almost incidentally dispenses drinks. He's variously an impish leprechaun or a grumpy and disgruntled warlock with an Irish cholera. McCourt offers strong opinions on just about anything, along with strong drink — when it is required — and does so with style and self-assurance. Then, there is his near encyclopedic knowledge of his daily communicants' favorite topics: old movies, old actors, legendary drinkers, football picks, baseball batting averages, and a remarkable store of other valuable but arcane information.

### ANGELA'S ASHES

McCourt can be affable, with a crooked smile creasing his Irish mug when holding an audience before supplicants revealing in his presence. But, at times, he can be arch and acerbic when his patience is tried by the arrogant and the pompous. He can deliver a knockout punch without raising his voice.

The silver-haired McCourt is from a high-profile Irish family. One brother, Frank McCourt, now deceased, was the author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir of a miserable Irish childhood, *Angela's Ashes*, which described growing up in the Limerick slums with a ne'er-do-well father who spent his occasional wages and the official dole money in the nearest pub. Another brother, Malachy, 82, has been an actor, TV talk-show host and bartender. He also wrote a memoir, *A Monk Swimming*. The Catholic Hail Mary prayer includes a line "Blessed art

thou amongst women ..." As a youth in Ireland, Malachy heard the line "amongst women" as "a monk swimming." Logical! Alphie, 72, is the youngest of the McCourt brothers and lives in New York.

### MALACHY'S SALOON

When the late San Francisco writer Ron Fimrite once asked McCourt if he intended to write his memoir, the Irish wit said: "If I do, I will write of the difficulty we had in hiring decent help, of the decline in the quality of watercress sandwiches, of the trouble we had keeping our palm trees trimmed and the shamefully low price we received from selling our polo ponies."

McCourt was one of seven impoverished children, three of whom died in their first three years. He came to the United States from Ireland in 1954 when he was 18, and after his discharge from a four-year stint in the U.S. Air Force, he joined his brother Malachy, who operated a New York saloon, and worked as a bartender there for three years. It was his first experience behind the bar, and he found it agreeable. Then he did a few years at Chez Jay's in Santa Monica. There, McCourt says, he was privileged to pour drinks for — and to drink with — pros like John "Duke" Wayne, Lee Marvin, Howard Duff, and Neville Brand who became his buddies.

### A GYPSY BARTENDER

When he came to San Francisco in 1969, he was hired as a bartender for the classic retro saloon, Perry's on Union Street. He remained there 21 years honing his saloon persona. He moved to Monroe's on Laguna for a while, and then to the Washington Square Bar & Grill in North Beach, Seal's Cove on the Embarcadero, the Buchanan Grill in the Marina, and then to the reopened "Square," as regulars always called the Washington Square Bar & Grill. "I was your gypsy bartender," he says now.

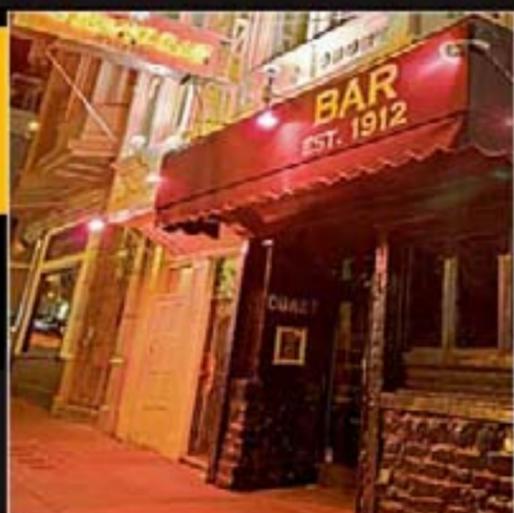
When it was announced in 2012 that the benevolent Irish terror Michael McCourt (not Irish tenor by the way), would be behind the bar at Original Joe's, his disciples rejoiced. It was viewed as a return to the glory days, which in a

MCCOURT, continued on 17



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## McCOURT

CONTINUED from page 16

sense, it was. "There has been a terrible epidemic of healthy living that has put a dent in the saloon economy. This, in spite of the fact that the medical journals are reporting that a little of the spirit is good for you," he says.

### RANDOM 'MCCOURTISMS'

McCourt admits he was a hell-raiser when he was younger. "I thought I should be part of Sinatra's rat pack," he says now with a note of regret. Today he's a family man and lives in North Beach with his second wife, Joan. He has four children, two by his first marriage. None are bartenders.

Many of McCourt's distinguished acolytes have followed their man from one San Francisco saloon to another. These include politicians, lawyers, police officers, dockworkers, bartenders, authors, editors, reporters, musicians, advertising execs, and retirees from all the above pursuits. Trading sage McCourt utterances has become a sport among them, a kind of cottage industry. Each new gem is polished and weighed carefully for its lasting truth, shock value, and humor. Here are a few random McCourtisms on life, love, politics, death, taxes, and other important subjects:

**Saloons:** "Saloons are us. Those of us left are the keepers of the flame. Saloons are drinking establishments for what is left of the drinking establishment. They are places to go to find out who has died."

**High society:** "It seems to me that those we call high society in San Francisco are just the descendents of carpetbag-

gers, saloonkeepers, miners, and other opportunists. They were born with silver spoons in their mouths. Some of their ancestors mined that silver from the Comstock Lode. Now the hoity-toity are born with cell phones in their mouths so they can call their stockbrokers."

**Politics and government:** "The old politicians had a sense of humor. The new ones seem to have only a sense of their own greatness. Perhaps if they took a little glass of something each day it would improve their humor."

**The church:** "When I grew up in Ireland the church was at its zenith. We didn't dare to question anything. We were scared witless."

**Death and dying:** "What a shame; people are dying these days that never died before."

**Taxes:** "Taxes are OK for the rich. We should really have a special tax that just benefits the disabled and the homeless."

**The mai tai:** "The other day a woman came in, sat at the bar and asked me for a mai tai. 'Do you see any palm trees in here?' I asked her. She settled for a shot of bourbon straight up."

**Wine experts:** "I call them cork sniffers. A while back a guy came in and said he wanted something woody and grassy. I asked him if he wanted to start a fire or did he want a drink."

They're not making bartenders like Michael McCourt anymore. He's an original at Original Joe's.

Our columnist Ernest Beyl, a Michael McCourt acolyte, may be reached at [ernest@marinatimes.com](mailto:ernest@marinatimes.com)

## TABLEHOPPER

CONTINUED from page 15

sit and hang out (and order a drink!) or grab and go, but either way, the counter is open Monday-Friday noon-4 p.m. (The Friday lunch offer — free lunch if you order two drinks — still stands.)

And here's some spicy news: It looks like the **Lusty Lady** (1033 Kearny Street) will be getting a second life at the hands of Ken Friedman and April Bloomfield. The pair, who reopened **Tosca Cafe** in October, have taken over the space of the former worker-owned strip club, which sadly closed in September. Seth Boor, whose previous projects include **Sightglass**, **The Mill**, and **Southern Pacific Brewing Co.**, is the architect behind the remodel. They are hoping to maintain a lot of the spirit of the beloved **Lusty Lady**, including its seediness, with private booths available by reservation, and maybe even peep show windows that open onto a bartender. (I foresee lots of inappropriate cocktail shaking technique.) Ceri Smith and Randall Grahm will also be in charge of the wine list, and Isaac Shumway will helm the drink list. They're still working on a name, and hope to open in the second half of 2014 (first they need to get a lock on a full liquor license).



The pie case at Chile Pies and Ice Cream in NOPA

PHOTO: [HTTP://TEATIMEADVENTURES.BLOGSPOT.COM/](http://teatimeadventures.blogspot.com/)

### HAYES VALLEY

Corey Lee is targeting a spring opening of his modern (yet casual) bistro, **Monsieur Benjamin** (451 Gough Street). Chef Jason Berthold (RN74) will lead the kitchen — they both worked together at **The French Laundry** and **Per Se**. **Monsieur Benjamin** will offer something that we don't have a lot of in this town: traditional French bistro dishes with seasonal ingredients, and updated with some modern techniques. There will be late hours (yay), and Aidlin Darling Design is designing the 95-seat space, plus there will be 16 seats outside.

With the sad closure of **Moishe's Pippic** after 26 years, that prime real estate was not going to sit for long. Jocelyn Bulow (**Chez Maman**) and co-owner David Alexander are taking over the space, and are planning to open a second location of **Potrero Hill's Papito** this

spring, calling it **Papito West** (425A Hayes Street). While the **Potrero** location is casual, the **Hayes Valley** version will feature a raw bar (with oysters, ceviches, and plateaux de fruits de mer — look for a little jalapeño in the mignonette) and a menu that is more restaurant oriented than a taqueria. There will be 40 seats plus some outside seating and beer and wine. Bulow is hoping to open by March 15.

### NOPA

**Chile Pies and Ice Cream** (601 Baker Street, 415-614-9411) will be serving weekend brunch. From 11 a.m.-2 p.m., you can get some serious brunch goodies, like breakfast egg pies and biscuits and gravy.

*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.*

Voted Best Romantic Restaurant



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Please visit our website for the weekly menu.

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\*Some restrictions apply. Promotions are not valid on holidays.



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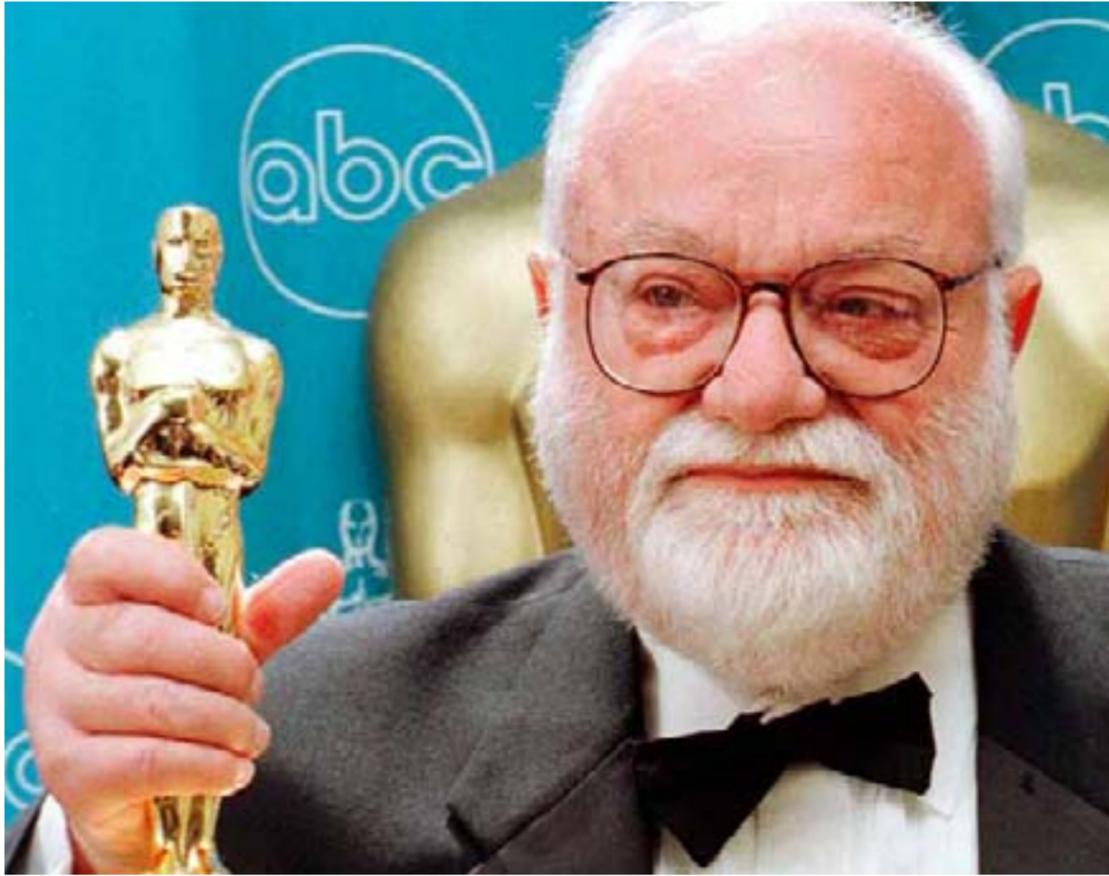
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2263 Union Street

AVEDA



Saul Zaentz with the Oscar he won for *The English Patient* in 1997

# Remembering Oscar-winning filmmaker Saul Zaentz

by Ernest Beyl

The bare bones outline for the life story of Saul Zaentz, who died in January at 92, could be a plot for one of the many movies he made during his lifetime. And therein lies a story waiting to be told.

A young man from a Russian-Polish-Jewish immigrant family in Passaic, N.J., with a passion for jazz, baseball, and movies, drops out of high school and supports himself by gambling. He joins the Army in 1942 to see the world. He sees it, and in four years attains the rank of sergeant major and gets his first view of the city by the Golden Gate. Still foot-loose when he is discharged in 1946, he goes to St. Louis, largely because he is a fierce Cardinals fan. There, between home games, he attends business college for a couple of years, then picks up and drives west — all the way to San Francisco.

An employment bureau sends him to a phonograph record-distributing company. He gets the job.

He does everything — fills orders, packs records, talks to disk jockeys. He learns the music business.

## SAUL'S FANTASY

Soon Zaentz meets jazz impresario Norman Granz who lures him back East. While working for Granz, he goes on the road managing concert tours with Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck, Gerry Mulligan, and Stan Getz. Zaentz returns to San Francisco in 1955 and joins Fantasy Records. By 1967, with the help of a few investors, he purchases the company.

What Zaentz purchases is a company with a diverse group of artists including Dave Brubeck, Vince Guaraldi and Cal Tjader, even X-rated comic Lenny Bruce. Plus a bunch of unknown “new thing” rock groups. One day, to hear what he has in the archives, Zaentz listens to a local rock group from El Cerrito called the Golliwogs, which has been playing in pass-the-hat joints. The sound — a kind of swamp rock — appeals to him. He calls the

Golliwogs into his office; one of them, John Fogerty, is a Fantasy warehouseman. Zaentz suggests that if the group changes its name, Fantasy will give it a recording contract. Fogerty and his bandmates change the name to Creedence Clearwater Revival.

## PAYDAY WITH RIP TORN

In 1968, Zaentz and Ralph J. Gleason, iconoclastic music and pop culture columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, get together and Gleason becomes a vice president for Fantasy. Soon, the two are dreaming and scheming. They decide to make a movie. Zaentz has always wanted to do that. He wants to make one from the Ken Kesey novel, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. But actor Kirk Douglas, who wants to play the part of the quirky Randle Patrick McMurphy, owns the rights. Negotiations slide and Zaentz moves on. He and Gleason are hell-bent to make a movie. They do. It is called *Payday*. The late San Francisco Bay Area novelist Don Carpenter

writes the screenplay, and actor Rip Torn plays the lead in this gritty, music biz drama of an amoral country-western singer.

Pauline Kael, film critic for *The New Yorker*, praises the movie. She writes in February 1973: “Financed by Fantasy Records and completed last year, it was brought in for fewer than seven hundred and eighty thousand dollars. Universal, Warner Brothers, Twentieth Century Fox, and Columbia all turned it down for distribution — though it is doubtful if they could bring in a film that looked this professional for three times that amount.”

Hmm, thinks first-time filmmaker Zaentz when he reads Kael's *New Yorker* review.

## CUCKOO'S NEST

One day in 1974, Zaentz gets a call from Michael Douglas, Kirk's son who later becomes a close friend. Michael Douglas has acquired the rights to *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* from his father, who apparently no longer wants to play McMurphy. “Still interested?” Douglas wants to know.

Absolutely! The next year, Zaentz's first major movie effort, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, directed by Czech émigré Milos Forman and starring Jack Nicholson as McMurphy, sweeps the top five Academy Awards including best picture.

## THE ENGLISH PATIENT, AMADEUS, AND MORE

In just more than 20 years and seven films later, Zaentz-produced motion pictures are awarded 22 Oscars — three for best picture. After *Cuckoo's Nest*, Zaentz makes *Three Warriors* in 1977 and *Lord of the Rings* in 1978. Then in 1984, in his second collaboration with Milos Forman comes *Amadeus* — eight Oscars, including best picture and best director. He follows this with *Mosquito Coast* from the Paul Theroux novel. It stars Harrison Ford. Next comes *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* in 1988 from the Milan Kundera novel. San Francisco's Philip Kaufman directs it. It is honored with three

Academy Awards nominations. In 1991, Zaentz brings out *Play in the Fields of the Lord*, a powerful drama about man and his primitive nature.

Then, Zaentz produces *The English Patient* in 1996 from a novel by Michael Ondaatje. It sweeps nine Academy Awards including best picture and best director with those honors going to Zaentz and

Anthony Minghella, son of an Italian immigrant to Britain. At the Academy Awards ceremony in Hollywood, Zaentz also receives the prestigious Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award “For a consistently High Quality of Motion Picture Production.” The *New York Times* wrote, “He invests in his own films, possibly a singular distinction, and helps bring them to life with a hands-on style. He is perhaps the last of the great independent producers.”

Zaentz's final film was *Goya's Ghost* in 2006, a Milos Forman collaboration starring Javier Bardem and Natalie Portman. Although it received some good reviews, it was not a successful venture.

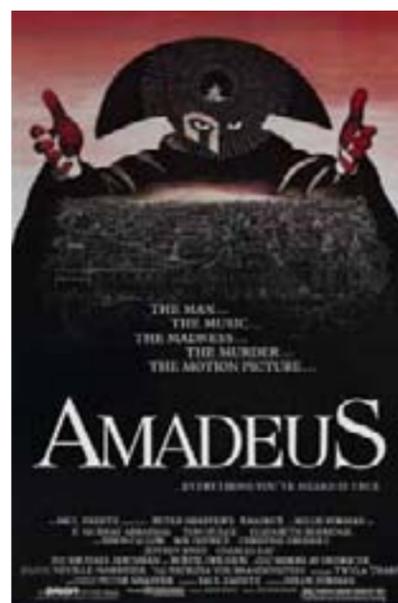
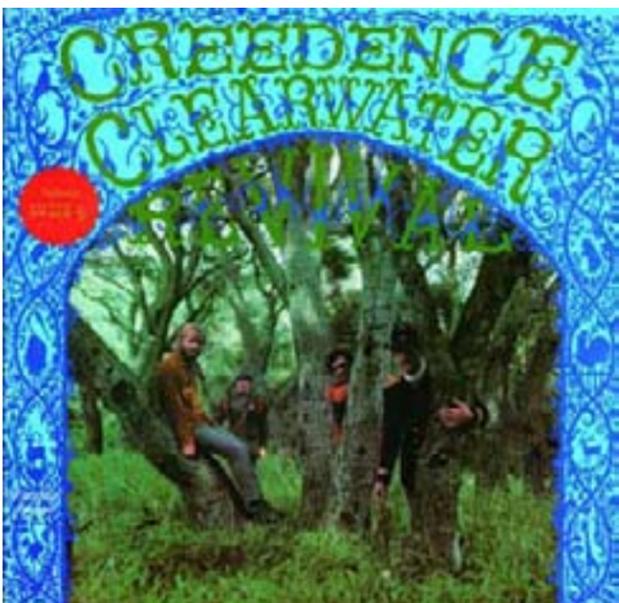
## TWENTY-TWO OSCARS

If you're keeping track, Zaentz films have garnered 22 Oscars. How does that measure up with other San Francisco movie heroes? Francis Ford Coppola has 14, including the Irving Thalberg Lifetime Achievement Award. George Lucas has one — the Thalberg Award. Who has the most Oscars for best picture? It's a tie between Sam Spiegel (*On the Waterfront*, *Bridge Over the River Kwai*, and *Lawrence of Arabia*) and Saul Zaentz (*One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Amadeus* and *The English Patient*).

Not bad for a kid from Passaic, New Jersey.

**Editor's note:** For a longer version of this column, including Ernest Beyl's interview with Saul Zaentz, visit [www.marinatimes.com](http://www.marinatimes.com)

Ernest Beyl had a friendship with Saul Zaentz that went back to the Fantasy Record days. E-mail: [ernest@marinatimes.com](mailto:ernest@marinatimes.com).



From Creedence Clearwater Revival to Oscar-winning films such as *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Amadeus* and *The English Patient*, Zaentz's influence can be seen across multiple art forms and decades

IMAGES: © FANTASY RECORDS; FANTASY FILMS / UNITED ARTISTS; THE SAUL ZAENTZ COMPANY; THE SAUL ZAENTZ COMPANY

# 'Tim's Vermeer'

by michael snyder

YOU COULD CALL INVENTOR and digital-tech engineer Tim Jenison obsessive. You could call him self-indulgent, too. But his fixation on the beautiful, hyper-realistic paintings of 17th-century Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer — and his almost preposterous quest to figure out the master's technique and attempt to personally paint an exact copy of a Vermeer — is at the heart of *Tim's Vermeer*. This unique and fascinating documentary is produced by famed magicians/debunkers Penn Jillette & Teller, narrated by Jillette and directed by Teller. It's also imbued with Penn & Teller's trademark skepticism, mordant wit, and willingness to delve behind the scenes of what appears magical or unfathomable but can, in fact, be explained in very real and understandable ways.

Vermeer's work had previously inspired speculation that he used a primitive type of mirror-projection system to achieve such glistening, quasi-photographic paintings as *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. His command of light,

his accurate-to-the-millimeter rendering of anatomical proportion, and his representation of the tiniest detail suggested something beyond sheer skill with a paintbrush and pallet. Still, the details (and possible mechanics) of his approach remained a mystery.

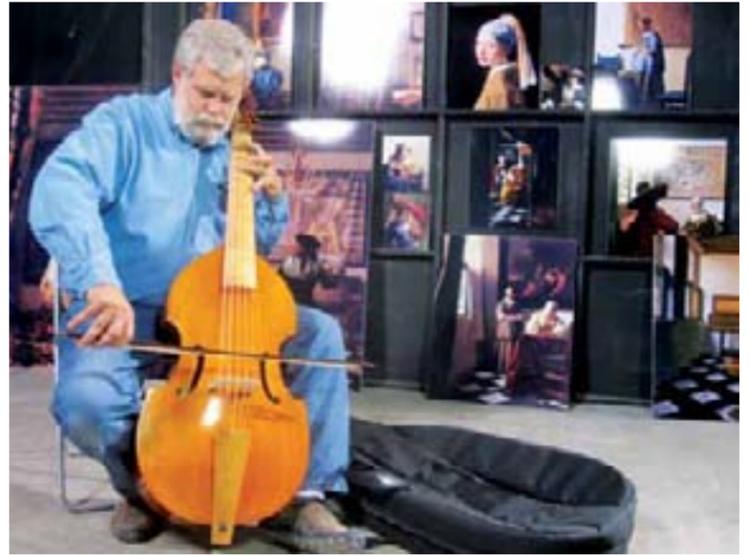
Based in Texas, Jenison appears to have earned a comfortable income from the well-regarded Video Toaster and TriCaster systems he developed for the NewTek company, and thus he had the capacity to pursue the years of research and painstaking craft that are at the heart of *Tim's*

with the intention of eyeballing a Vermeer owned by Queen Elizabeth. Jenison also compares notes with British architect Philip Steadman, whose book *Vermeer's Camera: Uncovering the Truth Behind the Masterpieces* postulates that the use of the antique, light-bending device known as a camera obscura was pivotal to Vermeer's expertise.

As Jenison tries to build a means to reproduce Vermeer's paintings (an apparatus that would have been possible to make in the 17th century), the film shifts its focus. Much of the final third

of *Tim's Vermeer* is dedicated to Jenison's rigorous attempt to perfectly duplicate Vermeer's 1662 painting, *The Music Lesson*. Jenison almost single-handedly constructs every physical

component depicted in the painting, fashioning something akin to a theatrical set. He gathers together models to sit in for the people in the original, and, using his own optical system and standard brushes and paint, meticulously goes about recreating the Vermeer. To see Jenison delicately and thoroughly render the minuscule designs on a vintage



Recreating a classic painting: *Tim's Vermeer* PHOTO: © SONY CLASSICS

keyboard is to see a man driven by what he perceives as a duty.

A viewer may possibly find *Tim's Vermeer* tedious in its deliberate pursuit of a truth — a palpable answer to a centuries-old question. The depiction of Jenison's dogged attempt to understand Vermeer's gift and to render what amounts to a perfect counterfeit version of a masterwork could strike the casual observer as the decadent ministrations of a well-to-do dilettante.

But for an art lover with a hunger to understand what was behind the greatness of a venerated artist, Jenison's diligence is admirable, and the laborious details of his quest are truly compelling. As an investigation into a nexus of art and science and as a search for answers to the conun-

drum posed by the uncommon beauty and precision of Vermeer's magnificent output, Teller's documentary is a treat and a hoot. Jenison's mission takes on a crazy glory. And rather than diminish Vermeer as a creative force, it adds another dimension to his genius.

*Tim's Vermeer*: opens Feb. 14 at the newly renovated Landmark Theaters Embarcadero Center Cinema, 1 Embarcadero Center, 415-352-0835, [www.landmarktheaters.com](http://www.landmarktheaters.com)

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 Digidive TV. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster

**For an art lover hungry to understand, Jenison's diligence is admirable.**

*Vermeer*. As Teller, Jillette, and the camera accompany him, Jenison travels to Europe to visit Vermeer's base of operations, Delft, Holland; he drops in on the Yorkshire, England, home of artist David Hockney, another Vermeer fan whose ideas of his own about the master's process have long been a matter of public record; and he swings by Buckingham Palace

## BOOK NOTES ∴ Book review

# Charles Plymell's early writings revisited in 'Benzedrine Highway'

by sharon anderson

"Plymell has as much to say about death as Hemingway did and a lot more to say about it in terms of the present generation stillborn into a world that can offer nothing."

— William S. Burroughs

I WAS BORN IN APRIL 1935, DURING THE blackest dust storm ever to hit Holcomb, Kansas." Charles Plymell's introduction in *Benzedrine Highway*, a newly released anthology from Kicks Books, traces the road back to where it began.

Over the last 50 years, Plymell has written many books, including the novel, *The Last of the Moccasins*, the story of Plymell's experiences in and around San Francisco in the 1960s, and his first volume of poetry, *Apocalypse Rose*. During his time, Plymell has pioneered new creative frontiers. He was a part of the 1950s and 1960s subculture in Kansas and California, developing what became a permanent affiliation with the Beat generation. As a publisher, he was a part of the underground comics movement printing the first editions of *Zap Comix* with R. Crumb and S. Clay Wilson in 1968. He founded Cherry Valley Editions with his wife, Pamela Beach Plymell, and together they printed books by writers such as William Burroughs and Herbert Huncke.

In the foreword to *Apocalypse Rose*, Allen Ginsberg described Plymell and friends inventing the Wichita Vortex, a confluence of creativity forged out of solitude, space and a death vibration, which "... had driven a host of prophetic youths out of heartland Kansas." The vortex vibration's epicenter can be found in this book. Its stories pos-

sess the fresh immediacy of a gas pedal pushed to the floor.

*The Last of the Moccasins* and *Apocalypse Rose* are included in this collection along with what Plymell calls "... a selection of prophetic random poetic outbursts." *Benzedrine Highway* is a trip down Route 66, with dreams, madness, poetry, and convertibles. It's a trip between San Francisco and the Wichita Vortex, and to uncharted regions of vibrant awareness.

### Petal From The Rose

Baby, break that mind trap in time stigma though your outline has gone beyond the changes of the mercury in your flaming youth!

Weary streets of waiting, walking, under the marquees of all night movies on the meat block where teen age hustlers cruise.

Market street and the moon is full. We see an old newsreel with the face of Dillinger. "He smiles on the right side of his face," You say, "Like Bogart."

Voices in the fog dispelled the blocks of waves bright lights hung on.

— Charles Plymell

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

## THE BEST OF BOOKS ∴ Flying off the shelves



compiled by sandy mullin

### BOOKS INC. HARDCOVER BEST-SELLER LIST

1. **City of Thieves: A Novel**, by David Benioff
2. **The Goldfinch**, by Donna Tartt
3. **Tender Bar: A Memoir**, by J. R. Moehringer
4. **Zagat 2014 San Francisco Bay Area Restaurants**
5. **Season of the Witch**, by David Talbot
6. **This I Where I Leave You: A Novel**, by Jonathan Tropper
7. **Where'd You Go, Bernadette?: A Novel**, by Maria Semple
8. **Book of Joe: A Novel**, by Jonathan Tropper
9. **Are You Smart Enough to Work at Google?: Trick Questions, Zen-like Riddles, Insanely Difficult Puzzles, and Other Devious Interviewing Techniques You Need to Know to Get a Job Anywhere in the New Economy**, by William Poundstone
10. **The Day the Crayons Quit**, by Drew Daywalt & Oliver Jeffers

### STAFF PICKS FOR ADULTS

**The Leonard Bernstein Letters**, edited by N. Simeone

The legacy of the multi-talented maestro lives on! The correspondence is significant, with a wealth of famous names that speak directly without any thought of publication or posterity. There are helpful footnotes and ample biographical sections. It's a look behind the scenes at a great talent.

— Bill Dito

**Bellman and Black**, by Diana Setterfield

A perfect, contemplative winter read! Setterfield chronicles the life of a William Bellman from boyhood to his final meeting with his mysterious business partner, Mr. Black. Setterfield's bleak style captures a poetry of oblivion, death, and the grim entertainment that colors the dance we call life.

— Marie Siegenthaler

### PICKS FOR KIDS

**Ages 12 & up: Unwind**, by Neal Shusterman

It is the future. Between your 13th and 18th birthday, your parents may choose to have you unwound, dismantled piece by piece. Connor, Risa, and Lev are on the run from those that would destroy them. A grim satire on abortion and delinquency masquerading as an exciting odyssey of adventure, intrigue, and survival. Brilliant!

— Marie Siegenthaler

**Ages 3 & up: Dream Animals**, by Emily Winfield Martin

What if you had your very own dream animal(s), one who led you to your dreams every night at bedtime? Would you choose a bear, a bunny, robins, or a red fox? Emily Martin's evocative paintings and cozy, almost whispered narration set the tone for furred, finned, or feathered sweet dreams.

— Sandy Mullin

Sandy Mullin is the manager at Books Inc.

# FEBRUARY EVENTS

## what not to miss this month

### MAJOR EVENTS

#### Chinese New Year Festival

Various days thru Feb. 16

Various S.F. venues

Gung Hay Fat Choy! Lunar New Year 4712, or 2014, is the Year of the Horse. Celebrate with three weeks of festivities including the Miss Chinatown Pageant, a street fair, flower fair, and the colorful Chinese New Year Parade (details below). 415-986-1370, [www.chineseparade.com](http://www.chineseparade.com)

#### S.F. Beer Week

Daily, Feb. 7-16

Various Bay Area venues

Experience over 90 events at over 150 venues of rare beer release parties, tap takeovers, food pairing, and dinners at some of the region's top restaurants, meet-the-brewer nights, educational events, and much more. [www.sfbeerweek.org](http://www.sfbeerweek.org)

#### S.F. Chronicle Wine

##### Competition Public Tasting

Saturday, Feb. 15, 1:30-5 p.m.

Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

As the largest competition of U.S. wines in the world, this public tasting offers a refreshing new way to learn and experience the joys of wine and delicious food. \$65-\$85, 650-548-6400, [www.winejudging.com](http://www.winejudging.com)



Chinese New Year Parade

Saturday, Feb. 15, 5:15-8 p.m.

Market & Second Sts. to Kearny & Jackson Sts.

Named one of the top 10 parades in the world, this is one of the few remaining night-illuminated parades in the country. Highlights include elaborate floats, lion dancers, folk dancers, costumed school groups, marching bands, stilt walkers, Chinese acrobats, and the 268-foot-long golden dragon, Gum Lung. 415-340-3055, [www.chineseparade.com](http://www.chineseparade.com)

#### Tulipmania Festival

Daily, Feb. 15-23, 10 a.m.

Pier 39

Come stroll down the pier and enjoy a spectacular and colorful display featuring thousands of tulips and seasonal garden favorites and take a guided tour starting at the entrance plaza with complimentary beverages. Free, 415-705-5500, [www.pier39.com](http://www.pier39.com)

### LAST CHANCE

#### 13th Annual Sketchfest

Various days thru Feb. 9

Various S.F. locations

This nationally recognized comedy festival mixes national headliners, local favorites and the best up-and-coming groups from throughout North America for sketch, improv, stand-up, and alternative comedy. \$10-\$30, [sfsketchfest.com](http://sfsketchfest.com)

#### The Art of Bulgaria: La Dolce Vita & Beyond

Tue-Sun thru Feb. 17

de Young Museum

This exhibition presents approximately 150 show-stopping pieces from 1950-1990, along with sketches and other materials from the Bulgari archives with a decade-by-decade look at Bulgari's innovations in jewelry design and includes several striking pieces from the Elizabeth Taylor collection. \$10-\$22, 415-750-3600, [www.famsf.org](http://www.famsf.org)

### AFFAIRS OF THE HEART

#### Lesbian/Gay Chorus: 11th Annual Love Bites

Sun-Mon, Feb. 9-10

Martuni's (4 Valencia St.)

This "Love Bites" performance is a hilarious anti-Valentine's Day cabaret about heartache, bitterness and revenge. 415-779-5428, [www.lgcsf.org](http://www.lgcsf.org)

#### City Opera: Pre-Valentine's Day Soiree

Wednesday, Feb. 12, 7pm

The Pour House (1327 Polk St.)

Perfect for an elegant, romantic and no-fuss Valentine's experience, enjoy opera, pop-opera and classic songs in a casual, intimate venue. Free, donations welcome, [www.cityoperasf.com](http://www.cityoperasf.com)

#### Valentine's Day Magnolia Cocktails & Magnolias by Moonlight

Friday, Feb. 14, 5-9 p.m.

S.F. Botanical Garden, Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park

Enjoy hors d'oeuvres and cocktails garnished with magnolia petals, then meander through the garden's moonlit paths of fragrant magnolias. Includes hot, fragrant tea and cookies. Registration required. \$50, 415-661-1316 ext. 400, [www.sfbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.sfbotanicalgarden.org)

#### 4th Annual Union Street Has a Crush on You Valentine Wine Walk

Thursday, Feb. 13, 4-8 p.m.

Union Street (Gough to Steiner Streets)

Fillmore Street (Union to Lombard)

This evening stroll features wine samples, finger foods and special treats offered by our local merchants, so don't forget to thank them with your support! \$20-\$25, <http://SRESProductions.com>, <http://unionstreetsf.com> 800-310-6563

#### Cutting Ball: Love Sucks Pity Party

Feb. 14, 7 p.m.

Exit on Taylor (277 Taylor St.)

Celebrate the dark side of love, complete with complimentary wine and candy; event admission included in the ticket price of the performance of *Ubu Roi*, a parody of *Macbeth*. \$15-\$30, 415-525-1205, [cuttingball.com](http://cuttingball.com)

#### BATS Improv: Romantic Farce

Friday, Feb. 14, 8 p.m.

Bayfront Theater, Fort Mason Center

Filled with big characters, mistaken identities, slamming doors, and lots of love, this full-length story is sure to be a hit with couples and singles alike. \$17, 415-474-6776, [www.improv.org](http://www.improv.org)



How We First Met

Friday, Feb. 14, 8 p.m.

Marines' Memorial Theatre (609 Sutter St.)

This hit comedy show shares real-life tales of romance brought to hilarious life on stage by a crack team of improv performers for an uplifting, spontaneous theatrical experience. \$40-\$55, 415-392-4400, [www.howwefirstmet.com](http://www.howwefirstmet.com)

### COMMUNITY CORNER

#### Black History Month Kickoff Celebration

Friday, Feb. 7, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Rotunda, City Hall

Hear keynote speaker, historian Dr. Chad Williams from Brandeis University on civil rights in America, this year's theme. Visit <http://sfpl.org/index.php?pg=1015767301> for a list of citywide events.



14th Annual CityBeat Breakfast

Tuesday, Feb. 18, 7-9:30 a.m.

S.F. Marriott Marquis (55 Fourth St.)

Join the Chamber of Commerce at its largest and highest-profile event of the year, featuring S.F. trailblazers who are setting the pace for business and government innovation. \$85-\$100, 415-392-4520, [www.sfchamber.com](http://www.sfchamber.com)

#### S.F.'s Watch Dogs — The Civil Grand Jury

Saturday, Feb. 22, 3-5 p.m.

Presidio Branch Library (3150 Sacramento St.)

Learn how the grand jury works, how issues are selected, how investigations are undertaken, and what happens with the jury's findings and recommendations in this community meeting that includes a brief presentation by former civil grand jurors and a Q. and A. 415-355-2880, [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org)

### GALAS & BENEFITS

#### National Pancake Day

Wednesday, Feb. 5, 7 a.m.-10 p.m.

IHOP (2299 Lombard St. & 200 Beach St.)

Enjoy a complimentary stack of pancakes and help IHOP support the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals and other local charities. Free (donation suggested), 415-924-4004, 415-837-0221, [www.ihoppancakeday.com](http://www.ihoppancakeday.com)

#### Monte Carlo Night

Saturday, Feb. 8, 6:30-10 p.m.

Museo Italo Americano

Bldg. C, Fort Mason Center

Enjoy an evening of gambling, food, fun, and prizes in support of the museum. \$100, 415-673-2200, <http://museoitaloamericano.org>

#### 34th Annual Academy of Friends' Gala: Return to the Emerald City

Sunday, March 2, 5-11:30 p.m.

Terra Gallery (511 Harrison St.)

Join the excitement of watching the Academy Awards and enjoy an evening of cocktails, tasty treats, entertainment, and more, all in support of community organizations that help those affected by HIV/AIDS. \$250-\$750, 415-995-9890, [www.academyoffriends.org](http://www.academyoffriends.org)

### ARTS & CULTURE

#### 28th Annual Tribal & Textile Arts Show

Thu-Sun, Feb. 6-9

Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

Nearly 100 international dealers and galleries gather to display and sell thousands of artifacts, sculptures, textiles, masks, beadwork, carvings, carpets, baskets, ceramics, jewelry, and clothing from the Americas, Africa, Oceania, the Himalayas, South East Asia, Philippines, Indonesia, and more. \$15-\$150, 310-455-2886, [www.caskeylees.com](http://www.caskeylees.com)

#### 22nd Annual Noise Pop Festival

Tue-Sun, Feb. 25-March 2

Various S.F. locations

S.F.'s favorite indie music, arts and film festival returns with a film series that explores the intersection of music and art; Pop-n-Shop, a local designer fair; Culture Club, an interactive workshop exploring DIY culture, art gallery shows, happy hours, and much more. [www.noisepop.com](http://www.noisepop.com)

### PERFORMANCES

#### ACT: Napoli!

Tue-Sun, Feb. 12-March 9

American Conservatory Theater (405 Geary St.)

This dark and robust comedy about a feisty, Neapolitan mother during World War II who sets up a lucrative black market business to get her family out from under the boots of fascism and poverty is a masterful blend of humor and pathos — and a miraculous tale about a wildly entertaining family that is determined to survive at any cost. \$25-\$125, 415-749-2228, [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org)

#### Paul Jacobs: Organ Recital

Sunday, Feb. 16, 3 p.m.

Davies Symphony Hall

Don't miss the returning organist's remarkable performance on the mighty Ruffatti organ featuring a program of Bach, Mozart, Guilman, and Reger. \$20-\$30, 415-864-4000, [www.sfsymphony.org](http://www.sfsymphony.org)

#### Celebrating Black History: Jazz & Poetry

Friday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.

The Beat Museum (540 Broadway St.)

Enjoy jazz poets Charles Curtis Blackwell, Gail Mitchell, Q.R. Hand & Friends with jazz accompaniment. Free, 415-399-9626, [www.kerouac.com](http://www.kerouac.com)

#### Lamplighters Music Theatre:

##### Die Fledermaus

Fri-Sun, Feb. 21-23

Lam Research Theater, YBCA (700 Howard St.)

Celebrate the group's 61st season with Johann Strauss's bubbly tale of temptation, revenge and mistaken identity in a night of love, laughter and levity where Champagne is king. \$15-\$59, 415-978-2787, <http://lamplighters.org>

#### Bobby Hutcherson, David Sanborn, Joey DeFrancesco, & Billy Hart

Thu-Sun, Feb. 20-23

SF Jazz Center (201 Franklin St.)

Four jazz giants come together in this history-making collaboration that springs from their brand-new *Blue Note* album. \$25-\$75, 866-9205299, [www.sjfazz.org](http://www.sjfazz.org)

### NIGHTLIFE



After Dark: Sexplorations

Thursday, Feb. 6, 6-10 p.m.

Exploratorium (Pier 15)

Oh, settle down — it's not that kind of a program. Spend an evening peeking into the surprising hows and whys of sexual reproduction across many varied life forms. Ages 18+, Free-\$15, 415-548-444, [www.exploratorium.edu](http://www.exploratorium.edu)

#### LoCura Album Release Party

Saturday, Feb. 8, 9 p.m.

The Independent (628 Divisadero St.)

LoCura's music is steeped in the sounds and history of the Bay Area; also present will be Ziek McCarter and a "special brass band surprise." \$14-\$16, 415-771-1421, [www.theindependentsf.com](http://www.theindependentsf.com)

#### Ana Popovic

Sunday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.

Yoshi's (1330 Fillmore St.)

The Serbian blues guitarist blends electric funk slide guitar, jazzy instrumentals, and a tight blues groove with her soulful vocals. \$24-\$28, 415-655-5600, [www.yoshis.com](http://www.yoshis.com)

#### We Were Promised Jetpacks

Saturday, Feb. 22, 9 p.m.

Bimbo's 365 Club (1025 Columbus Ave.)

Fresh off their sophomore album, Jetpacks is a young group that has been raising eyebrows with its talent and sound. \$19.99, [www.bimbos365club.com](http://www.bimbos365club.com)

#### Throwing Muses

Friday, Feb. 28, 8 p.m.

JCCSF (3200 California St.)

The seminal indie rock band is back with its first release in over a decade, *Purgatory Paradise*, a whopping 32-track album. Don't miss one of the most important bands of the post-punk era in concert. \$25, 415-292-1200, [www.jccsf.org](http://www.jccsf.org)

## FILMS & LECTURES

### Changing the Way We Die

Wednesday, Feb. 5, 6–8 p.m.

Latino-Hispanic Mtg. Rm., S.F. Main Library

More than 1.5 million Americans a year die in hospice care and a vast industry has sprung up to meet the growing demand. Join us when authors Fran Smith and Sheila Himmel discuss their new book *Changing the Way We Die*. A book sale follows the event. Free, 415-557-4300, www.sfpl.org



### 16th Annual S.F. Independent Film Festival

Feb. 6–20

Various S.F. locations

This festival brings little-known films together with past favorites, such as *Big Lebowski*. \$12 single film (multi-film packages available), 415-820-3907, http://sfindie.com/festivals/sf-indiefest

### The Inside Story of Fox News

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 7 p.m.

JCCSF (3200 California St.)

Gabriel Sherman, author of *The Loudest Voice in the Room: The Inside Story of How Roger Ailes and Fox News Remade American Politics*, will discuss his inside-Fox story with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Lowell Bergman. \$25–\$35, 415-292-1233, www.jccsf.org

### P.J. O'Rourke

Wednesday, Feb. 12, 6 p.m.

The Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)

His title is the "H.L. Mencken Research Fellow" at the libertarian Cato Institute, but you don't care; he's better known as the sharp-tongued political humorist from *Wait Wait Don't Tell Me*, *Holidays in Hell*, and more. \$7–\$20, 415-597-6705, www.commonwealthclub.org

## SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

### TV Hackfest San Francisco 2014

Wednesday, Feb. 5, 9 a.m.

Moscone Center West

This event brings together designers, developers, product managers, producers and the next generation of talent to get creative and build future TV app concepts. Free, +44 (0) 117-973-2353, www.sixdegs.com

### The Neurobiology of Mind & Behavior

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m.

Nourse Theater (201–299 Hayes St.)

USC neuroscience professor Antonio Damasio talks with KQED's Amy Standen about the latest understanding of how our brains work. \$25–\$27, 415-379-6000, www.calacademy.org



### Pacific Orchid Exhibition: Orchids & All That Jazz

Thu–Sun, Feb. 20–23

Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

The largest orchid show in the U.S. features more than 150,000 blooms and combines the symphony of orchids with jazz music. Events include wine-tasting gala preview, educational tours, and horticultural demonstrations. Partial proceeds benefit the S.F. Conservatory of Flowers and UC Berkeley Botanical Garden. \$10–\$55, www.orchidsanfrancisco.org

### Condoms and Climate

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6 p.m.

The Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)

Alan Weisman, author of *Countdown: Our Last, Best Hope for a Future on Earth?* and Malcolm Potts, a population and family planning expert at Berkeley, discuss climate change and global population. \$7–\$20, 415-597-6705, www.commonwealthclub.org

## POTABLES & EDIBLES

### Food from the Heart 2014

Friday Feb. 7, 5:30–8 p.m.

Ferry Building Marketplace

Stroll down the candlelit nave and sample seasonal hors d'oeuvres and local wines, all to the sounds of music and tango dancing. Proceeds benefit Slow Food San Francisco. \$2–\$8, 415-693-0996, www.ferrybuildingmarketplace.com

### Inside the California Food Revolution with Joyce Goldstein

Saturday, Feb. 15, 3–4 p.m.

Presidio Branch Library (3150 Sacramento St.)

Join the author as she talks about her new book, a very detailed study of the changes that took place in California in food, food production, artisans, chefs, restaurants, restaurant design, menus, service, and wine and how they ultimately influenced the rest of the country. Free, 415-355-2880, www.sfpl.org



### Michael Mina & Michael Chiarello: Giants of California Cuisine

Monday, Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m.

Grand Ballroom, Fairmont Hotel

Hear rising star Evan Rich get these two mega chefs to open up about their passions, the process, the American dining landscape, and their experiences shaping California food. \$25–\$35, 415-597-6705, www.commonwealthclub.org

### Cowgirl Creamery: A Conversation & Cheese Tasting

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m.

JCCSF (3200 California St.)

Join founders Sue Conley and Peggy Smith and hear about their successful cheese-making business in Pt. Reyes Station as they discuss their new book, *Cowgirl Creamery Cooks*. \$40, 415-292-1200, www.jccsf.org

### Napa vs. Sonoma Wine Showdown

Thursday, Feb. 27, 6:30–9 p.m.

General's Residence, Fort Mason

Offering more than 150 wines, 30 of the best wineries in the state are pitted against each other with you as the final judge. www.uncorkedevents.com

## SPORTS & HEALTH

### Brain Fitness

Tuesday, Feb. 4, 11 & 25, 2–4 p.m.

Latino-Hispanic Mtg. Rm., S.F. Main Library

In this incredibly social class, you will exercise your brain in fun, challenging and creative ways to maintain and improve your cognitive vitality and memory. Free, 415-931-8679, www.sfpl.org

### Supporting Aging Parents

Thursday, Feb. 6, 4:30–6 p.m.

Enright Room, CPMC (2333 Buchanan St.)

Setting boundaries and role reversal with an aging parent can be challenging. Join this lecture about managing the shift in family dynamics, assertiveness, burnout, maintaining balance, and using a team approach to care giving. Free (\$10 donation suggested), register at 415-923-3155 or cpmcchrc@sutterhealth.org

### 36th Annual Chinatown YMCA Chinese New Year Run

Sunday, Feb. 9, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Grant & California Sts. to Kearny & Sacramento Sts.

Benefiting the Chinatown YMCA Physical Education Program, this scenic race winds its way through the city. Costumes reflecting the Year of the Horse encouraged! \$35–\$40, 415-576-9622, www.ymcasf.org/chinatown

### 3rd Annual Childhood Obesity Bay Area Conference

Saturday, Feb. 22, 10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Conference Hall, UCSF Medical Center (500 Parnassus Ave.)

This conference brings together local stakeholders in childhood obesity prevention to promote innovation and provide insight into work being done on this critical issue. Proceeds benefit Slow Food S.F.'s School Garden program. \$60–\$80, 415-846-6396, www.slowfoodsancisco.com

## CHILD'S PLAY

### Sanjay and Craig Live

Saturday, Feb. 8, 11 a.m.

JCCSF (3200 California St.)

The Nickelodeon animated series comes home to the city where it was created. See the rad-awesome stars perform a live episode accompanied by clips from the series. Followed by a Q & A and the world premiere of a brand-new episode. \$20, 415-292-1200, www.jccsf.org

### Freedom Bell Craft

Saturday, Feb. 8, 11:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Presidio Branch Library (3150 Sacramento St.)

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wanted freedom to ring throughout America. Learn more about Dr. King's legacy and enjoy making the Freedom Bell craft. Ages 5 & up. Free, 415-355-2880, www.sfpl.org

### Chinese New Year Family Concert

Saturday, Feb. 8, 4 p.m.

Davies Symphony Hall

Welcome the Lunar New Year and the Year of the Horse with this family event featuring music and instruments in a fusion of East and West. Includes a festive reception (3 p.m.) with Asian instruments, dancers, Chinese calligraphers, and more. Proceeds support the symphony's community and education programs. \$46–\$74, 415-864-6000, www.sfsymphony.org

### Year of the Horse Celebration

Sunday, Feb. 9, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

Asian Art Museum

See students from the Chinese American International School present classical music and dance from China. The program ends, as tradition states, with a playful student-arranged version of the lion dance, which is believed to scare away evil spirits and ensure a bright beginning to the year. Afterward, enjoy Amy Ma's story about Chinese zodiac animals and their characteristics. Free with museum admission (free–\$12), 415-581-3100, www.asianart.org



### Valentine's Party

Thursday, Feb. 13, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Jamaroo Kids Studio (2001 Pine St.)

Take kids to make Valentines and enjoy special treats while they explore a terrific play space. Valentine's Storytime is 10:30–11 a.m. Activities geared for ages 1–7. \$5–\$10, www.jamarookids.com, 415-614-2001

### Family Jazz Night with Six Roses

Thursday, Feb. 13, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Golden Gate Valley Branch Library (1801 Green St.)

Take a musical journey with a solid performance of renditions representative of Black-American music. Free, 415-355-5666, www.sfpl.org

## CREATURE FEATURES

### Coats for Cubs

Daily thru April 22, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

Buffalo Exchange (1555 Haight St. & 1210 Valencia St.)

Give your furs back to the animals! Your used furs will be donated to rehabilitation organizations across the country to use for bedding and comfort to orphaned and injured wildlife. 415-431-7733, 415-647-8332, coatsforcubs.com, buffaloexchange.com

## JUST FOR FUN



### Neal Cassady Birthday Bash

Tuesday, Feb. 4, 7 p.m.

The Beat Museum (540 Broadway St.)

This annual tribute to the "secret hero" of Howl by Allen Ginsberg and the inspiration for Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* will feature Cassady's son, John Allen Cassady with reflections and reminiscences. Free, 415-399-9626, www.kerouac.com

### KPFA Grateful Dead Marathon

Sat–Sun, Feb. 8–9, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

KPFA-FM (94.1 & 89.3)

Host David Gans promises a bounty of unreleased and previously unheard music by the Grateful Dead, Jerry Garcia, and related artists, plus a live performance from the KPFA studio in this annual fundraiser for the station. http://cloudsurfing.gdhour.com

### Stitchers Stash Sale

Monday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m.

United Church of Christ (501 Laguna Honda Blvd.)

If you're into embroidery, don't miss this event where you'll find linens, needlework charts and books, stretcher bars and hoops, and more. Proceeds benefit Embroiderer's Guild of America, a nonprofit dedicated to the study and preservation of embroidery. Free, 415-931-9018, sf.ega13@gmail.com

### Chinese New Year Treasure Hunt

Saturday, Feb. 15, 4–9 p.m.

Justin Herman Plaza

In this largest and most popular treasure hunt of its kind in the U.S., teams have four hours to solve inventive clues and find unique, little-known treasure spots. \$12–\$50, 925-855-1986, www.sftreasurehunt.com

### The Whole Bead Show

Fri–Sun, Feb. 21–23

Fleet Room, Bldg. D, Fort Mason Center

Discover vintage through contemporary pieces made from glass, stone, metal, pearl, amber, and porcelain, antique and handmade beads, findings, buttons, charms, and beaded jewelry. Access merchants, bead makers, and importers worldwide who are direct suppliers of many professional and novice jewelry makers. Free, 800-292-2277, www.wholebeadshow.com

### 26th Annual Russian Festival of S.F.

Fri–Sun, Feb. 21–23

Russian Center of S.F. (2460 Sutter St.)

Come experience live performances by Russian dancers, vocalists, and musicians; sample Russian cuisine, tea and a variety of flavored vodkas; and explore the Museum of Russian Culture, Art Gallery, and Bazaar of Russian gifts and crafts. 415-921-7631, www.russiancentersf.com

### The Great S.F. Crystal Fair

Sat–Sun, Feb. 22–23, 10 a.m.

Conference Center, Bldg. A, Fort Mason Center

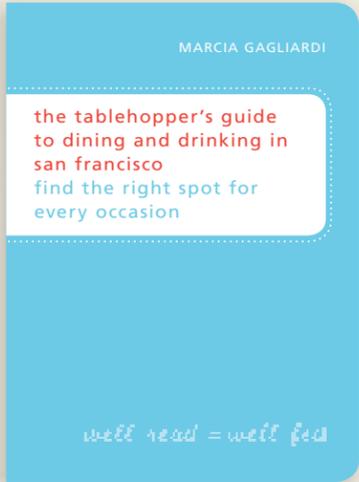
A magical mix of crystals, minerals, beads, jewelry, and the healing arts returns with over 40 vendors, while psychics bring their cards, aura cameras and magic for your entertainment. 415-383-7837, Free–\$8, www.crystalfair.com

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FITNESS FIRST :: Into the water



Rossi Swimming Pool in the Richmond District

# Swim your way to fitness this winter

by julie mitchell

**A**LTHOUGH THIS WINTER SO FAR HAS been warmer than many of our San Francisco Julys, it's still too chilly for most of us to want to take a plunge in the bay. Heated outdoor pools are limited, but there are many options for heated indoor pools at athletic clubs as well as several public locations to keep you in swimming shape year around.

One thing that makes swimming — along with other water workouts like water aerobics — such a great workout for almost everyone is that it provides whole-body exercise with no impact. The water cushions the joints and provides buoyancy to the body. Those nursing injuries or suffering from arthritis, stiff joints, or fragile bones can easily take to the pool to burn calories and build cardio fitness.

Swimming can also help improve both mental and physical health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), swimming is a great way to get regular aerobic exercise, build muscle mass, help with chronic diseases such as fibromyalgia, improve mood, and decrease anxiety. Water-based exercise can even improve the health of pregnant women and their unborn children.

Swimming is excellent exercise for those of all ages, especially older adults. According to [www.medicinenet.com](http://www.medicinenet.com), one study of men who completed an eight-week swimming program showed a 23.8 percent increase in the triceps (back of the arm) muscle. While you won't build big muscles by swimming, it is an excellent way to keep muscles toned. And swimming hard, with smooth, even strokes without taking breaks, can burn upward of 500 calories an hour, just a little fewer than cycling.

So how do you integrate a water workout into your exercise program?

Most San Francisco public pools have masters swim programs. Despite what it sounds like, the term “masters” was first used with adults who participated in track and field events and was later adopted by organized swimming for adults 18 to 55. During a masters swim practice, coaches can help you learn the basics of different strokes along

## During a masters swim practice, you can learn the basics of strokes along with breathing techniques.

with breathing techniques. Or, if you are still working on a new stroke, using a kickboard to make your way up and down the length of

the pool will provide you with a solid workout. All of the city's public pools have daily lap-swim times, and their schedules are available online. If you belong to a gym with a pool, sign up for a private lesson with a trainer or coach to get started. Water workout classes that involve jogging or using water weights in the pool are another way to build strength without putting any strain on joints. And even if you don't want to swim laps, remember that most children love playing in the pool, and spending time in the water as a family offers both exercise and fun to all.

All you need to start swimming is a durable swimsuit and a pair of goggles; a swim cap is good for those who want to keep chlorine and other chemicals out of their hair. Of course, if you don't mind the cold temperature or the waves, there are many outdoor swim programs available in the Bay Area, including the famous Dolphin Club, whose members swim year-round in the waters off Aquatic Park.

**San Francisco Aquatics and Pools Program:** <http://sfrecpark.org/recreation-community-services/aquatics-pools/>

**Dolphin Club of San Francisco:** [www.dolphinclub.org/swimming.html](http://www.dolphinclub.org/swimming.html)

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# Do-it-yourself Valentines

## From holiday to family project

by liz farrell

**I**T SEEMS LIKE JUST when we have put away all the holiday decorations, it's already time to start thinking about Valentine's Day. Whether your children are in school and distrib-

that are a step above the supermarket or drug-store choices. Most come prepackaged in kits that range from \$15-\$20 that are sure to rival Hallmark. Or you may want to consider attending a workshop. The Children's Art Center located in Fort

easy project for preschool children might involve stickers or rubber stamps. Grade-school children will be able to handle more complex projects involving cutting, gluing and assembling. For them, you might try incorporating some basic math skills — cutting out supplies, adding up how many they have done, and subtracting how many they have left.

### START EARLY

Decide on your project, gather the supplies, and then experiment yourself to make sure it is going to work. Don't wait until the night or day before to start on the Valentines. Allow several days or maybe even a week to complete them. Remember, children have a short attention span and will not be able to sit down and complete the project all in one sitting. Making a few each night will minimize

## Whether your children are in school and distributing Valentines or you send them to family and friends, it's a great time to get a little creative.

ute Valentines there or you send them to family and friends, it's a great time to get a *little* creative. Now, don't get scared, I just said a little creative. If you are like me, the thought of anything crafty or that requires messy supplies like glitter or glue has me running the other direction. However, my wonderful and dear friend Gina Eggert has showed me over the years that with just a little effort, help from the Internet, and some patience, this can be a great activity for the whole family. With a few simple steps, you can find a DIY project that will have everyone in your household looking forward to candy hearts and kisses.

Mason is offering a family Valentine's workshop on Feb. 8 from 10 a.m.-noon for \$30 per parent/child pair.

### KEEP IT SIMPLE

The best way to keep it simple is to find something that is age appropriate for your child. It is also important when choosing a project to keep in mind how many Valentines you will be making. Making



Make Valentine's Day even more meaningful  
PHOTO: ANDREW MALONE / FLICKR

### GET IDEAS

With websites like Etsy, Pinterest, and Spoonful, there is no lack of places to look for great inspiration. With a simple search, you will find thousands of ideas and something for everyone. My son loves to make paper airplanes, so this year we are going to try making paper airplanes and writing cute sayings on them like, "You're just plane cool." This definitely wouldn't "fly" with my daughter, so she is going to attach a flag onto a pencil that says, "You're all write." These are simple ideas that fit my energy level and their attention span and interests.

If you are looking for something ready-made, try Paper Source on Chestnut Street. They have great, simple options

## You can also make it a fun learning project without your children even knowing.

Valentines for 12 students versus 35 might drastically change the entire project. The last thing you want is that you stay up until the wee hours of the morning finishing the project for 35 classmates because it was more than your little one could handle.

You can also make it a fun learning project without your children even knowing. When my son was in preschool, I had him write his name (good practice) on all 30 Valentines, and those letters were looking pretty good by the end. Another

the stress and frustration for everyone.

If you are all about fast and easy, then Walgreens may be your best option, but don't be afraid to get creative and have a little fun. The time spent working on the Valentines with your children may be frustrating at times, but also may become one of their treasured childhood memories. I am convinced that the most-remembered Valentines are those with candy (for obvious reasons) and those homemade.

E-mail: liz@marinatimes.com

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THE URBAN HOME & GARDEN

# Water conservation

## Coping with seasonal drought

by julia strzesieski

**D**UE TO OUR DRY WEATHER AND below average rainfall over the last few months, the governor recently declared the dreaded “D” word: Drought. Unfortunately, because clean water is part of our everyday living, it is also easy to take for granted — we just turn the spigot and there it is. Though water conservation is always smart and saves us money, rationing is a whole other ballgame.

**WATER-SAVING TIPS**

Make sure to keep these water-saving tips in mind around the house and office to help preserve one of our most precious resources:

**KITCHEN**

**Faucet:** Install an aerator, a simple, inexpensive device, which adds air into the water flow.

**Cold drinking water:** Keep a water pitcher in the refrigerator for cold water instead of running the tap until the water is cold.

**Pot size:** Select the proper size pot when boiling water for pasta or other food — don't boil unnecessary water. Save leftover boiled water for soup stock or to water plants. Steam vegetables when possible — you'll also retain more nutrients.

**Washing fruits and vegetables:** Wash these foods in a bowl of water instead of running water for each fruit or vegetable.

**Garbage disposal:** Use the garbage disposal sparingly. Composting food waste saves gallons of water.

**LAUNDRY ROOM**

**Laundry level:** Use the proper water level for each load (if that is an option), and wash fewer large loads instead of more frequent small loads.

**Water temperature:** Wash clothes, especially darks colors, in cold water. It saves energy and helps clothes retain their color.

**BATHROOM**

**Faucet:** Install an aerator on your faucet.  
**Showerheads:** Install an energy-efficient, low-flow showerhead.

**Toilet:** Check for leaks by adding food coloring to your toilet tank. If it seeps into the bowl without flushing, chances are you have a leak.

**GARDEN**

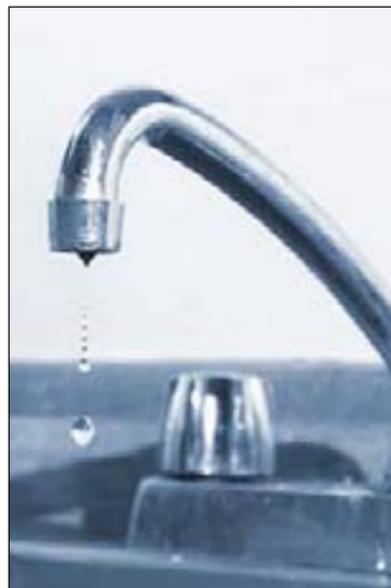
**Watering:** Make maximum use of water by watering early in the morning.

**Weeding:** Keep weeds under control; they steal valuable water.

**Mulch:** Spread a layer of mulch around plants to retain moisture.

Finally, be sure to check the storm drains on the streets around your home. With no rainfall over the past few months, leaves and debris are likely piling up. If we are fortunate enough to get some good spring rain, the debris will be washed down to the nearest gutter, which may clog and cause flash flooding for the homes in their vicinity.

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



**WATER-USAGE TIPS**

Look around the house to see what you can do to cut back on your water usage. Two of the highest indoor water guzzlers are toilets and clothes washers. Toilets account for one-third of all indoor water usage, and a leaking toilet (see below for how to detect leaks) can cost thousands of dollars in yearly water and sewer charges. Clothes washers account for nearly one-quarter of indoor water usage, with a conventional washing machine using more than 50 gallons per cycle, adding up to a stunning 16,000 gallons of water per year on laundry alone.

### SFPUC offers rebates for replacing old toilets with high-efficiency ones.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) is a great resource for helping to conserve water. It offers cash rebates for replacing old, inefficient toilets with High Efficiency Toilets (flush volume of 1.28 gallons per flush or less), and for water-efficient clothes washers.

In addition, the SFPUC can help you find ways to detect leaks and reduce your water use and offers free Water Wise Evaluations. Trained specialists will visit your home and garden or business and provide you with an assessment tailored to meet your specific needs, including how to read your water meter as a tool for detecting silent leaks and assessing your water usage. Visit [www.sfwater.org](http://www.sfwater.org) for more information on rebates or to schedule a Water Wise Evaluation.

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For any remodeling or square footage additions to your home, a new California law requires your contractor to install brand-new water conserving plumbing fixtures throughout your entire home. For example, if you are remodeling or making any permanent improvements to your home, your contractor must also install high-efficiency toilets and water-efficient showerheads and faucets, regardless of where the remodeling occurs. If you are planning a remodel, make sure you discuss this with your general contractor to avoid a surprise at the end of the job.

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REAL ESTATE TODAY :: Put it on the digital dotted line

# Time is of the essence meets real estate today

by carole isaacs

**A**ROUND THE THANKS-giving holiday I was extremely fortunate to have three buyers have their offers accepted. Wow! The task of completing inspections and signing off on contingencies took the forefront once the initial excitement wore off.

Until recently, when I told clients about digital signatures and DocuSign, I was met with either a blank stare or a look of concern. Questions like: "Are you sure this is safe or even legal?" were common. Fast forward to real estate today and the digital age. It is the rare buyer or seller who even blinks when I tell them about signing documents online. Most people do some form of banking or bill pay online, and the next step to signing contract documents online is easy.

While writing offers, there were conversations with all of the parties of my November transactions

about signing documents. As I wrote in December: "San Francisco is different." Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, all of my buyers were traveling, and not just to Tahoe. During this period, there were trips to Canada, Asia, Southern California, Chicago, and Hawaii. There were also sellers' travel plans and their agents' travel plans to consider.

Travel plans are frequently a consideration today, so buyers and sellers must clearly understand that *time is of the essence* in real estate. Digital signatures and the ease of signing online is great, but buyers and sellers still need to carve out the time in their busy schedules to read documents, ask questions, and understand what they are signing.

When deadlines are not met, there is the risk of falling out of contract. This may cause the buyer to lose the home, or the seller to lose a good buyer. This is especially critical today for

buyers, when many homes have back-up offers and sellers do not have as much incentive to be accommodating to buyers' travel plans, or other reasons that may delay close of escrow. Normally the seller's goal is to close escrow in the shortest time possible.

Contingency deadlines detailed in the contract need to be met. Remember: *Time is of the essence*. This does not mean the ratified contract is cast in stone. Along the road to closing escrow, it may be possible to add an addendum to a contract to change deadlines. This requires agreement between buyer and seller.

Digital signatures are great for contract documents, but when it comes to escrow and loan documents wet signatures are necessary unless the purchase is cash. Oh, the groans when people hear this. San Franciscans are used to life online and the ease of being anywhere in the world, at home, or in their office to do busi-

ness. Wet signatures while traveling will require making plans in advance. This will mean going to the title company's office in another city, having a notary public meet you at a place of your choosing, or in a foreign country you will need to make an appointment at the American Embassy to sign escrow and loan documents. Mailing the escrow package back to the title company takes extra transit time, but all of this can be managed by planning in advance. Another possibility is giving someone a power of attorney to sign escrow and loan documents and have someone else do the signing. When there are two buyers buying a property and one is not available to sign, this is an easy way to complete the signing and avoids additional document transit time.

The documents in a real estate transaction sometimes can feel like a moving target, because the rules keep chang-



Digital signing is now widely accepted in the real estate world PHOTO: GIDEONC / FLICKR

ing. The National Notary Association in conjunction with some states is, and has been for some time, working on establishing an acceptable digital notary process. Also, there are some banks that will allow digital signatures during the processing stage if they receive a specific, mostly proprietary, certification from the real estate agent. You can compare this with banks' eventual acceptance of faxed signatures. It is best to ask your lender if they accept digital signatures at the time you apply for a loan.

Most home buyers and sellers are involved in only a few real estate transactions in their lifetimes, and it is quite normal to feel anxious about how, when, and what

you will be signing at escrow closing. Real estate today is an international business, and escrow officers and lenders are well equipped to deal with the nuances of your travel plans and get the job done to close escrow on time.

Combining both digital and wet signatures is accomplished every day. The key is planning in advance. Be sure to tell your real estate agent, lender, and title company about your travel plans immediately when you first make an offer, and you can expect a smooth escrow closing with no last-minute surprises.

*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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# The Marina Times Real Estate Market Report: December 2013

By Hill & Co.

## SINGLE FAMILY HOME SALES

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/ BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow	253 Pixley Street	2BD/1BA	\$1,300,000	Above	33
	245 Pixley Street	2BD/1BA	\$1,300,000	Above	18
	2537 Greenwich Street	4BD/4BA	\$3,600,000	Above	27
	2760 Lyon Street	3BD/3BA	\$3,825,000	Below	17
	2601 Union Street	5BD/5BA	\$4,615,000	Below	0
Lake	156 27th Avenue	2BD/1.5BA	\$1,525,000	Above	0
	436 Lake Street	4BD/2.5BA	\$2,810,000	Above	26
Laurel Heights	68 Blake Street	3BD/1BA	\$1,050,000	Above	56
Lone Mountain	2486 Fulton Street	4BD/1.25BA	\$900,000	Below	31
	473 Parker Avenue	6BD/4.5BA	\$3,500,000	Above	1
Marina	1657 Beach Street	4BD/5BA	\$3,900,000	Below	49
Nob Hill	1335 Jackson Street	4BD/3.5BA	\$2,500,000	Above	83
	1350 Jones Street	4BD/3BA	\$2,900,000	Below	234
North Beach (no sales)					
Pacific Heights	2039 Broderick Street	4BD/3.5BA	\$3,150,000	At	139
	2315 Webster Street	3BD/2.5BA	\$3,200,000	Above	19
	2635 Broadway	3BD/3.5BA	\$5,400,000	Below	45
	2666 Broadway	4BD/4.5BA	\$8,650,000	Below	267
	25 Normandie Terrace	3BD/3.5BA	\$5,510,000	Below	58
Presidio Heights	3965 Sacramento Street	6BD/3.5BA	\$3,225,000	Below	66
	15 Arguello Boulevard	9BD/7.5BA	\$9,750,000	Below	120
Russian Hill	1245 Lombard Street	4BD/2.5BD	\$2,400,000	Below	62
Sea Cliff	2993 Lake Street	5BD/5.5BA	\$3,250,000	Below	60
Telegraph Hill (no sales)					

## CONDOS

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/ BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow (no sales)					
Lake	195 20th Avenue #4	1BD/1BA	\$615,000	Above	14
	643 Lake Street	3BD/2BA	\$1,575,000	Below	21
Laurel Heights	155 Parker Avenue	3BD/1BA	\$888,000	Below	71
Lone Mountain (no sales)					
Marina	1500 Francisco Street #5	1BD/1BA	\$795,000	At	33
	3653 Buchanan Street #2	3BD/2BA	\$1,700,000	Above	14
Nob Hill	1177 California Street #506	0BD/1BA	\$425,000	Below	81
	42 Salmon Street	1BD/1BA	\$535,000	Above	53
	10 Miller Place	2BD/2BA	\$1,150,000	Below	105
	1100 Sacramento Street #708	3BD/3BA	\$3,800,000	Below	33
	1100 Sacramento Street #902	3BD/3.5BA	\$4,200,000	Below	47
North Beach	1100 Sacramento Street #PH	4BD/5BA	\$7,000,000	At	19
	591 Francisco Street	3BD/1BA	\$710,000	Above	21
Pacific Heights	460 Francisco Street #204	2BD/1BA	\$716,625	Above	40
	747 Filbert Street #A&B	3BD/2BA	\$1,249,000	At	89
Pacific Heights	2999 California Street #66	0BD/1BA	\$500,000	Above	50
	1800 Washington Street #112	1BD/1BA	\$722,000	Above	73
	2230 Pacific Avenue #102	1BD/1BA	\$745,000	Below	59
	1945 Washington Street #507	2BD/2BA	\$802,900	At	8
	3234 Washington Street #4	2BD/2BA	\$835,000	Above	22
	1856 Franklin Street #4	3BD/2BA	\$850,000	Above	105
	2425 Franklin Street #A	2BD/1BA	\$965,000	Above	33
	1701 Jackson Street #309	2BD/2BA	\$1,000,000	Above	22
	2100 Pacific Avenue #1A	2BD/2BA	\$1,200,000	Below	92
	2928 Washington Street	3BD/2BA	\$1,650,000	At	46
	2326 California Street	4BD/3BA	\$1,800,000	Above	15
	2143 Jackson Street #2143	4BD/4BA	\$2,950,000	Above	20
	2259 Clay Street	3BD/3BA	\$3,000,000	Above	0
	1980 Vallejo Street #10	4BD/3BA	\$3,175,000	Above	1
Presidio Heights	333 Cherry Street #B	0BD/1BA	\$406,000	Above	18
	186 Arguello Boulevard	2BD/2BA	\$1,525,000	Above	53
	3355 Jackson Street	4BD/4.5BA	\$3,950,000	Above	79
Russian Hill	1050 North Point Street #1203B	0BD/1BA	\$510,000	Below	21
	56 Glover Street	1BD/1BA	\$815,000	Above	32
	1444 Vallejo Street #5	2BD/2BA	\$855,000	Above	41
	2511A Polk Street	2BD/1.5BA	\$985,000	Above	41
	1335 Filbert Street #306	1BD/1BA	\$1,020,000	Above	10
	757 North Point Street #7	2BD/2.5BA	\$1,175,000	Below	72
	1000 North Point Street #1101	2BD/2BA	\$1,210,000	Above	37
	999 Green Street #3103	1BD/1BA	\$1,495,000	At	9
	1945 Hyde Street #2	2BD/2BA	\$1,980,000	Above	70
	1020 Union Street #12	3BD/2BA	\$2,520,000	Below	128
	1945 Hyde Street #4	3BD/2.5BA	\$3,345,000	Above	52
	1070 Green Street #1501	3BD/3.5BA	\$3,650,000	Below	86
	1945 Hyde Street #6	2BD/2.5BA	\$3,800,000	Above	60
Sea Cliff (no sales)					
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 real estate hunt

# How to lose friends and influence nobody

by john zipperer

I HAVE A FRIEND — LET'S CALL HIM Richard — who has almost every reason to be a happy homeowner. But the one reason that makes him unhappy could ruin it all for him.

Richard had managed to get a condo for a reasonable price despite the high cost of housing here. Nice view out the front and the back of his unit. Situated up on a hill. He even has ample parking, which is like winning the lottery in San Francisco.

When he moved into his place, he did the things a new resident should. He met

resulted from an unpermitted change made by the owner; so that owner didn't want to take it to his insurance company and have to pay any fines or do anything else that was necessary to bring it into compliance even with HOA rules.

Richard's own insurance company said this didn't involve them, thank you very much. And Richard was left with the walls torn down to the studs and plastic sheets separating it from his living room. And he's gotten very, very sick of eating delivery food or cooking with a microwave in his bedroom

The HOA tried contacting the upstairs owners, but they didn't even reply. In everything they have done through this entire

situation, they have shown themselves to be uninterested in being good neighbors; they have been interested only in their own well-being — the heck with everyone else.

The fact that Richard lives in a condominium isn't terribly

## A malfunction in some kitchen equipment resulted in water pouring into Richard's kitchen.

the neighbors, both in the owner-occupied units and the units that were rented. He also paid attention to the things that would matter to his neighbors: He was careful not to be noisy; he was conscientious about putting his garbage and recycling inside the bins and not beside them; he removed his laundry from the shared washing and drying machines as soon as they were done so no one else had to wait for him; he attended homeowner association meetings. A good neighbor.

His reward for the most part was enough to warm the heart. His neighbors were an interesting mix of ages and professions, and almost to a one they were nice and pleasant.

Then there were the upstairs neighbors. More accurately, the upstairs owners, because they had long ago moved out of their unit above Richard's and have rented it out for the astronomical sums that rentals can command in today's market. He was a fine with them being absentee owners, as long as their tenants were good neighbors and the unit didn't cause any trouble.

But then the unit caused trouble. It wasn't the renters, who were in fact quite good neighbors; nice people, each of them. But a malfunction of some kitchen equipment resulted in water pouring down into Richard's kitchen and onward down to the sidewalk. Richard had his insurance company assess the damage, and his kitchen cabinets and the soaked walls were removed; his kitchen was left a bare shell.

Richard was unhappy; not devastated, but unhappy. In fact, the prospect of a new kitchen filled him with a happy anticipation. The old kitchen was fine; but now he could get a new kitchen, and it would all be paid for by his upstairs neighbor's insurance company. He figured that was worth a little disruption to his life and the inability to cook at home for a while.

Nearly five months later, though, his kitchen was still all bare studs and plastic sheeting. The flood from upstairs had

crucial to this story. Many single-family homes in densely populated San Francisco are literally wall-against-wall with their neighbors; they might as well be town-homes. But even a stand-alone house, with nice walking space and maybe even a tree and some bushes between it and its neighbors, can be victimized by the careless (and thoughtless) neighbor who lets water runoff flood the other home's backyard or who has parties every night on the back porch.

Richard predicts that he will either convince his upstairs neighbor to pay for his new kitchen or he'll get his lawyer to do the convincing for him. Either way, he's lost all illusions about the upstairs neighbor being cooperative or even well intentioned.

What could he have done to avoid this? Nothing, realistically. There are bad owners everywhere; just because someone scrapes together the money to buy a house or a

## Richard has lost all illusions about the upstairs neighbor being well intentioned.

condominium doesn't mean they are ethical people. But Richard swears that if he ever buys another condo, he will look for a significant factor: the length of ownership of many of the other owners. Yes, even jerks can hang onto their condos for decades. But he figures that if a lot of the other owners have been there for decades as well, then the jerks can't be too bad.

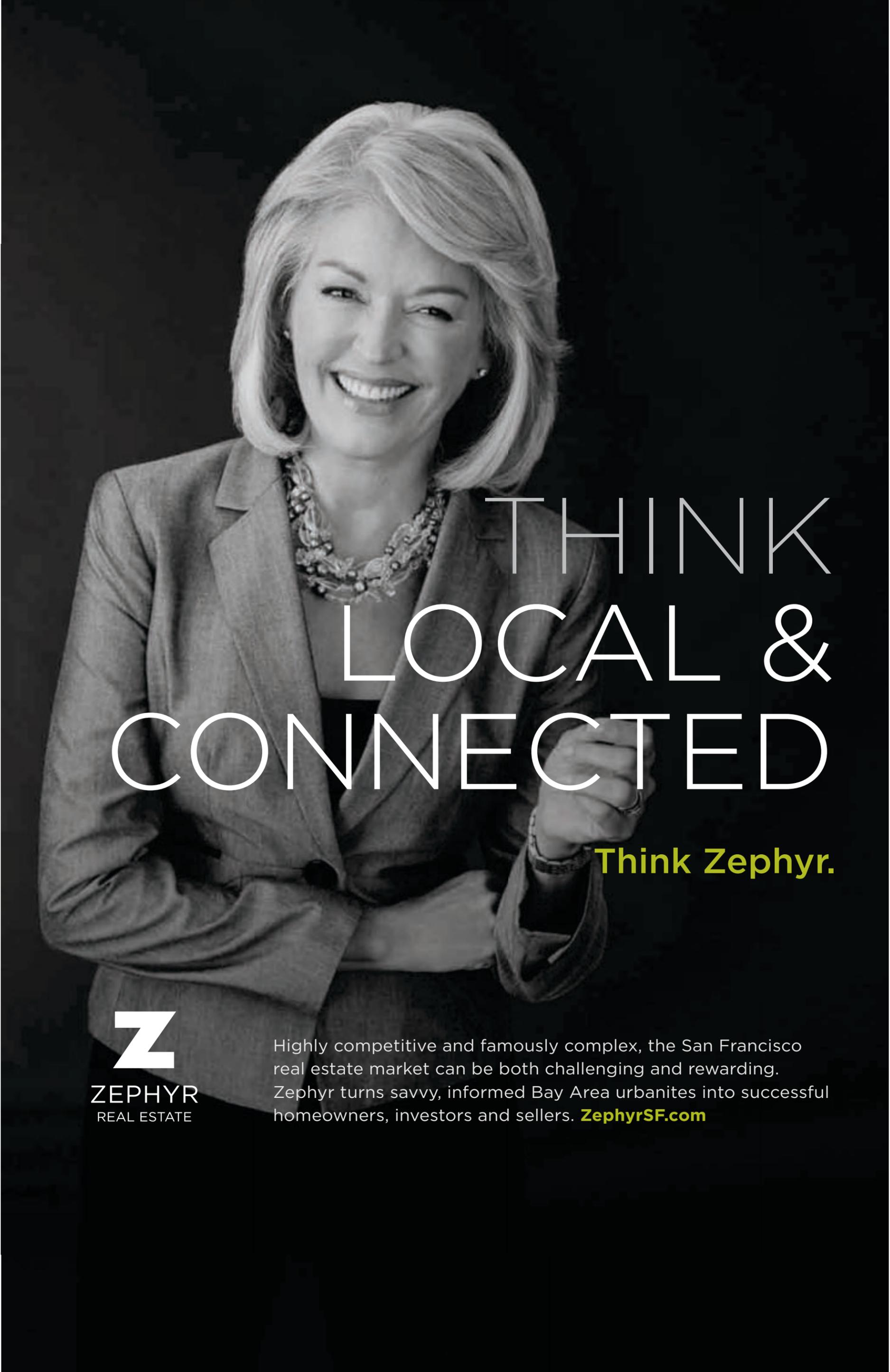
He still counts himself lucky. He got a great condo. He just doesn't have a good upstairs neighbor or a good kitchen. And he prays every day that the local real estate prices remain sky-high, so that the upstairs owners will decide to cash in, buy somewhere else, and be a pain in someone else's ... kitchen.

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COMMERCIAL PROPERTY REPORT

Retail rental tough for retailers

by john zipperer

EVERYONE HAS HEARD the “rule” that 90 percent of restaurants fail within their first year. In fact, the first year takes a heavy toll on small businesses of all types; if you don’t believe that, try opening up a bookstore in San Francisco. But added to the usual challenges of small businesses is the same economic boom that is making housing prices spike in the city. Retail space, too, is getting hard to find and harder to pay for.

It might appear to be a paradox. When the local population booms, that should be great news for local businesses. It means more customers and more foot traffic outside their stores. But San Francisco doesn’t have a large inventory of available retail space any more than it has a large inventory of residential space, so landlords looking to fill new, refurbished, or even existing space that’s facing a lease renewal are able to command top dollar for their square footage.

There are always businesses going out of business. When you have many thousands of shops, restaurants, bike repair sites, and more in a city, there is a regular turnover, and it’s not always for nice mom-and-apple-pie reasons such as the elderly owners retiring after 50 years of success. They also go out of business because one of the partners running the thing drank the profits, the food wasn’t very good, they were swindled by an unscrupulous financial advisor, or maybe they just couldn’t sell enough of whatever they were selling to make their payments to the bank. It’s sad, but it’s normal.

What is beyond normal right now is the very low vacancy rates and very high increases in lease rates that retailers are experiencing. Over the past couple years, there have been reports of numerous small businesses forced out of their space because of rental costs that doubled or more when their leases came up for renewal. As a result, they closed up shop, either moving to a less expensive location and hoping their customers follow them or giving up and retiring to Phoenix.

The challenge is not only felt by small busi-

nesses in town. As a 2013 report from Terranomics Retail Services ([www.terranomics.com](http://www.terranomics.com)) notes, “rising rents and declining vacancy figures underscore the intense demand for downtown retail opportunities, and Class A landlords typically take the pick of the litter. ... [I]n this atmosphere, entrepreneurial startup tenants often end up getting treated like the runt. These small boutique retail hopefuls, often unique and creative, regularly get overshadowed and squeezed out by their institutional competitors due to their lack of longstanding credit. In some instances,

neighborhood commercial districts are controlled by stringent zoning codes that adamantly oppose any formula retail tenants opening store locations within their jurisdictions” — will continue to protect some of the neighborhood business owners from competition from large chains, and therefore it will limit the number of institutional renters getting long-term sweetheart deals from landlords. But that pressure will remain. As Cassidy Turley notes, “Luxury retailers are back and are looking for space in the nation’s high street shopping districts and

trophy shopping malls. We also continue to see new concepts from abroad in this category looking for new flagship locations on top shopping

To play with Las Vegas’ marketing line, what happens downtown does not stay downtown.

Class A landlords will require a letter of credit guaranteeing six months to a year’s worth of rent.”

In the commercial real estate world, “Class A” refers to the newest buildings with the most modern amenities. Younger and shinier is always rated more highly than older and experienced.

Commercial real estate services firm Cassidy Turley ([www.cassidy-turley.com](http://www.cassidy-turley.com)) recently released its 2014 retail forecast, and much of the news in it is not likely to make local retailers warm and fuzzy, unless it’s from drinking heavily. For community/neighborhood retail space (the second largest category after “all shopping centers” in San Francisco), Cassidy Turley predicts a low vacancy rate of 4.3 percent, with just under 10,000 square feet of space newly leased, and an average quoted rental rate of \$27.68 per square foot. That’s the lowest per-square-foot leasing rate of the various categories; specialty centers are highest at \$60, strip shopping centers are the closest at \$28.27, and the others — power/regional centers and malls — are somewhere in between. A possible indication of relief is that 270,000 square feet of community/neighborhood space should be under construction, and when that comes to market, it should help puncture the pricing balloon.

San Francisco’s quixotic formula retail laws — Terranomics notes that the city’s “[n]eigh-

streets in markets like Manhattan, San Francisco, Beverly Hills and Chicago’s Michigan Avenue.”

And once you’ve planted your luxury brand on Union Square, what better place to put your second local location than on Chestnut? Or, if there is no space in Union Square to begin with, why not start out on Chestnut and be right down the street from where your customers actually live? Again, as Cassidy Turley writes, “The shortage of Class A space is now starting to discourage growth in some trade areas. For example, we know of a number of retailers who have slowed or postponed planned expansion in the San Francisco Bay Area as they patiently wait for quality space to become available.”

To play with Las Vegas’ marketing line, what happens downtown does not stay downtown. The lack of Class A space in and around the Financial District will keep up the pressure on retail space in the neighborhoods, including the Marina. And that means good and bad things for you. Your favorite business might find itself forced to vacate its location. Or your least favorite business might find itself forced to vacate its location and a business you like better might grab the spot.

Either way, San Francisco’s transformation from the economic boom is only beginning.

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



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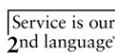
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**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Palace of Fine Arts was built for the Pan-Pacific International Exhibition in 1915. While other buildings built for the Exhibition were not meant to last, the Palace still stands today because of its concrete walls. Once the exhibition ended, the upkeep of the palace proved to be too costly and the city recognized that a loss to the palace was a great loss to the people. To keep the Palace intact it hosted 18 lit tennis courts during the 1930's, and during World War II it served as a home to army vehicles. In 1964, philanthropists raised enough money to demolish and rebuild the palace, making it one of San Francisco's most beloved landmarks today.

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**HOUSING**

CONTINUED from page 1

he said with a straight face, doesn't go that far in a city like San Francisco. By the end of the episode, he had looked at homes in Cow Hollow, Noe Valley, and Ghirardelli Square, finally settling on a \$3.2 million condo in the last of those locations.

That story includes much of what is driving the affordability debate in San Francisco. A multimillionaire wants so

There's something in that plan for everyone, including activists seeking protection of existing units, developers seeking to build, new residents of all incomes, and existing homeowners who don't want their home values to decline. The mayor will seek to involve housing advocates, developers, property owners, and others in a task force to study, develop, and implement the plan.

Critics will be watching closely to see over time how many of those 30,000 units are new and how many

**Critics will be watching to see how many units are new and how many rehabbed.**

much to come into the city that he "settles" for an expensive condo (with, admittedly, an awesome view of the bay). Meanwhile, new two-bedroom apartments are renting for \$3,600 or more, and low- and middle income residents are finding it impossible to get apartments to rent or homes to buy within their budgets. And note that the stockbroker does not ride a corporate bus to work at Google, which has become the scapegoat of many of the activists.

Against that background, Mayor Lee has presented his plan to retain the city's middle class and to ensure that he is not made the new scapegoat come reelection time.

**THE PLAN**

Mayor Lee made the proposal in his January State of the City speech, laying out a seven-point plan that would construct or rehabilitate 30,000 new homes in the city, with at least one-third of them being permanently affordable to low-income households (those earning less than 80 percent of the median income, or \$77,700 for a family of four) and moderate income (less than 120 percent of median income, or \$116,500 for a family of four), and a majority of them targeting the middle income category (which, in San Francisco, means a family of four with income up to \$145,650, which would be a princely sum in most parts of the country).

The plan's elements include reform of the eviction process; stabilization and protection of at-risk rent-controlled units, using rehab loans and a new program to permanently stabilize rent rates for these units; revitalization and rebuilding of public housing units; doubling the down payment loan programs, which particularly can help middle class homeowners, including on land under public control; building more affordable housing, relying more on the private sector to share the cost burden; building more market-rate units, especially rental units, to deal with the pent-up demand from years of inventory constraint and the resulting price spikes; and easing construction of new housing by boosting staff in city departments involved in housing, streamlining the process to speed it up, and boosting neighborhood infrastructure.

are rehabilitated. Rehabbed units can be very important; rehabilitation is often a time when a lower-priced unit is spruced up at great cost and then put back on the market at a high price point. But the devil will be in the details.

What will constitute "rehabbing"? Will that just be used to count some affordable housing units that got mold remediation and a new coat of paint and that were likely to remain affordable anyway? Or will it actually preserve affordable units that were at risk of being torn down or otherwise leaving the affordable inventory completely?

**HELP FROM WASHINGTON**

At least one part of the plan almost immediately got a boost from the Obama administration. On Jan. 23, the mayor's office announced that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had approved the city's plan to leverage \$180 million in private equity and other new sources of funding to rehabilitate as many as 4,584 of San Francisco's public housing units. San Francisco Housing Authority Commission President Joaquin Torres said HUD's approval was critical to the effort to improve living conditions "and to preserve the existing affordability for the over 31,000 seniors, families, children, and individuals who call San Francisco public housing home."

Mayor Lee said the plan "allows us to renovate public housing without displacing existing tenants," something that has not always been the case in other cities that have done large-scale reform of their public housing. In Chicago, for example, since 2000, thousands of residents were moved when the city tore down



Though the pressure on housing prices comes from more places than just the tech boomers, Mayor Lee's identification with the tech companies has made it a political necessity for him to address housing affordability. PHOTO: JOHN ZIPPERER

**Mayor Lee said the plan "allows us to renovate ... without displacing existing tenants."**

its infamous high-rise public housing estates and replaced 25,000 units with low-rise new and rehabilitated mixed-income units spread throughout that city. Like the redevelopment plans in Chicago, New Orleans, New York, and elsewhere, San Francisco's strategy involves partial privatization of the housing stock and services, in recognition of the lack of funding at Torres's agency to carry out the rehab projects on its own.

HOUSING, continued on 31



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## HOUSING

CONTINUED from page 30

### MAKING IT WORK

For the mayor's plan to be a success, for it to be a bold success, the city of San Francisco will need to focus on getting as close to 30,000 affordable units newly built. With the mayor's stated intent of moving much of the cost from the city to the private developers, that means it will be even harder for the developers to make money on the projects. So the best thing the city can do is make the permitting and regulatory side of the process much easier, and that risks poking the beast that is citizen activism, in which everyone is entitled to a vote on whether a project gets built.

Some critics have argued that such changes should be made across the board, and for good reason: Those baked-in costs of doing real estate business in San Francisco are also inflating the prices of the market-rate housing. If Lee's plan comes to fruition in a form close to what he has proposed, he will be addressing the pains of both market-rate and affordable housing developers at the same time.

But if investors — large or small — think now is a great time to get into the affordable housing business, they should be cautious.

Affordable housing development is very complicated, usually involves many layers of subsidy and other funding, and many if not most of the people and companies involved in it are in it for moral reasons instead of profit. Even small affordable housing developments can involve tricky negotiations on deadline with public and private providers of financing, loan guarantors, bond underwriters, and others. It is not for the faint of heart, though having a heart helps.

Beyond the political balancing act of Mayor Lee, all city leaders are facing a challenge. That *House Hunters* stockbroker who paid for an expensive condo in the city therefore also helped out the city budget with the real estate transfer tax and other fees associated with real

year, Dan Schreiber looked at the effects of the city's continued growth. Even with the boom-and-bust cycles of California and especially the Bay Area, the trend has been and will continue to be more people in these 47 square miles of San Francisco. "The population of roughly 825,000 in 2012 will have steadily increased to a milestone by 2032, when a projected 1 million people will make their home inside city limits, according to an upcoming report from the Association of Bay Area Governments," Schreiber wrote. "By 2040, the report speculates that the growth rate will begin to level out at 1,085,700."

So if Mayor Lee and the current supervisors don't get it right with their current attempts to address the problem of affordability during an economic boom, they will be postponing the resolution until their successors deal with it, at which time the population will be even larger, the housing stock even older, and available inventory even less affordable.

Lee wasted no time in demonstrating that affordability will be a continuing focus. Just a week after his State of the City speech, he couched his praise of new employment numbers (showing that San Francisco's unemployment is the third-lowest for any county in the state) by

## Beyond the political balancing act of Mayor Ed Lee, all San Francisco city elected leaders are facing a housing challenge.

estate deals. He is also likely to be spending more money in San Francisco than if he had bought a place in San Jose or Atherton, and that helps jobs, local businesses, and city tax coffers.

In a series of articles in the *Examiner* at the turn of the new



San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee has staked his reputation on managing the boom

noting that the "robust economic recovery creates new revenue to fund vital city services, and it allows us to tackle the significant affordability challenges that still face working- and middle-class families in our City. That's why we must continue to pursue an aggressive affordability agenda to build 30,000 new homes by 2020, invest in transporta-

tion and education, and attract and grow good jobs for all San Franciscans."

He is on-message.

*John Zipperer is a former senior editor at Affordable Housing Finance and Apartment Finance Today magazines, as well as a former editor at the CCIM Institute. E-mail: john@marinatimes.com*

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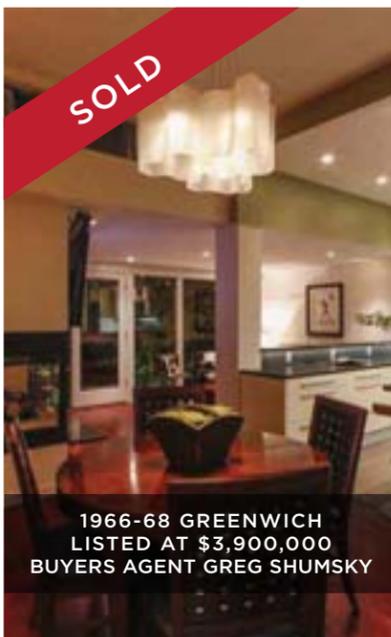
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## YAPPING WITH ...



Clockwise: A Boston terrier mix, just days old, will stay in a foster home with mom Betty and the rest of the litter until old enough for adoption; Critty and Timmy, two Boston terriers rescued from a hoarding situation, will soon be ready for loving homes; One of five puppies abandoned at the Stockton shelter, where one puppy died; the four survivors will find homes through Wonder Dog

PHOTOS: COURTESY WONDER DOG RESCUE

# Linda Beenau

## Director and founder, Wonder Dog Rescue

by susan dyer reynolds

### How many years have you been involved with animal rescue?

I began in rescue over 23 years ago, working with Nancy Ford, a Boston terrier rescue person (thus, my love of Bostons!).

### What are the upcoming events for Wonder Dog?

We hold adoption events and are open to the public every Saturday at our office at 2926 16th Street in San Francisco. We also meet

people individually by appointment. All of our dogs are in foster homes, so we only gather as a group once a week. All events are posted on our website, [www.wonderdogrescue.org](http://www.wonderdogrescue.org). We do not have any benefits scheduled at this time, but stay tuned and check our website often.

### How did you get involved with rescue?

I was thinking about adopting a Boston terrier back in 1990 and got the number of the rescue from San

Francisco Animal Care and Control. I didn't wind up adopting a dog through Nancy, but we continued a lifelong friendship. In those days, everything was done on Rolodex cards. Nancy knew everything about Bostons and pugs, and most of what I learned in those first 10 or more years came from Nancy. I am sad to say that she passed away last year after a long illness.

### Tell us about your organization.

Wonder Dog Rescue is an 11-year-old nonprofit organization. Before

LINDA BEENAU, continued on 36

## HUMOR :: Cutie-pie

# My life as a dog stalker

by sandy fertman ryan

LAST YEAR, WE LOST OUR DOG. WAIT: DON'T RUN away! This isn't another sad dog story. Although we don't have another one yet, embarrassingly, we've become "those people" who are constantly on the hunt to pet other people's dogs. We began by cruising places like Fort Mason, Washington Square Park, and the Marina, where we once took our little guy, and fortunately, people were incredibly sympathetic to us, allowing us to take our time while ogling their pups.

Us: "Hey, cutie pie! Yes, YOU! Oh, look at YOU! You. Are. So. Cute! You. Are. So. Cute!"

Virtually everyone was very nice — and tolerant — of our pathetic behavior for the first six months after our Charlie's passing. Even the dog walkers who were hustling to round up their charges at Crissy Field for a trip back to the truck took the time to let us get our dog on, so to speak.

But then suddenly, seemingly overnight, my husband and I apparently crossed an invisible line, and our little habit started to become not so sweet, not so touching, but rather more like An Annoyance. Like when we found a dog particularly endearing (OK, every dog), and we found ourselves keeping just a slight yet visibly unnoticeable grip on the dog's body while fawning over him or her so there was no chance for bolting until we were finished smothering him or her with love. Or was it desperation?

Dog: *That's nice. I feel for ya losing your dog and all. But could you please let go of my leg so I can go chase that Lab with the big stick?*

Owner: "Oh, that's sweet, but I think my dog wants to go chase that Lab with the big stick!"

We'd become "those people" — you know, like smokers who rarely buy their own cigarettes and are continuously bumming them from acquaintances and perfect strangers on a daily, no, hourly basis. And eventually, those acquaintances and strangers get sick and tired of the smokers and send them on their merry way with a simple air-slapping wave of the hand. Just like that, we had crossed over the line to becoming the poor slob bumming the cigarette.

It's not like people run away when they see us. I think some of them still like the fact that

STALKER, continued on 34

## PIT OF THE MONTH :: Pigeon

# Rocket Dog Rescue saved Pigeon's life, now she's ready to be part of yours

by susan dyer reynolds

Mrs. PIGEON is probably one of the most special dogs you will ever meet. This tiny girl is a muscular short stack, standing no taller than the average person's knee. (Like my Skylar Grey, she's a low rider, built like a perfect little teapot, short and stout.) Pigeon is a beautiful dog, around two to three years old, with one golden-brown eye and one sparkly blue eye (I'm partial to blue eyes — my beloved Jazzy had two of them). She has a good amount of

energy but, like most pitties, has a couch potato side, and loves to hang out at home with her people.

Pigeon loves to keep you laughing, even though there was nothing funny about the way her life began. She came to Rocket Dog Rescue from a high-kill shelter after being dumped there with her dead puppies inside her, and had to undergo emergency surgery to save her life. Despite her rough start, Pigeon still trusts and loves people, and is eager to move forward. Pitties like Pigeon are like that — they rarely let their tough beginnings affect their



PHOTOS: COURTESY ROCKET DOG RESCUE

future. (In fact, all of the dogs rescued from Michael Vick's infamous house of horrors were adopted and went on to happy, balanced lives, many in homes with kids and cats, some as therapy or search-and-rescue dogs.)

Pigeon's ideal home is with someone who has experience with bully breeds, and who will let her be an only dog (she deserves to be doggy queen of the house after all she's been through!).

To learn more about Pigeon, please visit [www.rocketdogrescue.org](http://www.rocketdogrescue.org). You can also buy the 2014 Rocket Dog Rescue calendar there, which is gorgeous and benefits the many dogs Rocket Dog saves (6,296

and counting). You can also e-mail [adopt@rocketdogrescue.org](mailto:adopt@rocketdogrescue.org) about Pigeon (put "I saw Pigeon in the Marina Times ..." in the subject line).

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

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**Lucille (A343843)** is a fun 2yo cat. This pretty, sweet, petite girl is very friendly & loving & ready for a home where she can talk about her day.



**Milo & Lulu (A349383 & A349382)** are just wonderful, loving cats--nice, friendly & affectionate. This bonded pair is ready for a forever home.



**Lula (A349808)** is a delightful 9 mo Chihuahua mix pup. This adorable & gentle girl enjoys walks & making new friends.



**Hazelnut (A348632)** is a lovely & lively little domestic quail. She is curious, active, alert & makes great little chirping noises.

SKY'S BUYS :: Shopping

# Dog for Dog treats give back with a simple philosophy: 'You buy one. We give one'

by susan dyer reynolds

**T**HE FIRST TIME I saw Dogsbars at Pet Food Express I purchased them because I wanted to help animals. The company that makes the treats, Dog for Dog, has a straightforward mission: For every treat you buy, they donate one to a dog in need. I bought both flavors — peanut butter and blueberry — and as I was unwrapping them at home, I was drooling right along with Skylar because they looked and smelled better than any human granola bar I'd ever had. They're made with organic brown rice syrup, oats, blackstrap molasses, organic crisp brown rice, organic flax seeds, organic peanut butter, sunflower seed kernels, organic potato flakes, organic sunflower oil, and, for the blueberry version, dried blueberries.

I have to confess I took a nibble of both flavors and could have eaten an entire bar (but I couldn't do that to Skylar).

Founder Rocky Kanaka Keever came up with the concept while holding pet adoptions at his pet supply stores. He realized that despite how ever many dogs were adopted, many more were left in shelters. Celebrities including Michael Bublé, Snoop Lion and Chelsea Handler took note, and with the help of these high-profile folks, Dog for Dog has been able to promote the product and



publicize the plight of shelters across the country, where 4 million of 8 million animals are euthanized each year.

On a recent trip to Pet Food Express, I discovered the company also makes Dogsbutter, peanut butter especially for dogs without sugar, salt or hydrogenated oils. There are three varieties: Original, simply made with peanuts, golden flaxseed and palm fruit oil; Skin & Coat, which has added coconut; and Immunity & Digestion, which also has coconut, plus ginger. Because Sky has a sensitive stomach, I bought the Immunity & Digestion

Dogsbutter, which I plan to use when I make her frozen yogurt (see last month's issue or visit [www.marinatimes.com](http://www.marinatimes.com) for the recipe). Like most dogs, Skylar loves peanut butter, so this is a healthful alternative, and best of all, Dog for Dog donates a jar for every jar sold just as they do with all their products. In addition to the bars and butters, Dog for Dog also makes other treats like chicken and lamb, as well as kibble, made with a variety of blends, including pork, chicken, duck, and turkey, and a grain-free version made with salmon and ocean fish.

**Dog for Dog**, [www.dogfordog.com](http://www.dogfordog.com): all products made in the United States. Dogsbars, \$3.99 each; DogsButter, \$9.99 each. Available at Pet Food Express and other fine pet supply retailers.

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

STALKER

CONTINUED from page 32

we find their dog so compelling.

Dog: *I know: It's almost hypnotic how cute I am.*

But recently, I have seen dog owners hurry along when they see us coming. For instance, in our building, a particularly delightful Corgi and his owner, whom we have pestered frequently, seem to vanish behind the elevator door just as we approach. There is also a dog walker who crosses the street at the exact moment when we come into view. Coincidence? I think not. Maybe they don't want to spend the extra time with us while we gush in that now-repulsive doggy baby-talk voice to their pup, or maybe they just don't want to feel our pain. Honestly, I wouldn't want to either.

It can be brutal being dog-less when you once had a dog in this dog-frenzied city of San Francisco. And probably for the other doggy owners as well. I realize our behavior is

pretty invasive, but to all of you dog parents out there, please know that our bizarre behavior will end once we shake it off, get to a dog rescue, and adopt another pooch to be the

## It can be brutal being dog-less when you once had a dog.

focus of all of our attention. Yeah, I know what you're thinking: *Poor guy.*

In the meantime, maybe you could consider it an act of mercy when you stop and let a former owner blubber over your dog. Let's call it volunteer work! It's a win-win situation, unless, of course, this cuts into your dog's digging-for-field-mice time. If that's the case, just speak up. We had a dog. We'll understand.

*Sandy Fertman Ryan has written for several national magazines, including TEEN, Seventeen and Parade. She is currently working with a therapist to stop talking baby talk to dogs. And her husband. E-mail: [yipee633@yahoo.com](mailto:yipee633@yahoo.com)*

## MEWS BRIEFS :: GGNRA update and Lindsay Wildlife Rehabilitation Hospital needs your help

by susan dyer reynolds

### GGNRA EXTENDS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON DOG MANAGEMENT PLAN UNTIL FEB. 18

Shortly after Scott Wiener took office as District 8 supervisor in 2010, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) began gearing up to ban off-leash dog walking on most federal lands. "I met with the GGNRA, and I spoke to Senator Mark Leno; I drafted legislation opposing the plan, and held a hearing," Wiener said. The hearing on Monday, Oct. 21, 2013, garnered input from city departments, dog advocates, and residents. Conspicuously absent: representatives from the GGNRA and environmental groups like the Sierra Club, which support tightening the rules. Wiener's resolution passed, and the GGNRA backed off a bit, extending public comment through Jan. 11, 2014.

"I don't begrudge their ability to make changes, but this plan goes way too far," Wiener said. "This is an urban recreation area. They're not taking into account where all these dogs are going to go." Wiener pointed out that at the dog park located at 27th and Douglass streets, 100 dogs enter per hour, and that number, as well as the number of dogs at other city parks (dog parks and otherwise), would only increase if off-leash access to GGNRA land were greatly restricted.

On Dec. 2, 2013, Wiener and his supporters got a big boost when House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) wrote a letter urging the GGNRA to extend the public comment period on the dog management plan for another month to Feb. 17, 2014. In the letter addressed to GGNRA General Superintendent Frank Dean, Representative Pelosi wrote, "Our city is named for Saint Francis of Assisi, patron

saint of animals and the environment. While Park Service regulations may ban off-leash dog walking in National Parks, there is a long history of off-leash recreation in San Francisco, which began before the transfer of land from the City and County of San Francisco to the National Park Service. It is essential the National Park Service fully consider the wide-ranging consequences of the new rules, including the impact on San Francisco parks, and carefully review the concerns of San Franciscans



District 8 Supervisor Scott Wiener speaks up at the "Save Off-Leash Dog Walking in the GGNRA" rally PHOTO: COURTESY SCOTT WIENER

as expressed by our elected Board of Supervisors."

The GGNRA listened and granted the extension, stating on their website that "due to continued concern from some stakeholders, the comment period has been extended a second time," until Tuesday, Feb. 18. You can submit comments online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/commentForm.cfm?documentID=55416> (all comments must be entered before 11 p.m. Pacific Time).

The current GGNRA plan would require dogs to be on leash in most

areas, only allowing dogs to run free in limited parts of Crissy Field, Fort Mason, Ocean Beach, and Fort Funston. The rules would be even stricter outside of the city. In Marin County, for example, dogs would be allowed to run free in only one of the six areas where they presently have unleashed access. The GGNRA says the harsh restrictions are necessary because of complaints from bird watchers and other visitors who don't like dealing with dogs.

In 2011 when the original proposal was

released, it prompted nearly 5,000 comments, most of which were critical and opposed the restrictions. In April of that year, the Board of Supervisors went on record opposing the plan. A new draft released in September 2013 didn't fare much better, drawing continued opposition from residents and the Board of Supervisors as well as Representative Jackie Speier (D-San Francisco/San Mateo).

**Sign an online petition opposing the GGNRA Dog Management Plan, and find contact information for**

**congressional representatives here:** [www.crissyfielddog.org/news.html](http://www.crissyfielddog.org/news.html)

**Mail your comments about the GGNRA Dog management Plan to:** Frank Dean, Superintendent, GGNRA, Building 201, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco CA 94123-0022

### LINDSAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION HOSPITAL IN NEED OF DONATIONS

Donations to the Lindsay Wildlife Museum's rehabilitation hospital are down 25 percent from a year ago, and officials are asking for money before the busy spring season when the hospital is overwhelmed with sick and injured baby birds and mammals. It costs nearly half a million dollars to operate the 60-year-old organization, and they are currently \$100,000 short (more than 95 percent of the hospital's funding comes from private donations).

Lindsay is an extremely important hospital, and one of the few places in the Bay Area where citizens who find injured wildlife can bring them for treatment. Last year the hospital took in 5,500 injured wild animals, including foxes, opossums, eagles, hawks, and many types of birds. In fact, Lindsay has cared for more than 27,500 animals in the past five years alone. Every time a citizen brings an injured animal to the hospital, it also provides a crucial opportunity for education, while the museum at Lindsay provides educational programs for more than 40,000 school children each year.

Donations can be made to Lindsay Wildlife Museum, 1931 First Avenue, Walnut Creek, CA 94597 or online at [www.wildlife-museum.org](http://www.wildlife-museum.org) (click on "support"). Please note on your check or online that your donation is to be earmarked for the wildlife hospital.

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CATHOUSE : Finding the real cat

# The taming of Boris

by John Zipperer

**B**ORIS WASN'T THE FIRST CAT I'd lived with, but he was the one who changed my mind about cats. I like to think that, in return for that favor, I helped change his attitude toward those around him, too, and I have some evidence that that was the case.

Growing up, I was very much what you would call a dog person. I didn't dislike cats, I just thought they were not as interesting or as fun as dogs. The cats who were occasionally part of my family household were all fine and wonderful animals, but it was the black Lab who slept on my bed; the cat stayed with someone else who appreciated her more, and I can't blame her.

But when I got to know Boris, I came to appreciate just how much personality and emotion could be stuffed into that tiny, furry body.

When I first met Boris, he was a scaredy cat. He was distrustful of pretty much every human and a bully to other cats.

His backstory explained why he was so scared. Before I met my partner, he lived in an apartment in downtown Chicago. When a couple across the hall broke up and the girlfriend moved out, she (somewhat bizarrely) left her black tuxedo cat with her ex-boyfriend. That would be all fine and dandy, and I'd be willing to blame the breakup on her — perhaps she was embezzling money, or she cheated, or she was never home

agreed to, and so the skinny little black cat joined a household with one human and one other adult male cat, Max. The black cat was quickly named Boris, and he and Max settled into a tolerate-hate relationship that would last the rest of their lives.

Years later, when I came into the picture, Boris was better but still showing signs of his six months of affection deprivation. When people came to visit, Max was a showoff; he knew he was the most gorgeous cat around, and he loved to have people pay attention to him. But Boris would run away and hide in another room. He didn't like to be picked up, and he definitely did not want to sit on your lap.

When I joined the household, I was greeted by an arched back and a hiss from Boris, and I decided on the spot that the two of us were going to do whatever it took to become friends. So began a slow process of building trust, of learning just how much he wanted to be pet, where that spot is between his front shoulder blades that he can't scratch himself, how to approach



No need to be scared of black cats

## Years later, Boris still showed signs of his six months of affection deprivation.

because she worked too much, I don't know — but I can't leave her ex blameless. Because he promptly embarked on a six-month remodel of his unit. For six months, he lived elsewhere but kept the cat in his old unit, which was under construction, returning only to feed the cat and change his litter box. For half of a year.

My partner offered to take the cat off his hands, which was

him in a way that didn't startle him, and how to talk to him in a soothing manner.

He and I did in fact become friends. A few months later, during our housewarming party, Boris climbed onto my lap and settled down to sleep while I pet him. Some folks who had known him when he was a skittery, defensive scaredy cat couldn't believe their eyes. "That's the same cat?" said one woman who had known him from the start.

Soon Boris seemed to be happiest climbing onto the stomach or back of one of us while we were lying down. He would then do his ablutions, curl up, and fall asleep, purring. He got to the point that

he liked doing that so much that we could never lie down to read or watch TV without him climbing aboard. He had made a 180-degree turn, from a cat fearful of everybody and putting out a tough-guy vibe, to becoming a stereotypical pussycat who loved to receive and give affection.

Boris never made it out here to San Francisco with Max and the rest of the household; he died of cancer back in Ithaca, N.Y. But I take comfort that at least for the last few years of his life, he was able to live happily and securely, free of the fears that had driven him for years.

E-mail: john@marinatimes.com



Sweet, smart, well-trained, and funny, Brutus can't wait to find the perfect family  
PHOTO: COURTESY WONDER DOG RESCUE

LINDA BEENAU  
CONTINUED from page 32

that, I founded Bay Area Boston Terrier Rescue, which was breed specific. Today, we have evolved to being a rescue that doesn't rescue only Bostons, because there are so many other needy animals at the shelters. We specialize in the rehabilitation and placement of dogs with physical disabilities, very timid dogs, and senior dogs. We have a strong following on the Web and on Facebook, and find a great outpouring of support for those dogs who are at gravest risk of being euthanized because of disabilities or timid behavior. We love senior dogs, too, and keep senior dogs in hospice care to the end of their lives.

### Can kids get involved with Wonder Dog?

Yes, we love it! One of our volunteers is 12, and she's been volunteering with Wonder Dog for more than three years now. We have an informal after-school program once a week where the kids get to interact with the dogs while doing homework and hanging out. It's a win-win situation.

### Besides the after-school project, do you have any other special programs?

We are currently outlining a new program that will place dogs with veterans living with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). This

will be a comprehensive program, where both the vets and the dogs get the training and support they need to make it together. We're so fortunate to have the commitment of a trainer who specializes in this work. The program will be free of charge to participants.

### What is the biggest challenge facing your rescue right now?

We have reached a point where we need to hire a full-time administrator to manage the flow of calls, inquiries, and paperwork. Finding the funding for this position has been a challenge. Of course, we do not want to divert funding away from the animals. But our ability to function as a vibrant organization necessitates a strong administrative presence. Finding the funding support is our goal for 2014.

Our other challenge is finding long-term foster homes. The number of animals we can save is directly tied to the available foster homes. We provide good support to the foster parents, and match them with a dog who is compatible to their living situation. Increasing the number of available foster homes is another major challenge and priority for Wonder Dog.

### What is a short-term foster home, and how can it make a difference?

A short-term foster home is one that will take the dog for a week or two. They are incredibly important, because just getting the dog out of the shelter can be the difference between life and death. Once the dog is in foster care we can fully evaluate the medical and behavioral needs. This isn't always done at the shelters. We look at the euthanasia lists of shelters and have to sometimes make a snap decision — live or die. Knowing that I have, say, six open foster homes means that I can say yes to six of those dogs. So the more foster homes we have — short- or long-term — the more dogs we can save.

One stellar woman stepped in to help a pregnant beagle-Boston mix named Betty at the Stockton shelter. The puppies are going on 1 week of age, and all are doing well. This woman has committed to fostering the litter

and mom until the pups are 8 weeks old, when they are weaned and can be put up for adoption. We couldn't have taken Betty without this woman's support.

### What is the age range of the dogs at Wonder Dog right now?

There is a wide variety, actually. We have a wonderful foster home that specializes in puppies and whelping moms, and she takes in or oversees the fostering of the youngsters. We have young adult dogs and many older dogs too, so the age range right now is 1 day to 14 years!

### What are some of the breeds you have available for adoption right now?

We recently took in eight Boston terriers from a hoarding situation. They are currently in foster homes, where they are being evaluated and retrained to prepare them for loving homes. When we rescued these Bostons, they lived outdoors in cages. Therefore they've all needed help with house training. Some of them become frightened

when their foster parents leave for work. It's understandable, given their prior situation. Providing professional training and support to our foster homes will enable this transition to happen as smoothly as possible, and make sure those loving new homes are forever homes.

We also have two sweet adult pit bulls, a few other Boston terriers, some puppies, and a few middle-aged dogs. Most are small dogs.

### A dog I'd really like to see adopted ...

Brutus, a 4½-year-old Chihuahua we rescued from San Francisco Animal Care and Control about nine months ago. Because he is being fostered outside of the city he doesn't get the visibility others receive from being at mobile adoptions. Also, let's face it ... tan Chihuahuas aren't that popular these days. But Brutus is amazing! His foster mom is a trainer who has been doing "nose and scent" work

with him (this is the layman's version of what search and rescue is about). He is housebroken, well trained, and he does really fun tricks!

### A dog who is a great success story ...

Cricket is my most recent wonderful success story. I received a call from the Turlock shelter about a Boston with paralyzed hindquarters. As soon as I saw her photo I knew we just had to help her. Cricket's back legs are paralyzed, but she uses her chest and front legs to lift the hindquarters off the ground when she walks. We all fell in love with her sweet disposition, but I had a feeling I'd be keeping her, as you can imagine that very few people want a severely disabled dog. Well, I was wrong. Within a few weeks a former adopter contacted us about bringing a new dog into their lives. They told me that they'd learned so much from their dog, Sterling, and this time they

wanted to adopt a dog with special needs. Within minutes of meeting Cricket they were certain that she was the dog for them. Today, Cricket lives in the Watsonville

area. She has two dog companions, a wonderful yard, and a loving home. She goes on hikes with the family in a front carrier; she's a real part of the family, and I couldn't be happier.

### Where can people go online to find out more, see adoptable dogs, volunteer, foster, or donate?

www.wonderdogrescue.org  
To Donate: www.wonderdogrescue.org/donate  
Contact us at: adoption@wonderdogrescue.org  
To foster: foster@wonderdogrescue.org  
Facebook: facebook.com/wonderdogrescuegroup  
Twitter: twitter.com/WonderDogRescue

Wonder Dog Rescue: 2926 16th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, 415-621-3647

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com

## The number of animals we can save is tied to available foster homes.

## We urgently need short and long term foster homes!

Grateful Dogs Rescue partners with the San Francisco city shelter to offer a safe haven and help save dogs' lives. Foster homes – short or long term – are urgently needed. Vet bills for foster dogs are paid by Grateful Dogs Rescue. 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!**

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## MONKEY

Miss Monkey will melt your heart. Three years old and weighing about 12 pounds, Monkey is a fun, spunky, toy-loving terrier mix. She was too shy in the shelter to be adopted but it hasn't taken

her long to blossom. She is equally happy chasing a ball in the yard or snuggling in your lap. Monkey loves respectful children, is a bit wary of abrupt strangers, and is fine with other animals as long as they don't try to overpower her. She knows the sit and down commands and is great on walks. If you're looking for a new sidekick to bring fun and love into your life this Valentine's Day, you can't go wrong with sweet little Monkey!



## RUSSELL

Russell is an easy-going, Chihuahua mix, around 1 or 2 years old. Russell is drawn to kids, so a family with dog-savvy kids would be ideal.

Russell is an outgoing, gentle guy who loves people and other dogs. He walks well on leash, is great in the car and loves the park. When Russell is happy, he rolls on his back and wiggles to get a belly rub. He loves to cuddle up in a little ball next to you for a snooze, but is crate-trained and happy to sleep in his crate at night (if you can resist having this ball of cuteness snuggle with you all night!). Russell will surely charm his way into your heart.



## NARU

Naru is a 7-year-old white miniature poodle who is friendly towards everyone. He loves meeting new dogs during his daily walks and visits at the dog park. He's great indoors. Naru has a sweet temperament and he does well with cats and

dogs of all sizes, and would do best in a home with adults and older kids as his people. Naru has a goofy bouncy walk and is the perfect dog for someone in need of a service dog or emotional support animal. If you're looking for a social and loving dog who will bring joy into your life, Naru is your perfect love match.



## WILBUR

Wilbur is an adorable 7-year-old "Puggle" (a pug and beagle mix) weighing 30 pounds who is ready to shower a forever family with tons of love and

snuggles. He loves his energetic walks to the park. He lives with another dog and we think he would be a great second dog. He loves kids and is very gentle. We have not seen him with cats yet, but he is very sweet with everyone and everything he meets. Wilbur does not have an aggressive bone in his body and is ready to make a lucky person a very loyal and loved companion. Welcome Wilbur's love and affection into your life.



## ROSIE

Rosie is a lovely 5-year-old Rottweiler mix. She loves romping, playing at the dog park, going on walks and lying on her back so you can rub her pretty tummy. Although Rosie currently lives with two big dogs, five adults, a

cat, and a toddler, Rosie would love a forever home with an adult family. Rosie is an energetic 75-pound sweetie who responds to a variety of commands when motivated by a treat! Rosie has some health challenges (she is recovering nicely from ACL surgery for a torn ligament in November, and needs one medication daily) but she would love to be your Valentine rose.



## 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 who loves people. Wonka is about 9 1/2 pounds, is easy to pick up, and loves to be held. Willie Wonka does have some special needs: his hind legs are a bit "wonky" and not as strong as his front legs and he has difficulty with steps, but his MRI revealed no significant problems. 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.

**Check the Grateful Dogs Rescue website for 2014 upcoming Adoption Events Calendar**



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE AND OTHER DOGS:

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

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## THE ADVENTURES OF SKYLAR GREY :: Chapter 9



A devilish Skylar contemplates going for the golden tassels

### The land of low-hanging fruit

by susan dyer reynolds

*It's not what you look like, when you're  
 doin' what you're doin'  
 It's what you're doin' when you're doin'  
 what you look like you're doin'!  
 Express yourself!*

— “Express Yourself!” by Charles Wright

**K**ICKIE ADORED EVERYTHING ABOUT her new “granddog,” Skylar Grey, except for the way she slept: on her back, front legs straight up in the air, back legs spread eagle. “She’s a little hussy,” Kickie would say as Sky snored obliviously.

I reminded Kickie that Jazzy often slept on her back — it’s a pit bull thing. “Studies have shown that dogs who sleep on their backs are the happiest and most secure dogs, willing to expose their most vulnerable body part — their soft underbelly — to potential predators,” I explained. “Well, there are no predators here,” Kickie said with a chuckle. “She’s just a little hussy.”

Lack of modesty aside, Skylar had passed a very important test on her first weekend trip to Grandma’s: She never chewed any of Kickie’s prized tchotchkes, and that was a feat considering the house was full of them. A few months before, when Kickie’s other stepdaughter Sara visited from Arizona, we counted 56 tassels. Kickie loves tassels. She puts them everywhere and on everything, whether they belong there or not. There are tassels hanging from mirrors, tassels hanging from drapes, tassels hanging from lamps, the ceiling, drawer pulls, photographs, and even other tchotchkes. Most of the tassels were at a safe height because Skylar was only four months old, about 25 pounds, and like many pit bulls she was a low rider — built like a sturdy little teapot, short and stout. But with 56 tassels, there was still plenty of low-hanging fruit.

The morning we were preparing to head back to San Francisco, I boasted to Kickie that Sky hadn’t gotten into a single thing. “That’s my good little blockhead,” Kickie said affectionately, patting Sky’s square head. “You’re Grandma’s little angel.”

Skylar followed me when I went to the kitchen to do the breakfast dishes, but she made a detour into the living room. I watched her snoozing in the sun through the window above the sink, which conveniently peered into the living room via a sliding glass door. “You are a little angel,” I said to myself, and turned to pack up her food, bowls and treats. After several trips to the car, I heard Kickie

calling Skylar from the TV room. “Where’s my little blockhead?” she cooed in that high-pitched puppy voice. When I returned to the sink to dry the dishes, I noticed Sky was no longer in view. As I turned the corner into the living room, there she was — sitting on one hip, her green eyes wild and devilish, and a gold tassel swinging from her mouth.

“Where’s my little angel?” Kickie called again. “She’s right here with me,” I shouted, and then I turned to Skylar. “Give me that tassel,” I said under my breath through gritted teeth. Skylar went into the play bow: front legs stretched in front of her, butt wagging in the air. “This is not a game,” I said, but Skylar disagreed. She took off running around the living room, with me chasing her in tight circles. Small enough to get behind chairs, end tables, and sofas, Sky took every opportunity to pause where I couldn’t reach her and show off her prize, which may as well have been a diamond necklace as far as I was concerned. “Stay!” I said, pointing to where Sky was now sitting just a few feet away. I dashed out to the garage where I found a bag of her favorite chicken jerky. Nonchalantly, I reentered the living room where Skylar was sitting in the exact same spot, the tassel still swinging from her mouth in slow motion like a solid gold pendulum. “Here Sky,” I said, holding up the jerky. “I’ll trade you.” Skylar’s eyes grew beady and suspicious, but she raised her nose in the air to see if she could catch a whiff of what I felt was a more than fair exchange. “Do you want this, sweetie?” I asked, crouching in front of her and dangling the jerky just out of reach. She dropped the tassel and went for the jerky, which I held onto tightly until I had the tassel in my other hand. “Go see Grandma,” I said sternly.

As I surveyed the living room trying to figure out where Skylar got the tassel, I noticed a gold rope the exact color draped around a small wastebasket covered in beige cherub brocade. With a sigh of relief, I wiped the puppy slobber off and gently tied the gold tassel back in its rightful place.

When I went to get Sky from the TV room, she was already asleep in her favorite position: on her back, front legs straight up in the air, back legs spread eagle. “I know,” I said to Kickie, who was resting on the couch. “She’s a little hussy.” Kickie smiled, “Yes, but she’s also a little angel.” At that exact moment, Skylar stretched, yawned, and opened one hazel eye as if to wink at me. “Uh-huh,” I said, “an angel, indeed ...”

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

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**Muttville hosts "Love a Senior Saturday"** every Saturday from Noon to 3 p.m. at Muttville's headquarters, located at 255 Alabama Street. Visit [www.muttville.org/events](http://www.muttville.org/events) for more information and other event locations around the Bay.

**Please join us for Haute Dog SF 3, a canine runway event benefiting senior dogs!**

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Get your tickets while you still can for San Francisco's chicest canine event of the year. On February 7th posh pooches will once again showcase couture outfits designed specifically for them by some of the Bay Area's most prominent interior designers with exquisite fabrics provided by showrooms at the San Francisco Design Center (SFDC) as they walk the runway at Haute Dog SF 3. The evening is more than just a night of pretty faces strutting their stuff. This year it is also a chance for the SFDC to raise money for and awareness of Muttville Senior Dog Rescue! **For tickets please visit [www.muttville.org/events/haute-dog-2014.html](http://www.muttville.org/events/haute-dog-2014.html)**

## Meet a few of our available seniors:



### Lily

Lily is recuperating from her time spent at a shelter, poor little girl. Her tail was tucked under her first two days at Muttville, but now she is following volunteers around and really responding, showing that these dogs can really forgive and bounce back. Soft, gentle and long legged, Lily weighs 52 pounds and she's 8 years young. She is a sweet girl that will blossom in the right home. She is an agile dancer, and would love someone to take her for long walks. Lily is fine with dogs, big and small. And when you call her name softly, she will come over for some loving, she is so sweet! It is a wonder to look into her deep brown eyes.



### Daphne

Daphne is a sweet little Chihuahua with a great easygoing personality. She weighs about 6 to 7 pounds and seems to be on the young side at about 6 to 8 years old. She is completely house trained and is very good on leash. She loves sunbathing, chew toys, going for walks or rides in the car, and snuggling with you under the covers. Daphne will win you over with her flirty brown eyes and gentle nature — and she's a real lover, too! She's good with other dogs, as her two foster siblings will attest. She can do stairs and is very adaptable. Give her a bed with a blanket to burrow in and she is all set.



### Levi

Cute little Levi is a bit of a slow walker and if he could talk he would be a slow talker! Levi has a velvet-like coat; he's low to the ground and long like a dachshund (though his darling little face says something else). He is about 7 years old and 12 pounds. Levi would like to be the king of his castle — he can be a bit pushy with some dogs, though he is OK with most dogs. He really is a true charmer and likes to follow you around, though he also has a quiet, easygoing side. We love this little guy and you will, too.



### Vince

What a dude Vince is! We think he is a dachshund/poodle mix, as he's incredibly cute and charming. Vince is 11 pounds and about 7 years young, though he could be younger. He is a happy, fun guy, and he loves other dogs. He's super playful and cuddly. Vince would do well in an active home where he can get lots of love, and he would also like to live with another playful dog.



### Mister Henry

Sweet little Mister Henry is a real cutie and he has the most expressive little face! He weighs 4 pounds and is about 13 years old. He was picked up as a stray and his coat's condition hints that perhaps he lived in a field with plenty of foxtails. Mr. Henry is gentle and quiet and he loves to cuddle. He's just a little pocketful of joy. Mr. Henry had one of the worse mouth infections we've seen and Muttville is taking care of his health issues before he goes to his forever home. Won't be long!



### Nilly

Nilly is a super girl, sweet and easygoing. This lady can dance too, like Milly Vanilly! She is cute as a button and has lots of soul. We think she is about 8 years old; she loves walks, and she's great with other dogs and humans of all ages. She weighs 17 pounds and is perfect for an active home. Please think about making this lovely lady part of your family!

PHOTOS BY: J'ADORE LE CHIEN PET PHOTOGRAPHY,  
[WWW.JADORELECHIEN.COM](http://WWW.JADORELECHIEN.COM)

**To view more adoptable dogs, or to find out about becoming a foster parent, volunteering, or donating, please visit us at [www.muttville.org](http://www.muttville.org)**

**ABOUT MUTTVILLE SENIOR DOG RESCUE:** Muttville Senior Dog Rescue is dedicated to helping older dogs. When senior dogs end up at local shelters — because of a lifelong companion's death or change in circumstance, or because they've been abandoned — they are often passed over for puppies, and overcrowded shelters may have no option other than euthanasia. Muttville rescues these wonderful dogs, gives them the medical care they need, spruces them up with grooming and good food, puts them in a loving foster home, and finds them new forever homes. *Muttville is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization.*

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