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So long Candlestick, and thanks for the memories PHOTO: DAVE WILSON / FLICKR

Freezing with my father at Candlestick Park

by susan dyer reynolds

SOME OF MY BEST RECOLLECTIONS of my father revolve around the one thing that really connected us: sports. I have no doubt, being a tremendous athlete himself, that my dad was hoping for a boy.

He was one away from making the Boston Red Sox as a shortstop when there were only eight major league

teams, and he was an All-American high school basketball player who led his Pawtucket, R.I., team to a state championship. After graduating from San Jose State with a degree in physical education, he went on to coach high school basketball and golf, but baseball was always his true love. From the time I could walk, he had a mitt on my hand. The bad news was that he didn't have a boy; the good

news was that he had a girl who could outplay a lot of the boys. Much to my father's delight, I became an All-Star catcher, nicknamed "Gunner" because of my strong arm, and I had a homerun-socking bat to match, making me one of the most feared players in the league.

When my father married my mother and decided to move to California

CANDLESTICK, continued on 11

Where to go from here

Exploring what can be done to deal with city growth successfully

by john zipperer

Final of a four-part series

WHEN NPR'S COMEDY NEWS QUIZ PROGRAM *Wait Wait Don't Tell Me* visited San Francisco in late July, host Peter Sagal joked, "We're here in San Francisco, ... and even though it's only been a week, all of us at *Wait Wait* have changed. For one thing, we are now all millionaires. ... Somebody came up, gave us \$10 million each; we're supposed to make an app or something. Whatever."

A city such as Detroit can only dream about having a problem with too many young, high-income people moving in. But in San Francisco, the influx has created or exacerbated problems that have existed for years with too little new housing, a sclerotic development process, and a political system pitting a pro-development establishment against a large activist community that fears its concerns are being ignored. Even outside of that heated political confrontation, there is uncertainty among many who simply wonder how their city is changing and whether they will like what it is becoming.

"Cities, countries evolve and change, and I don't think you should be afraid of that," says District 2 Supervisor

GROWING CITY, continued on 4

THE COASTAL COMMUTER :: In memorium

Change and loss in the city of gloss

by michael snyder

A DAY PRIOR TO WRITING THIS piece, I posted a status update on Facebook about the demise of a favorite Thai restaurant in my neighborhood — a pleasant, increasingly upscale district that has become a playground for many of the carpetbagging, overpaid, and profligate technoids who have overrun San Francisco and priced longtime citizens out of the city.

The restaurant was closing its doors after decades of providing tasty, occasionally exotic, and always reasonably priced food to locals. Someone (I suspect a greedy, speculating, real-estate-flipping vampire) bought the building and is more than tripling the rent from \$4,000 a month to — get ready! — \$13,000 a month. Thus, bye-bye Thai. While I was having a last dinner there, the pang of loss almost overwhelmed the satisfaction provided by the flavors. Then again, in a city where a gallon

of water can cost \$2, a cup of cold-brewed coffee sells for \$5, and the new molecular gastronomy joint up the block charges \$23 for a plate of chanterelle mushrooms mixed with corn and potatoes creamed in carrot juice, should I really be surprised?

Responses to my Facebook posting were numerous and impassioned. One native San Franciscan now living in Oregon called the situation heartbreaking. Another expat who relocated to Los Angeles mourned the loss of the Thai joint, saying how amazing the food was and pointing out that she had watched the owner's kids grow up over the years. She also recalled seeing a crew of drunk, belligerent over-age frat boys with the whiff of Google about them as they joyfully ripped newly planted trees out of a sidewalk near the Thai restaurant that was.

One commenter from Santa Monica asserted that it will all fall apart at some point, though not before more damage is done to the Bay Area. The same person

COASTAL COMMUTER continued on 4



Find out what the tourists know at Calzone's PHOTO: COURTESY CALZONE'S

Consider Calzone's

by ernest beyl

SOMETIMES I THINK Calzone's — the North Beach, high-style *ristorante* with a lot of sidewalk action — gets a bum rap. "Too touristy," one is apt to hear. What's wrong with that? Attracting tourists to your restaurant is bad? Don't

Chez Panisse, the French Laundry, Gary Danko, or the Tadich Grill attract tourists? — who, by the way, eat well and have a hell of a good time.

Let's get real here. Calzone's brings 'em to North Beach. It's exuberantly and unmistakably Italian like the *ristorantes* along

Rome's Via Veneto. One imagines Fellini, just out of sight, observing. Sitting on the sidewalk under the awning and the heat lamps — when necessary — and observing the Columbus Avenue strollers, can be salubrious. But Calzone's deserves some serious atten-

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TOP 10 STEAKS IN AMERICA

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



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ONLINE SPECIALS

Evalyn Barron, expanded calendar listings, complete archives, and more on www.marinatimes.com

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NEWS BRIEFS :: Roundup across the city

More Central Subway?

WASHINGTON SQUARE SUBWAY STATION

Hoping for a convenient and quick ride downtown when the city's long-planned and uber-controversial Central Subway extension is completed, the Russian Hill Neighbors group is urging city leaders to build a stop on the line at Washington Square and to extend the line to Fisherman's Wharf.

Current plans call for the new line's northern end to be in Chinatown. Additional info is online at sfnextstop.org.

LAURA'S LAW BECOMES LAW IN SF

After a 12-year journey, Laura's Law is now the law in San Francisco. The bill, pushed by District 2 Supervisor Mark Farrell, passed the Board of Supervisors July 8 by a 9-2 vote.

The law was adopted in Sacramento back in 2002 but not implemented in San Francisco until now. It allows court-ordered

mental health treatment for people with serious mental illness, a history of psychiatric hospitalizations, jailings, or threats.

The law "is not a panacea for mental health treatment here in San Francisco, but another tool in the tool box for our city to help those suffering from a clinically identified severe mental illness," said Farrell. "Most important, Laura's Law will provide appropriate treatment services for our most vulnerable residents, reduce hospitalization and incarceration rates, and improve public safety for our residents and visitors."

NEW RESERVOIR PARK INCHES AHEAD

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission in July approved a land transfer of the Francisco Reservoir. If approved by the mayor and the Board of Supervisors, the land located between Larkin

and Hyde streets south of Bay Street will be taken over by the Recreation and Park Department for use as a city park.

JAIL STAFFING SHORTAGE COSTS CITY MILLIONS

A San Francisco Civil Grand Jury has issued a report claiming that the Sheriff's Department can't meet state-mandated staffing levels without spending millions of dollars extra on overtime. The group found that the problem was exacerbated by complex bureaucracy for handling injury pay and budgeting, and that job-related disabilities affected a large number of deputies.

There was a bit of a negative feedback loop involved, with the needed overtime work then raising the incidence of injury to deputies on jail duty.

News tips? E-mail: john@marinatimes.com

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The In-Box: Letters to the Times

First, George Lucas had no plan for the museum ["When did S.F. become the no-go city?" *Marina Times*, July 2014, page 7]. Would it contain souvenirs from his childhood? Would it contain mostly *Star Wars* materials that would really just serve as an advertising vehicle for him? And why San Francisco? Why not Modesto, his hometown? He celebrated Modesto in *American Graffiti*, so obviously he feels a link to that city. But why San Francisco? He did most of his work in Marin.

Also, San Francisco has enough museums: The Italian Museum, the Cartoon Arts museum, the Jewish museum, The Mexican Museum, the GBLT museum, the Musée Mécanique, the Wells Fargo museum, the Palace of the Legion of Honor, the de Young Art Museum, the Disney family museum, the Asian Art museum, the African diaspora museum, the Fire Department museum, the Cable Car museum, the YBCA museum/gallery, the Exploratorium, the Market Street Railway museum, the USS Pampanito, the C.A. Thayer, the Museum of Modern Art, California Historical Society museum, the Beat museum, Pacific Heritage museum, Folk Art & Craft museum, the Craft & Design museum, the Balclutha.

That's 26 - 26 museums just within San Francisco!

We don't need any more tourists; we don't need any more traffic congestion. And we don't need any cheap museum that's going to promote George Lucas and his *Star Wars* films.

David Kaye
San Francisco

Just read your article ["Of Chillows, children and Chihuahuas," *Marina Times*, July 2014, page 30]. [I've had a] picture up in one of our rooms since your Jazzy articles. You are a fine writer, you are an exceptional human being, and I want to express appreciation for all you have done, are doing, and will do.

We have cats (four). I only wish there was some way to show this appreciation. Many good wishes for you and Skylar.

Lynn Taussig
San Francisco

Susan Dyer Reynolds responds: Thank you so much for your touching letter. As far as helping, there are so many ways. Passing along the articles to raise awareness is a great way to help; just starting a dialogue about the problems in our broken shelter system. Stopping to say "hi" to pit bulls and telling their owners that you have read about Jazzy and Skylar means a lot to us, because so often we face ignorant comments from people who only believe what they see "on the news."

Adopting, volunteering and donating means the world to great groups like Friends of San Francisco Animal Care and Control; Muttville; Rocket Dog; and the many other rescues I write about. Letters to city officials like the Board of Supervisors supporting the great work Rebecca Katz and her team are doing at ACC and telling them that you support additional funding for them — they do so much with so little. And, of course, continuing to love and support animals as I know you do with your four cats.

E-mail: letters@marinatimes.com



Muni's aging and overcrowded fleet of buses, trolleys, and trains are sorely in need of investment PHOTO: ZBORALSKI

GROWING CITY

CONTINUED from page 1

Mark Farrell. “We need to embrace it. But pay close attention to how it’s changing such that the things that we value most about San Francisco do not change. As an example, I believe what makes our city more unique than any other aspect is our different neighborhoods, whether it be the Marina, the Castro, the Mission, West Portal, or Chinatown.” He says that the distinct neighborhoods not only make them good to live in but are a big part of the reason people visit the city. “We don’t want to be strip malls. We don’t want to be just high-rise apartment buildings. Does that mean neighborhoods have to look exactly as they do or did 30 years ago? No. It’s a balancing act, ultimately.

“But that’s the beauty of San Francisco,” Farrell says. “It’s not in packing a million-plus people inside San Francisco *just because*. That would do no good. It is a fine line between people being protectionist and people opening the flood gates.”

In 1827, Brazil’s leaders were presented with a plan to move its capital from Rio de Janeiro to a more central location. More than 130 years later, that plan was finally put into action with the construction of an entirely new city, Brasília, planned from the ground-up in futuristic mid-century style. Brasília now has the country’s fourth largest population and its highest per capita income.

One might love or hate Brasília’s architecture, but the city’s creation was a rare opportunity. Almost every other urban challenge has to be met within an existing, functioning urban environment of aggressive change-makers, NIMBYists, limited land, and many, many competing interests. Such is the case in San Francisco.

Though expensive and limited housing is at the root of many of the complaints about San Francisco’s current dilemma, Stephen

Smith argued on Forbes.com that it’s not just housing that encourages gentrification. “The first 100-unit rental building with the neighborhood’s first high-quality grocery store is a huge boon, but the hundredth glass tower with the neighborhood’s fifth bank won’t even be noticed,” Smith argues. “It’s at this point that the price-lowering effect of dumping new units on the market will outweigh the price-raising effect of the new amenities — in other words, prices will start to fall. The problem with American urban development patterns is that once a neighborhood has its amenities, new development grinds to a halt. Wealthier new residents have more political savvy than the old ones, and they use this to impose a protective NIMBY shield around the neighborhood.”

Smith says that new development needs to occur across a city, in a variety of neighborhoods (with different socio-economic levels). However, “politicians prefer to channel growth towards poor neighborhoods rather than risk upsetting rich people’s views and property values.”

San Francisco’s system and political leaders “sometimes make it unnecessarily hard [to develop housing] by putting obstacles in place that don’t necessarily make it [better],” says District 8 Supervisor Scott Wiener.

“It’s a democratic process here in San Francisco, as with anywhere else,” says Farrell. “The reality is we have people who are very passionate about different parts of San Francisco. On the left, on the right, in the middle — the great part is that people are involved in our city. Overall, and generically, it definitely slows growth. In times like these, maybe a number of people view that as a good thing. A similar person could look at it and say, if we had done a better job previously, planning for where we are today, we wouldn’t have all these crises that we do.”

Along with housing, another crisis of a more-crowded city is transportation.

Parking has become more expensive, bikes have become more prevalent, and Muni is groaning under the weight of increased ridership, high operation costs, and insufficient investment.

Farrell says Muni problems are nothing new. “Muni has always been an issue in San Francisco. Since fourth or fifth grade, I was riding Muni across the city by myself all the time and knew every route. But certainly as we increase population, and increase the combination of Muni riders and more bicyclists and drivers, every issue becomes more exacerbated. I think that the fault lies across the board. People drive recklessly, people ride their bikes recklessly, and people walk recklessly across the street. Everyone needs to do a better job and realize that we are living in a more congested city than before and need to take a deep breath. In terms of spending — no, we are not spending enough on infrastructure at all. The reality is, and I tell you this as chair of our Budget and Finance Committee, every year there is a finite amount of money you can spend and you have to delineate priorities.”

“When we’re trying to run a city, you have to deal with the big mega-issues, as well as the small issues in between,” says Wiener, who also sits on the budget committee. “For example, I’ve been very focused recently on double parking, which seems like this petty thing, but especially in a growing city it has huge impacts in terms of traffic and public transportation and bike safety. But it’s one of those things that gets overlooked. I’m also focused on having better nighttime transportation. We’ve got very inadequate night-time transportation. But particularly

as we grow, we know our night-time economy is very large, we’re very interconnected with Oakland; we have to stop pretending everything shuts down after rush hour. Issues like that are really solvable issues, and it’s important to focus on them.”

The debates that either hone public policy or — depending on your view — prevent anything from getting done are a factor of life, especially in outspoken San Francisco. “It’s part of the process I saw coming into city government,” says Farrell. “Elected officials — I’m not blaming anyone or any group in particular, but if it’s an issue that’s going to face the government 10, 20 years down the line, they’re going to be out of office at that time. Why would they spend the time to fix an issue and take some lumps?”

Efforts to deal with longer-term issues of importance to cities are therefore often

taken on by regional associations of governments and planning departments. This allows them to address issues in-depth and, they hope, be removed a bit from the day-to-day political resistance to change and to sacrifices needed for long-term planning. For example, OneBayArea is a collaboration between four government agencies and associations, including the Association of Bay Area Governments; it focuses on collaborative planning for the region’s communities. But results are mixed, and taking the planners out of the bruising local political hubbub leaves them open to charges of being unresponsive or uncommunicative concerning people’s needs.

“My personal wish is that the people in charge of these planning organizations would do a good job of communicating and involving the community,” said Andre Shashaty, president of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. “Some of the California regional planning agencies have done a reasonably good job. The Southern California Association of Governments did a pretty good job with their sustainability strategy. I would give the Association of Bay Area Governments bad marks, because I don’t think they did a good job of messaging and I don’t think they did a good job of soliciting public input. The result is that they created a backlash against transit-oriented zoning and land-use planning. [People are] sensitive about being told what to do by a regional organization.”

So within the confines of the borders around San Francisco’s 46.9 square miles,

“In terms of spending — no, we are not spending enough on infrastructure at all,” says Supervisor Farrell.

the problems and opportunities presented by surging population and expenses are being met not by building an entirely new city on virgin land, nor by rejecting all change to keep the neighborhoods unchanged, nor by giving way to rampant development in every corner of town.

The needs instead are being met by a series of initiatives, including increasing investment for Muni (see page 7); fulfilling Mayor Ed Lee’s plans to boost housing by 30,000 units, with large portions dedicated to low- and middle-income residents; implementing Wiener’s initiative to expand in-law housing; increase police protection; and other similar step-by-step efforts. Like every cobbled-together approach to solving complex and dynamic problems, the results are certain to continue to be controversial and certain to need updating as they are unveiled and implemented.

No ’hood stays the same forever.

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COASTAL COMMUTER

CONTINUED from page 1

said that San Francisco is making L.A. look good, adding that the same thing is happening there; but with more land and less tech business, it’s not as wild, wrenching, and widespread. Finally, a San Francisco loyalist with obvious survival skills chimed in: “Hooray for rent control and home cooking!”

Sure, there’s some affordable housing for those who are grandfathered in, and you can dine in your kitchen instead of going to the gourmet sandwich shop. Still, the working class and the middle class are now the collective underclass in San Francisco. As for the artists, they’re simply disappearing.

I can’t stop myself. When triggered, I will go on about how San Francisco is less friendly to artists

of all stripes than it used to be. We used to hear about the city as the ideal place to “woodshed” one’s craft before taking it to L.A. or New York. Now, even a woodshed in the Bay Area will cost you the arm you paint with and the leg you dance upon.

It’s easy and fair to blame skyrocketing rents and ancillary costs for the dwindling number of artists living within the city limits. An apartment is necessary, and a studio space is to be prized, but cheap real estate and San Francisco now seem to be mutually exclusive concepts — other than by virtue of rent control.

The serious diaspora actually began in the 1990s. A hearty gang of underground types had moved into South of Market warehouse spaces in the late 1970s and 1980s,

but renovation and gentrification drove a lot of them to more hospitable environs across the Bay in Emeryville and Oakland. In the 21st century, those places are becoming prohibitively expensive, too. Hipness costs.

Cheap real estate and San Francisco now seem to be mutually exclusive concepts.

Compared to the compact hills and dales of San Francisco, the massive urban sprawl of Los Angeles is much more conducive to those seeking to sharpen their artistic talents on a shoestring. Space is obviously more plentiful, and rents are more down-to-earth, especially when you factor in Encino and points

east in the San Fernando Valley. Plus, there are more entertainment gigs, production companies, theaters, clubs, and galleries, and probably more patrons and collectors with disposable income (although many Silicon

people in the NorCal region have money to burn). In short, you can still find a place to live in L.A. — not to mention a bite to eat — that won’t bankrupt an artist, and more potential for work.

In the wake of the Facebook update about the restaurant and the changing city, one of my San Francisco-to-Los Angeles buddies messaged me that the Southland was ready to welcome me back — and that Hollywood’s Thai Town eateries weren’t going anywhere. I’m always glad to head

to L.A., where friends and jobs and playtime abound, and I follow my beloved Giants on the laptop or at a sports bar. And I’ll be excited to return north by the start of football season when the 49ers play at their fancy-schmancy state-of-the-art stadium in Santa Clara for the first time. That would be Levi’s Stadium, in the heart of the Silicon Valley, where the price of a season ticket is roughly the GNP of a Third World country and many an old-time 49er Faithful has been priced out of the picture. Sound familiar?

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

SEE OUR PROGRESS

in the Marina

Lauren Cunningham

Senior Meter Program Manager

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POLICE BLOTTER : Dispatches from the officers of Northern Station

Crime on the streets

THE TREND IN LOCAL CRIME IS heading in the right direction, says Northern Station Captain Greg McEachern. "While we still see incidents occurring at random times and locations, we are not seeing the same level of criminal activity as we saw at this time last year," he notes. "I attribute the decreased activity to increased police presence due to recent hirings, strategic deployment of personnel to hot-spot locations and activity, and public education campaigns which ... the public have embraced as a requisite to remain safe."

Here are the crime statistics comparing May 2014 to May 2013.

Violent Crime

- Citywide homicide: down 36%
- Northern District homicide: down 50%
- Citywide rape: up 6%
- Northern District rape: up 27%
- Citywide robbery: down 26%
- Northern District robbery: down 30%
- Citywide aggravated assault: down 1%
- Northern District aggravated assault: down 19%
- Citywide burglary: up 3%
- Northern District burglary: up 13%
- Citywide auto theft: up 12%
- Northern District auto theft: up 15%
- Citywide theft from vehicle: up 7%
- Northern District theft from vehicle: down 7%
- Citywide arson: down 9%
- Northern District arson: up 22%

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

JUST HELPING A FRIEND

June 2, 11:20 a.m.
1300 Block of Van Ness Avenue

A local store summoned police officers to report a credit card fraud in progress. The officers arrived to find the male subject still on the scene; he told them he was just picking up a table for his friend. The officers checked his receipt and the card number was the same as one that was reported stolen, with a known loss of more than \$400. The subject was arrested and booked at Northern Station.

JUST HELPING HIMSELF TO A BIKE

June 3, 11:30 a.m.
2200 Block of Greenwich Street

After locating a motorcycle that had been reported stolen, police officers attempted to return it to its rightful owner. But the owner showed up to the scene without keys or a motorcycle helmet, so the officers made arrangements to have the bike towed and released it to its owner.

While the owner was waiting for the tow truck, the alleged thief returned to the bike and attempted to take it again.

He explained that he had purchased the motorcycle for \$600 and he knew it was stolen; he gave the key to the rightful owner, begging him not to call the police. The owner nonetheless called 911 when the subject slapped the phone out of his hands. At this point, the police officers arrived and detained the subject, who was booked at Northern Station.

OWNER UNKNOWN

June 8, 7:22 a.m.
Olive Street at Van Ness Avenue

Officers were dispatched to where a witness was reportedly following the subject of an auto burglary. The witness directed the officers to the subject, who was detained carrying a bag. The subject said the clothing in the bag was his, as was the wallet inside the bag.

Then, officers say the subject appeared to get more nervous. He said that he found the clothing in "the dumpster," but couldn't tell officers which dumpster. Then he said he found the clothing on the street.

The witness confirmed that the detained subject was the person seen smashing the window of the vehicle. The witness also directed officers to the location of the vehicle, but when officers ran a computer check on the car, they got only a P.O. box and not an address, so they were unable to locate the owner at that time.

The subject was booked at Northern Station.

CANDID CAMERA

June 9, 2 a.m.
1300 Block of Post Street

A security guard called to report a bicycle theft in progress. He was watching the subject via the building's security camera, and he said the subject appeared to be stripping parts off a bike. He described the subject, who was wearing a distinctive "Cal" hooded sweatshirt.

Police officers arrived and detained the subject, who admitted to stealing the bike parts and also admitted that he was on probation. He was booked at Northern Station.

KNIFEPOINT ROBBERY

June 9, 8:05 a.m.
Farrell at Larkin Streets

Officers were called regarding a reported robbery in progress. The suspect was described as a female wearing a blue sweatshirt and jeans; she had a large knife that she used to rob a male victim. A witness told officers the subject had entered an address on Ellis Street.

Officers were able to locate the victim, who had spots of blood on his head and shirt, and they got further details from him. He said he had been hit in the head by multiple subjects who then stole \$95 from him. The police officers summoned medics to tend to his wounds.

Officers were also able to locate two subjects, who were identified by the victim. The two subjects were arrested and booked at County Jail.



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What San Francisco's new budget accomplishes

by mark e. farrell

THIS YEAR I AM ONCE AGAIN serving as chair of our Budget and Finance Committee at the Board of Supervisors. Our budget process is long and complicated, but for the second year in a row, we passed the budget unanimously at the Board, and it was signed by Mayor Ed Lee.

As with last year, my goal during budget season was to develop consensus among my colleagues for a comprehensive budget we could all support. This year not only am I continuing to serve as chair of the committee, but my other committee members remained the same since last year, so we had a relatively knowledgeable group heading into budget season including supervisors Mar, Avalos, Breed, and Wiener.

Heading into this year's budget season, despite the growing local economy and a number of other structural financial measures we put into place over the past few years, we still faced a budget deficit of approximately \$66 million. Though it was small compared to an approximately \$585 million deficit we faced during my first year in office in 2011, we were still forced to make difficult decisions.

The mayor's total proposed budget for FY 2014–2015 and FY 2015–2016 was \$8.6 billion for each year.

The proposal closed budget deficits of \$66.7 million in FY 2014–15 and \$133.4 million in FY 2015–16. The mayor focused on addressing economic conditions and in particular the lack of affordable housing. To meet this need, Mayor Lee included \$94 million in additional new funding to expedite affordable housing projects, including \$2 million to support rehabilitation of vacant units at the Housing Authority, for which a number of us were pushing; these units can be renovated quickly and have the ability to provide affordable housing immediately for San Francisco residents.

Other highlights include investments in our public infrastructure to make San Francisco more livable, including fully funding our street repaving program, which will repave 1,700 blocks. Mayor Lee also included a 10 percent service increase in Muni to address crowding and reliability. Investments to our urban environment were also included, with a new street-cleaning crew and an arborist apprenticeship program in the Department of Public Works, as well as additional park patrol staff and urban forestry maintenance crew within the Recreation and Park Department.

Thankfully the mayor's proposal continued to fund the city's six-year public safety hiring plan to train the next generation of public safety

officers and personnel. When I first came to City Hall, the Board of Supervisors had failed to fund public safety to levels required by our city charter, but since I have been in office, we have turned that around. Over the next two fiscal years, we will hire 300 new police officers, 96 firefighters, 30 paramedics, and 10 911 dispatchers to enhance community safety.

Our expanded Budget and Finance Committee started meeting weekly back in March to develop an overview of our budget, financial trends from our local economy and tax projections, as well as budget updates from our large city departments. The meat of our work took place, as always, during the last two weeks of June, where each day of the week our committee held hearings in which city departments presented their budgets. These two weeks of hearings involved a critical, birds-eye view of every line item in the mayor's proposed budget to find savings and reallocate funds to priorities not addressed in that budget. This gave each supervisor the opportunity to make certain that both district and citywide needs were addressed. Ultimately, I was extremely pleased that we were able to come to a consensus budget and pass the FY 2014–15 and FY 2015–16 budget unanimously out of committee to the full board.

This year the Budget & Finance Committee found more than \$40 million in savings, with more than \$23 million for the first year and more than \$18 million for the second. With these savings, we funded a number of key priorities through the city and across various neighborhoods. Highlights include:

- \$3 million in increased funds for homeless services, including shallow rental subsidies and homeless prevention efforts
- \$2 million in increased funds for food security, in particular meals for low-income seniors
- Increased funds for pedestrian safety efforts throughout San Francisco (labeled "Vision Zero")
- Significantly increased capacity for our park patrol officers
- Increased funds for the SFFD arson investigation team
- Increase in funds for crucial cleaning and maintenance services throughout the city
- Invest in youth and senior specific services

We passed the budget unanimously out of committee just past midnight on June 27 (the earliest in recent history), and the full Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to pass the budget at our July 15 and July 22 meetings. Mayor Lee officially signed the budget the next day.

My priorities for this year's budget continued to resonate similar

themes as last year: prioritize fiscal responsibility to protect our city during the next downturn, fund essential city services such as public safety, and promote quality of life infrastructure projects throughout the neighborhoods of San Francisco, such as parks and road repaving. I am proud that after this budget season, we have now more than doubled our financial reserves since I first came into office, and with the mayor's support we have funded a significant number of my priorities citywide and within District 2 in particular.

Within District 2, I strongly advocated for a number of park projects and secured funds for much needed improvements at Alta Plaza Park and Mountain Lake Park playground. I also worked to secure adequate funding to move the Francisco Reservoir Park project forward. In addition, I have heard loud and clear from my constituents about the need for traffic and pedestrian improvements, and I secured over \$100,000 for stop signs, speed bumps, and other pedestrian safety measures to improve the quality of our roads and safety of our citizens. Other priorities include funds for additional cleaning in our commercial corridors every Sunday and funds for family services and community building efforts within our District 2 neighborhoods.

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Jeremy Affeldt tends to some of his customers/fans at Peet's PHOTO: TONY AVELAR

Getting around town

by john zipperer

THE MUNI 30 STOCKTON

What a difference a bus stop makes. That's the message of numerous Marina residents who have written or called the *Marina Times* to complain about the 30 Stockton stop moving from Divisadero and Chestnut to Fillmore and Chestnut.

"The worst was ... when I was out at night with my 76-year-old mother," longtime Marina resident Leslie Udland told us. "There were two 43 buses in the space, and the 30 had to stop in the street. We were told to get off, and my poor mom had to cling to the rails to get down the bus steps and then try to land on the street ... in total darkness. Yes, there is no lighting in the area, so you're forced to exit in the dark."

She says her calls to Muni have gone unanswered. We'll have more on this next month.

JEREMY AFFELDT PITCHES IN FOR LARKIN

Giants pitching star Jeremy Affeldt offered up some relief in late June for Larkin Street Youth Services, the local nonprofit that provides housing, education, and health services for homeless and at-risk children. Affeldt was the star barista for a special one-hour event at Peet's Coffee & Tea's Marina store. In addition to signing autographs and serving drinks, Affeldt joined Peet's in presenting a check for \$5,000 to Larkin.

STRUT YOUR MUTT RETURNS TO SAN FRANCISCO

For everyone who likes parading their dog down Chestnut or up Union or

takes special pride in having the coolest dog playing at Crissy Field, it might be time to think about loading the dog and the family into the car and taking a short ride to Treasure Island on Saturday, Aug. 23. That's the day when Best Friends Animal Society is holding Strut Your Mutt.

Best friends, a leader in the no-kill movement in the United States, expanded Strut Your Mutt from Salt Lake City to 12 cities.

of small businesses that has enabled many newcomers, notably women and minorities, to gain a foothold into our food economy."

MEXICAN PRESIDENT AND THE MEXICAN MUSEUM

Andrew Kluger, chairman of the board of The Mexican Museum (Fort Mason Center, Building D), recently returned from a trip to Mexico during which he met with Mexican President

Enrique Peña Nieto. According to Kluger, Nieto "acknowledged The Mexican Museum's leadership role as a standard bearer for Mexico's rich culture, history, and

art here in the United States. In addition, he has pledged his full support of our plans for an expanded new museum facility in the heart of San Francisco's Yerba Buena Garden Arts District."

The Mexican president also received from Kluger a copy of *The Mexican Museum's book Tesoros del Museo*, which highlights the institution's collections. In addition, Kluger met with officials from the National University of Mexico to discuss working together on future programming, and he invited Mexican leaders to the groundbreaking ceremony for the museum's new site in early 2015.

OVERHEARD ALONG THE BAY

Mother: The America's Cup is not coming back to San Francisco.

Son: Why?

Mother: Because San Francisco's greedy.

Husband: They wanted more money.

Child: How much? A million dollars?

Tips for the Northsider? E-mail: john@marinatimes.com

Many Marina residents have called or written to complain about the 30 Stockton.

Last year, more than 500 people and 425 dogs participated in San Francisco's Strut Your Mutt, raising \$77,929 for shelters and rescue groups.

The event on Treasure Island begins with 9 a.m. registration and a 10:30 a.m. start. Learn more at strutyourmutt.org.

ON AND OFF THE GRID

Off the Grid was named Assemblymember Phil Ting's small business of the year in July. Ting presented Off the Grid owner Matt Cohen with the legislative resolution during the food truck's Fort Mason gathering July 18.

"Off the Grid began in the Marina with a simple idea to group street food vendors together, drawing inspiration from Cohen's experiences attending Asian night markets while living in Japan," said Ting. "The first gathering happened in the Fort Mason parking lot with 10 vendors in 2010. The location on federal land was free from the city's street food rules — literally 'off the grid.'"

"As I see it, Off the Grid is a food truck phenomenon," added Ting. "It is a business

SKETCHES FROM A NORTH BEACH JOURNAL

Filthy McNasty, Freddie Freeloader, Magnolia Thunderpussy, Lavern Cummings ... and a happy birthday to Tony Bennett

by ernest beyl

TONY BENNETT'S BIRTHDAY IS AUG. 3. And where will he have his birthday party? Well, right where he left his heart last time he was in San Francisco — at Gigi's Sotte Mare, the estimable North Beach seafood joint on Green Street. Bennett is taking over Gigi's on his 88th birthday for 20 or so of his closest friends. Happy Birthday to Anthony Dominick Benedetto!

KEYSTONE KORNER

The other day I walked up Vallejo Street in North Beach on my way to Central Station. I wanted to ask the cops there a question about something I was planning to write for this column. But, being an Aries with a short attention span, I began thinking about other things. I passed Little Garden, a Chinese restaurant at 750 Vallejo, and the other things I started thinking about were a long-gone jazz club called Keystone Korner and the jazz artists who played there back in the 1970s. So I dropped in to Little Garden for pot stickers and to commune with some jazz ghosts.

FILTHY MCNASTY

The first ghost who made his appearance was the great hard bop, jazz pianist Horace Silver, who died a couple of months ago. In my mind's ear, I could hear his jumpy, funky tune "Filthy McNasty." I knew Horace slightly because wherever he performed — if I happened to be within striking distance — you could find me listening to the Horace Silver Quintet. He finally got to recognize me in the audience. I not only heard Horace Silver at the Village Gate in New York's Greenwich Village and at the Monterey Jazz Festival, where I talked to him backstage, but I dropped in one night to hear him at Keystone Korner. He played some of his great stuff — "Song for my Father" (about his Cape Verde Islands, Afro-Portuguese father), "Sister Sadie" and "The Preacher." Between sets, he walked by my table, acknowledged me as a fan, sat down, and I bought him a drink. I told him how much I enjoyed his music and he asked me what my favorite Horace Silver tune was. I replied, "Filthy McNasty." He said he would play it in the next set. And he did — dedicating it to "my friend, Filthy McErnie."

FREDDIE FREELOADER

Ghost number two was Miles Davis. One night I went to Keystone Korner to hear the mercurial Miles. Miles was not in a good mood that night. Was he ever in a good mood? Not in my presence, and I heard him play many times. He was a wonderful artist but the word *prickly* was invented for him. Between sets at Keystone Korner, I timidly approached the man and requested politely that in the next set could he please play "Freddie Freeloader" — from his great 1959 album *Kind of Blue*. "Get lost," he said in his gravelly voice and turned his back on me. Over those pot stickers at Little Garden I thought I heard Miles playing "Freddie Freeloader," and just like last time I heard Miles say "get lost" — so I did.

MAGNOLIA THUNDERPUSSY

No, I am not just making up these names. Magnolia Thunderpussy — aka Patricia Mallon — provided the food ser-

vice for the Keystone Korner. A third generation San Franciscan who could trace her roots back to pre-1906 Earthquake and Fire, she ran a catering service in the Haight-Ashbury during the heyday of that neighborhood. She served what she called "dirty food." Don't get me started.

LAVERN FROM SOPRANO TO BARITONE

Recently I got a letter from Paul L. Cummings from Las Vegas about a Back Story I wrote on Finnochio's, the wonderful club featuring female impersonators that was above the old Enrico's sidewalk cafe on Broadway. Cummings's middle initial stands for Lavern, his stage name when he performed at Finnochio's from 1956 to 1982. He wrote that he was still performing occasionally as a male, apparently having given up the lip gloss and high heels. So, in this case, what goes from San Francisco to Las Vegas apparently stays in Vegas. And by extension, what goes to Chicago (the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art) stays in Chicago and what will likely go to San Diego (America's Cup) may stay in San Diego. Now if we could only send Art Agnos and Aaron Peskin to Chicago or San Diego we could slow down progress in those cities and speed up our own.

ANNUAL WORST DRESSED LIST

Well, once again I anxiously scanned the pages of the *Nob Hill Gazette* to find out if I was included on the paper's Annual Best Dressed List. Alas, I was not. I'm thinking of establishing the counterpart of the *Gazette's* silly list here in the *Marina Times*. It will be called Ernesto's Annual Worst Dressed List and I, who get most of my clothes from my North Beach, on-the-street, haberdasher Bernardo Quintana, will take the top award.

THE ANGELA CHRONICLES

I sat down in Caffe Trieste with Angela Alioto not too long ago to discuss Lawrence Ferlinghetti's Piazza St. Francis-Poets' Corner. Readers of this column will recall that I have frequently taken potshots at Angela over what I perceive as endless delays in the project to establish an Italianate pedestrian plaza on that short block of Vallejo Street where Caffe Trieste and the Shrine of St. Francis of Assisi cohabit. It would be pleasant to see Lawrence's vision — which he first articulated in 1998 — come to pass in Lawrence's lifetime. When we met, Angela was "on the record" as we big city scribes say, and she told me: "I will raise \$1.8 million for the Piazza St. Francis-Poets' Corner. That's my goal." She has hired a fundraiser to assist her and is paying him a modest monthly retainer out of her own pocket. "By October or November of this year I will have all the money in the bank — if the city does its part," she said. The city has stipulated that it will provide (at no cost to the project) the necessary underground infrastructure. Angela continued: "If that comes together, above-the-ground construction should begin by October this year. So if all falls into place, completion of the Piazza St. Francis-Poets' Corner will be about February 2015."

Is that what Herb Caen would have called a scooplet?

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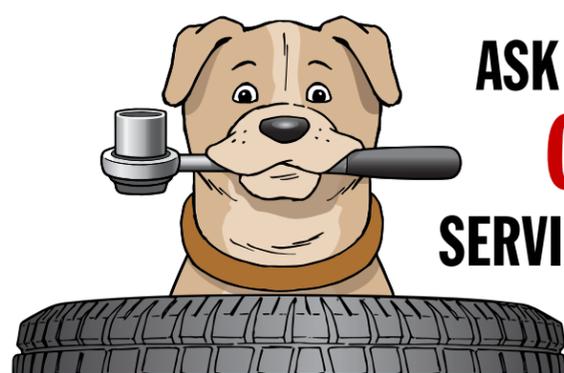


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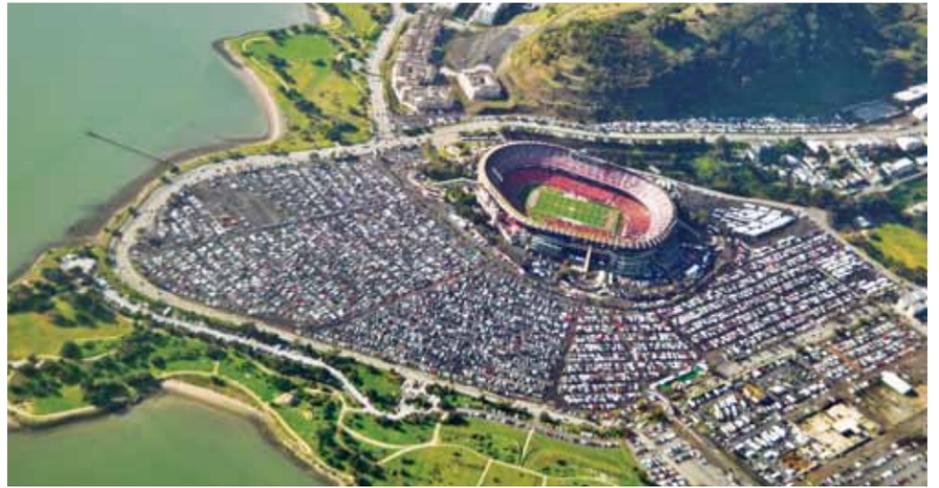
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SPORTS CORNER ∴ An alternative to Candlestick



Candlestick looked warmer from a distance

PHOTO: AMEHDIZA / FLICKR

Down but not out in Fresno

by steve hermanos

IF WATCHING A MID-summer baseball game at Candlestick Park was an arctic experience, watching a few miles north at the ballpark at McCovey Cove is as often subarctic. It's a few degrees warmer than Candlestick; the down of one's coat needn't be as thick. Teeth chattering, we turn to our neighbor and ask, "Isn't this great?"

Going across the bay to watch a game in Oakland is warmer. Being discomfited by a square mile of parking lot bordered by a freeway and BART, and then going inside where an agglomeration of concrete to rival the Hoover Dam surrounds the sublime expanse of green grass, is a hard-core baseball experience. Fog is replaced by grit. But relaxed, it isn't.

Last week, feeling the frazzle of big city life, I pointed my car south on the road to check out the Giants' highest-level minor-league team, the Fresno Grizzlies of the Pacific Coast League. Driving along, the gauge that samples the outside temperature jumped ten degrees every half hour; 61-degree San Francisco became 92-degree Gilroy with farm stands on each side of the road and flat cropland reaching the horizon.

Heading east on Highway 152, billboards decrying high-speed rail, water policy, and Nancy Pelosi, sometimes all three together, shouted the subtext: "You're Not In San Francisco Anymore!" Good enough! On to Fresno!

Donning shorts in the hot evening, I headed to the Grizzlies' ballpark. Named after a nearby casino, Chukchansi Park was completed in 2002 as part of a revitalization plan for downtown Fresno. Strolling through the gate, taking in the field and the open skies, the park has the feel of the newer spring training ballparks in Arizona. The lack of a crush of humanity was welcome.

Seeking out local fare, the Grizzly website had mentioned Ballpark BBQ and a

taco stand. A sufferer of the kale invasion, I was eager to dive into a mess of barbeque. Out beyond right field I was halted by the sight of a barrel barbeque smoker, shut, chained, locked, and unsmoking. I touched it: warmed by the sun but not charcoals. I turned and ambled along the concourse, watching the Grizzlies warm up, including former Giants Nick Noonan, Travis Ishikawa (part of the 2010 World Championship team), and George Kontos. Up from third base, the taco stand was actually a taco truck parked on the concourse — what brilliance, driving an excellent little restaurant right into the ballpark. The tacos emerging from the truck window looked wonderful, but the stalled line was about seven long, and the game was about to start, so I decided to take my seat and come back later.

The park sparkled. Twenty dollars bought a ticket for a second-row seat behind the Grizzlies' dugout. I watched as former Giant Mike Kickham cut down the Salt Lake Bees. I watched former first-round draft pick/minor league underachiever Gary Brown whack singles and hustle like Pete Rose. I watched as the daylight faded on the white face of the Luftenburgs store across the street beyond left field.

With Mike Kickham mowing down the Salt Lake Bees, and the Grizzlies piling up a 7-0 lead in the third inning, I obeyed my grumbling stomach and zipped up to the taco truck. But the line now extended two-thirds of the way across the concourse. Clusters of folks on both sides of the truck waited for their orders of tacos. Finding no line at a regular food stand, I settled for a hot dog, and fries blanketed by a blizzard of grated garlic — the more garlic the better!

As I watched Mike Kickham toss curves and fastballs with precision, I imagined how bummed a Giant must feel when he's told by manager Bruce Bochy, "We're going to send you

down to Fresno." Ishikawa, Kickham, Guillermo Quiroz, George Kontos, and Brett Pill have all driven out of field I was halted by the sight of a barrel barbeque smoker, shut, chained, locked, and unsmoking. I touched it: warmed by the sun but not charcoals. I turned and ambled along the concourse, watching the Grizzlies warm up, including former Giants Nick Noonan, Travis Ishikawa (part of the 2010 World Championship team), and George Kontos. Up from third base, the taco stand was actually a taco truck parked on the concourse — what brilliance, driving an excellent little restaurant right into the ballpark. The tacos emerging from the truck window looked wonderful, but the stalled line was about seven long, and the game was about to start, so I decided to take my seat and come back later.

And what about the other Grizzlies, such as Jose de Paula, Erik Cordier, Jason Berken, Mark Minicozzi, Mitch Lively — guys who made it to the highest level of the minor leagues but might never play a game inside a Major League ballpark? At what point do you shrug your shoulders and go away?

The clouds turned a deep pink, night settled in. Fans piled up impressive arrays of empty Tecate cans, and sleeveless summer shirts allowed the world to view elaborate, colorful, permanent tattoos. Mike Kickham let up one hit in 8-½ innings. The relief let up another harmless hit, and that was that. It took four minutes to go from seat to car.

The next day, checking Google for the Fresno Metropolitan Museum of Art and Science's opening time, I learned that in 2010 the museum defaulted on renovation loans and closed. How does a museum close forever? But another attraction caught my eye: the Forestiere Underground Gardens — a home built underground — and it's close to Highway 99 and thus the escape from Fresno. Before departing Fresno, I had to check out something not in a strip mall other than the ballpark.

Baldastare Forestiere was a citrus grower from Sicily who in 1905 at the age of 26 bought 100 acres outside of Fresno. Problem was that a few feet under the topsoil he encountered hardpan — a hard-packed, almost rocklike soil — through which citrus tree roots would not grow. What to do? He hired himself out *SPORTS CORNER, continued on 11*



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CANDLESTICK

CONTINUED from page 1

for teaching college, he made a promise to my very traditional Sicilian grandfather that he would bring her home to visit every summer. My grandparents first lived in Little Italy, New York, and later moved to Federal Hill, the Little Italy of Providence, R.I. (around 20 percent of Rhode Islanders are Italian American, the highest percentage of any state). My grandfather loved tending his garden, making Sunday sauce, smoking cigars, and drinking Chianti. He did not, however, love sports, so my father and I spent much of those summers just the two of us at Fenway Park.

One of my fondest memories is the time we sat behind the Green Monster, Fenway's famous left field wall, and watched the Sox get clobbered by the Oakland A's. After the game, he took me to lunch at the legendary Durgin Park, and a muggy July storm rolled over just as we arrived. He held my hand and covered my head with his Red Sox cap as we crossed the street.

Every year before we left for the East Coast, my dad took me to Candlestick Park to watch the San Francisco Giants as often as possible. My mom came a few times — like my grandfather, she didn't love sports, so she usually knitted through the entire game — but mostly, just like Fenway, it was our special father-daughter time.

We both had San Francisco Giants caps filled with coveted Croix de Candlestick pins, handed out to the diehard fans who braved extra-innings games in the unforgiving harsh conditions after 10 p.m. I idolized Johnny Bench, still considered one of the greatest catchers to ever play the game, and when the Cincinnati Reds were in town, my dad would walk me down to the dugout during batting practice where Bench would recognize the little girl with long black hair and bright green eyes peaking out from under a well-worn Giants cap. "Hi Suzie," he would say,

passing the legions of screaming fans holding out their items for autographs. My dad would always bring along a photo he took the last time the Reds were at Candlestick, and Bench would sign them with personal notes like "To Suzie: I'll forgive you for the Giants hat. Thanks for being such a great fan! Love, Johnny Bench." As he took my dad's Sharpie, he would ask how my catching career was going. "I got hit by a pitch and had a huge shiner," I told him one June evening as the wind whipped through the fog. "Badge of honor," he said with a wink.

As I grew up and discovered boys and they discovered me,

my father and I began drifting apart. I often went to Candlestick Park with Dave, my star high school running-back boyfriend who said he fell in love with me at Candlestick because I was able to explain the infield fly rule. When my family headed back East for the summer, I often chose to hang out with my cousins' cute friends and flirt rather than go with my father to Fenway. I had hit that age where I pretended not to

know my parents at the mall, and my dad knew the days of holding my hand as we crossed the street

to Durgin Park were over.

Before my senior year of high school my grandfather died, and with him the annual East Coast pilgrimages. During my senior year of college I lost my mother to a stroke, and just six months later my longtime boyfriend passed away suddenly from a rare heart condition. I was working at Apple, as I had through every college summer, but I knew it was time for a big change, so I moved to San Francisco with some friends. Shortly after I moved, my father and I went through a period where we barely spoke. I had a new boyfriend (I reeled him in with my infield fly rule knowl-

edge at Candlestick, too) and my dad, who had moved from my childhood home in Sunnyvale to live with his girlfriend, Kickie, in San Jose, often traveled to see the Giants on his own.

Then, one summer afternoon in 2000 while cleaning out some drawers, I found my old Giants cap covered with Croix de Candlestick pins, and all those great memories came flooding back. I picked up the phone and invited my dad to come up for Father's Day. "I have a surprise for you," I said. As he pulled up to my house in the Haight that morning I was standing outside wearing my old Giants cap, and I saw a huge grin come across his face. "I'm taking you to the Giants game at Pac Bell Park," I said. It would be my father's first trip to the new stadium, and a new beginning for our relationship.

When Kickie could no longer care for my dad because of his worsening dementia, I moved him to San Francisco to live with me. The disease ravaged his sharp mind and weakened his strong body. The last time we went to a Giants game was a week before he passed away, around Father's Day 2008. After the game I took him to dinner at the legendary House of Prime Rib, and a chilly summer drizzle rolled over just as we arrived. I held his hand and covered his head with my Giants hat as we crossed the street.

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SPORTS CORNER

CONTINUED from page 10

as a ditch digger and endured the 100-plus degree summer.

At home he daydreamed about how to beat the heat. He grabbed his pick and shovel. He dug out a room and a courtyard and a kitchen and eventually had a living space of below-ground-level courtyards and passageways and rooms that stayed cool in the summer, some of which he heated with fireplaces in the winter. He made all the walls and archways out of chunks of hardpan, giving his home a classic Roman feel.

It took me a while below ground level to appreciate Forestiere's masterly way of letting in plentiful light, of slanting the dirt floors of the courtyards and passageways so rain falls into cisterns, of the way eaves are slanted so water falls into meticulously constructed planters still containing his grafted fruit trees 70 years after he died.

He died in 1946, not too long after actual grizzly bears lorded over the area, and 12 years before the Giants moved to San Francisco. Like the Jason Berkens and Mark Minicozzis of this world, very few of us achieve a solid, glamorous Major League career. Baldastare Forestiere understood that. And he figured out a way to make it beautiful.

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



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THE TABLEHOPPER :: Get your credit card ready

New Marina spots; more big openings keep coming (Pabu, The Ramen Bar)

by marcia gagliardi

MARINA

Causwells (2346 Chestnut Street, 415-447-6081) has opened in the former Bechelli's. Business partners Alvin Garcia and Tom Patella have brought on chef Adam Rosenblum (previously a sous at Flour + Water), who serves a menu of "eclectic American cuisine with European influences." Sample menu items include deviled eggs with smoked trout; a kale Caesar; grilled octopus with garbanzos, fennel, watercress, and chile; and smoked brisket with onion jam, rye crumbles, and spicy mustard. There are a number of house-made items, from the ricotta cheese to cultured butter to salumi. For dessert, get ready for this one: a doughnut "crack" bread pudding, using doughnuts from Marina shop Allstar Donuts. Whoa.

With wine director Tom Patella (previously California Wine Merchant) overseeing the list, expect a lot of attention paid to the selections (and there will be plenty of snacks to go along with them). There are 20 wines by the glass, featuring small-production, family-owned, and good-value wines, primarily from California, plus some quality European bottles. Bartender Erin Vogel, who is studying for her cicerone certification, will be selecting an esoteric craft beer list, has selected an esoteric craft beer list to represent the best beer varieties.

The 1930s Art Deco space was designed by the Bon Vivants Design+Build (they also did Trick Dog, Shakewell, and the new Chubby Noodle), and will keep some vintage details, including repurposing the old cast-iron barstools. Bonus: they're open nightly (starting at 5 p.m.) and serve food until 1 a.m. Lunch (11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.) is also available.

North Beach favorite Chubby Noodle has opened a second location, **Chubby Noodle Marina** (2205 Lombard Street, 415-655-3335). Chef-owner Pete Mrabe keeps fine-tuning and tweaking the 12-item menu, which has a few dishes in each section (noodles, seafood, meat, and dim sum). The dim sum picks include chicken buns and pork and shrimp shu mai, and the seafood section features hot fried wild snapper (with arbol chile, garlic, ginger, and onion). You can order the chicken noodle soup, which is more like a ramen with fried chicken, and I can't wait to try the hickory-smoked bacon jook with a fried egg.

Bon Vivants Design+Build has remodeled the former Gatip Thai — it's a 49-seater, with high-top communal tables (which you can also reserve for large groups) next to the open kitchen, a stand-up bar, and wood booths with bench-style seating.

Co-owner Nick Floulis (Pushback Wines) is behind the wine and beer list, and clever wine-based cocktails, plus there's sake on tap — one of the first places in the United States to offer it. Open 5 p.m.-12:30 a.m. nightly, but they are pondering closing on Mondays, so just double-check before you head over.

NOB HILL

Ladies who lunch and businessmen who broker, you should know that lunch has returned to the **Big 4** (1075 California Street, 415-771-1140) Monday-Friday 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. The menu highlights classic dishes, including deviled eggs (\$7), chicken liver mousse (\$7), a burger (\$14), and Cobb salad (\$10/\$18).

JACKSON SQUARE

Mark your calendars: **Quince** (470 Pacific Avenue, 415-775-8500) is closing temporarily from July 25 until Sept. 19 for renovations. The new space, which is being designed by Douglas Durkin, will increase the comfort of

the restaurant, with a new entrance, custom lighting, and additional exposed brick. The warmth of the space will also be enhanced with new, curved leather banquettes and arched openings throughout. In addition to these decorative changes, there will also be some new spaces within the restaurant. Two seats will be added to the chef's counter, offering more opportunities for diners to watch the kitchen action. There will also be two additional private dining rooms, each with seating for 12, in addition to the existing 18. A new private dining room, the Octavia Room, can be reserved for up to 12 people in the kitchen at the neighboring Cotogna as well.

Perhaps the most fabulous (and definitely bubbliest) addition is the new Champagne bar and lounge. It will be situated at the restaurant entrance, and will encourage walk-ins. At the bar, you'll find cocktails, wine, and, of course, lots of Champagne, much of it available by the glass (selected by wine director Jai Wilson). As for bar food, there will be à la carte dishes from the main dining room's tasting menus, as well as special daily appetizers.

During the renovation, the Quince team will be popping up at the nearby Hedge Gallery with an amazing series called **curATE** (sfcurate.com) from July 30 through Aug. 30.

FINANCIAL DISTRICT

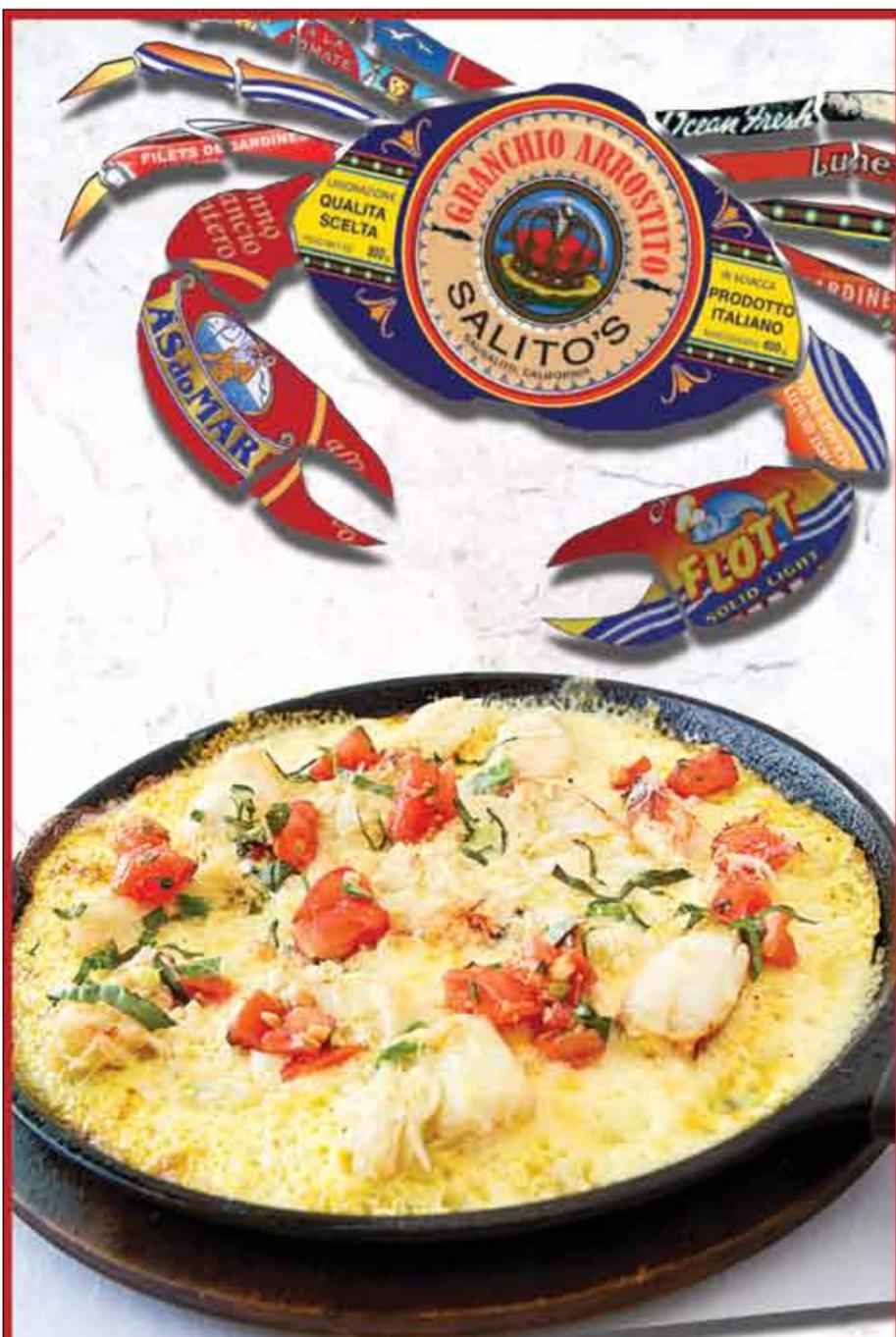
Ending with the largest endeavor, there are two big openings to note at 101 California Street: **Pabu** and **The Ramen Bar** from Ken Tominaga (of Hana in Rohnert Park) and Michael Mina. Let's start with The Ramen Bar (101 California, 415-684-1570), the more casual of the two. Tominaga's ramen is inspired by Tokyo-style ramen, which features a lighter broth, and a lot of attention will be paid to each of the top-notch ingredients, from the proteins to the fresh vegetables (I'm looking forward to finally having a soy-cured egg that isn't cold). There are four ramens, like Tokyo roast chicken (\$12) with soy-cured egg, bamboo, spinach, and yuzu kosho; and shrimp and crab dumpling (\$16) in a ginger clam broth, with sweet corn and mizuna. Gluten-free noodles are available as well.

There was already a line out the door on opening day, so expect to be waiting with fellow ramen obsessives during these opening weeks. Fortunately it's open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-9 p.m., with food service starting at 11 a.m.

As for **Pabu** (101 California, 415-668-7228), upon entering, you'll notice the bar area to your right, with a notably elevated ceiling, and softly glowing lanterns above with cranes on them. There are tall windows, and comfortable booths along the back wall upholstered in a burnt orange, sure to be filled during happy hour (Monday-Friday 3 p.m.-6 p.m.). Mina Group head bartender Carlo Splendorini and lead bartender Nick Jones are at the helm, creating house-carbonated beverages, fizzes, highballs, and more, with some Japanese ingredients making appearances.

To the left is the warm-feeling dining room that's full of wood (including oak-paneled floors), with a long, 22-seat sushi counter, seating in the center, and booths enclosed with wood slats along the side with sea foam green seats that create an even more intimate experience. There are also some beautiful private dining rooms. Tominaga's menu features both izakaya dishes and sushi, ranging from cold to hot small plates (there's a wonderful ankimo dish, and don't miss the Happy Spoon with uni, ikura, tobiko, ponzu, and crème fraîche), robata-yaki (eight kinds), shabu-shabu, and some larger plates, including tempura, seafood,

TABLEHOPPER continued on 13



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NEW AND NOTABLE ∴ The long and short



Brain food and belly food can be found at The Interval PHOTOS: LONG NOW FOUNDATION / PATRICIA CHANG

Stop and sip for a spell at The Interval

by julie mitchell

IN A CITY WELL KNOWN for its free thinkers, it comes as no surprise that the Long Now Foundation, a nonprofit devoted to promoting long-term thinking measured in centuries, not minutes, is housed at Fort Mason right next door to Greens. Its name was coined by one of its founders, Brian Eno, to help redefine what people typically consider the “here and now.” Some of its more visible projects include a mechanical 10,000-year clock comprised of a specially designed gear that has precision equal to one day in 20,000 years that self corrects, and a hand-selected library that includes the Rosetta Disk among other unique tomes.

The space also houses The Interval, a venue that is equal parts library, museum, bar, and cafe. The clock, floor-to-ceiling library, and the Orrery — a display featuring all the planets visible from earth with an unaided eye — are prominently displayed, but The Interval’s main focus is its bar and small scattering of tables.

Beverage and bar director Jennifer Colliau has

created a truly eclectic menu featuring cocktails from around the world, low- and no-alcohol drinks, a full tea service by Samovar, and Sightglass coffee. It starts with some of the earliest-known drinks, such as the Tom Collins, first written about in 1867, and continues on to cocktail-specific pages including the daiquiris of “Floridita,” an entire martini menu, temperate and tee-totaling drinks, morning cocktails, and wine, beer, coffee, tea, and tisanes. Prices range from \$8–\$12 for alcoholic beverages and \$4–\$6 for coffee and tea. The most expensive item on the drinks menus is a bottle of rosé from France at \$15.

Each cocktail is described not only in terms of ingredients but also its history. For example, the Vesper with gin, vodka, and Cocchi aperitif, shaken and served up with a lemon twist, was named for Vesper Lynd in Ian Fleming’s debut novel, *Casino Royale* (James Bond fans, rejoice). Brooklyn variations feature different twists on the Manhattan, dating back to 1908 when

New York bartenders started tinkering with the traditional rye-vermouth-liqueur-bitter formula. Temperate drinks include a strawberry-Meyer lemon shrub with sparkling water, and lemonade made with fresh lemon, almond syrup, and sparkling water.

“Cafe” is a bit of a misnomer; bites include a variety of “bar jars” featuring flavored cheese spreads served with Potter’s gluten-free oat crackers, assorted pickles, and three decadent ice cream sandwiches (\$6–\$9).

The Interval is a place to sip and nibble, converse and contemplate. The Long Now Foundation plans to use the space for receptions and other small events and activities. The organization is actively seeking donations.

The Interval/Long Now Foundation: 2 Marina Boulevard, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. A, theinterval.org; daily 10 a.m.–midnight; cafe 10:10 a.m.–5 p.m.; bar 5 p.m.–midnight; note: On Tuesday nights, the space is often host to ticketed events

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TABLEHOPPER

CONTINUED from page 12

and A4 and A5 Japanese Wagyu—look for a contemporary approach to these dishes, and they’re designed to share.

But anyone who loves sushi is going to want to beeline for the spectacular nigiri menu, and particularly Ken’s Nigiri Tasting Menu, which brings eight courses of beautiful Edo-style nigiri served two pieces at a time. The quality of the seafood is spectacular, from kohada to shima aji to a maguro pairing that will make you look at the fish in a different light. The sushi bar is at the hands of Yoji Harada, who started his culinary career at 18 in Japan, and when he eventually came to the United States, Ken got him to come to Hana from Gonpachi in

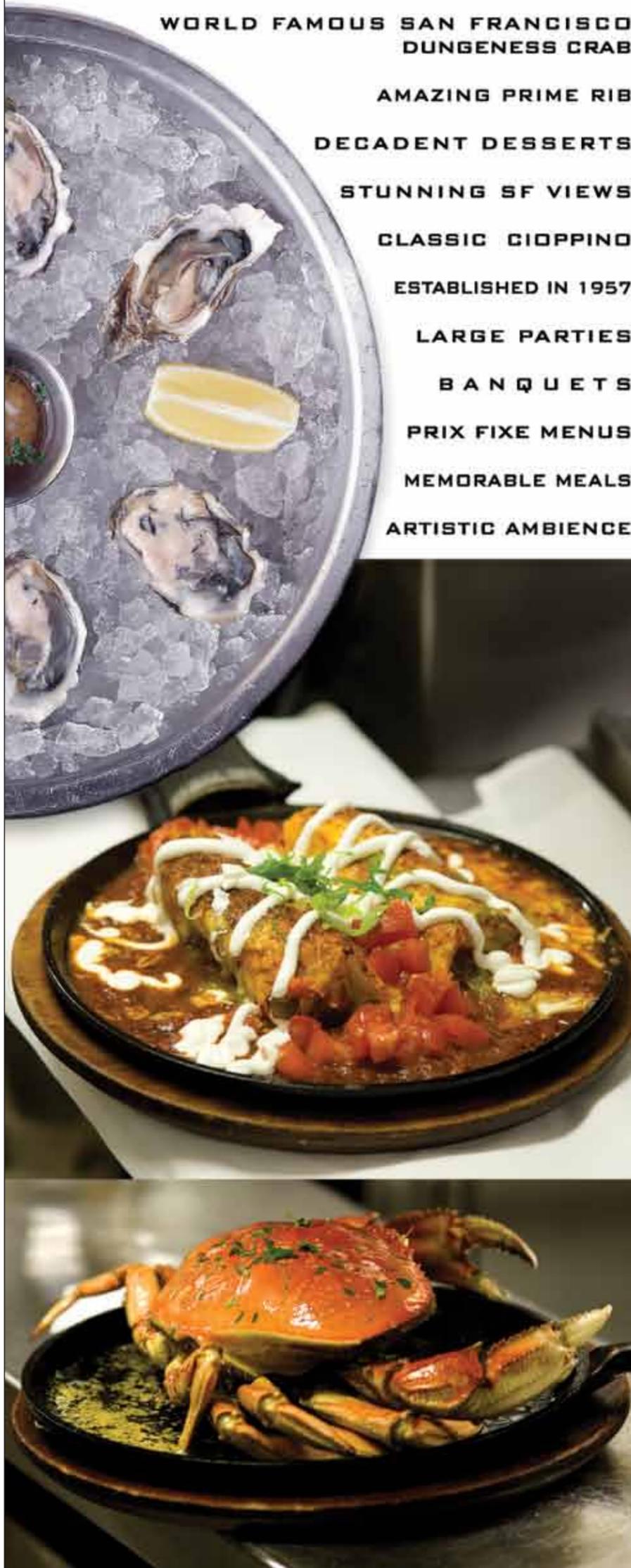
Torrance, and then recruited him for Pabu Baltimore, which recently closed. All I can say is lucky us that we now have Yoji at Pabu San Francisco, because the omakase experience I had at a test dinner was fantastic.

The other component to the omakase menu you don’t want to miss is the sake pairing from sake master Stuart Morris. You’ll learn more about sake in one meal than you probably have in a year, and the range of flavor profiles is very exciting. Even if you don’t opt for a sake pairing, you’ll still be steered to some excellent selections, and some are very rare.

Marcia Gagliardi is the founder of the weekly tablehopper e-column; subscribe and get more food news and gossip at Tablehopper.com. Follow her on Twitter: @tablehopper.

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People watching inside and outside Calzone's PHOTO: COURTESY CALZONE'S

CALZONE'S
CONTINUED from page 1

tion by restaurant reviewers, not just yelpers and other amateurs, who should take off their blinkers and open their minds. The point is it's not getting a lot of “ink” as we print folks say.

Calzone's has been around since 1986. It was opened and is still owned by long-time San Francisco restaurateur Jerry Dal Bozzo. He and a partner, Dante Serafini, operate several other restaurants in the area — The Stinking Rose, Old Clam House, Osso Steakhouse, Franciscan Crab Restaurant, Crab House — all in San Francisco — and Salito's in Sausalito, and the Dead Fish in Crockett.

CALZONES AT CALZONE'S

Calzone's may be off the radar for the big-shot reviewers because it's not a storefront joint in the avenues, a trendy Dogpatch loft with no name and no phone number, or a high-tech Valencia hottie. And I confess Calzone's hasn't been on my personal North Beach prowl list. Too bad! Recently I checked it out.

But before we go further, let's define the word “calzone.” It's an oven-baked, doughy turnover (usually pizza dough) filled with this and that. And by all means, try the calzone at Calzone's. Or try the pizzas, which are as well made as any in North Beach. But that's not the entire menu story.

MY LUNCH ‘WORKED’

You may want to stick to the small plates and, if so, several will make a fine meal. Not long ago, I covered my outdoor table with crab crostini (\$15.95), ratatouille (\$7.95), roasted cauliflower colore (\$7.95), and a salumi plate (\$11.95). That, and a bottle of Honig Sauvignon Blanc (\$34.95), made a fine meal and gave me enough time to people watch.

The crab crostini — there are two in a serving — had generous portions of fresh crab meat, topped by a thin slice of smoked salmon and a wedge of avocado on a toasted slice of sourdough drizzled with olive oil. It was rich and unctuous without being over the top.

The ratatouille — which frequently I find too slick

BUBBLING ON THE BACK BURNER

Another time, accompanied by a lady, we went for entrées. Mine was braised short ribs (\$21.95). Hers was breaded chicken Milanaise (\$19.95), and thinking we needed it, we added a dish of fettuccini with slow-roasted pork and beef sugo. (\$17.95). And cheapy that I am sometimes, I ordered house wine by the glass. They range from \$8.95 up. Not all that far up, but up.

My short ribs — there were four small boneless ribs — were nicely accom-

plished, very brown in a suitable ragu but perhaps not as lusty as I would have liked. They were accompanied by a few fava beans and a pile of orecchiette pasta, those little crimped pasta-things shaped something like the ears of a punch-drunk boxer.

The breaded chicken Milanaise was lemony and caper-y and the breading was crisp and a little spicy. As I recall it was served with some mashed potatoes and a bit of sautéed zucchini.

The fettuccini with pork and beef sugo was a home run. The sugo had been slowly bubbling on the back burner for a suitable, old-school time and tasted like it; that is, it filled your mouth with that Italian tomato saucy earthiness.

Overall, I prefer my cucina Italiana a little more rough and rustic around the edges. But that's me.

We skipped dessert. Next time!

What I am concluding here is, when you're in North Beach you may want to — consider Calzone's. You will be glad you did.

Calzone's: 430 Columbus Avenue, 415-397-3600, calzonesf.com, daily 11:30 a.m.-1 a.m. Indoor and outdoor seating. Full bar, lots of people having fun.

E-mail: ernest@marinatimes.com

Try the calzone or try the pizzas. But that's not the entire menu story.

and eggplant-y — was not that at all. The eggplant was firm and flavorful, and to that was added some onion, zucchini, bell pepper, tomato and, I was told, a bit of kale. Happily, your kale-disinterested columnist discerned no kale.

The roasted cauliflower colore was your routine, now very popular, roasted cauliflower flowers topped with toasted almonds, a very small amount of Manchego cheese, and a small cup of romesco sauce, similar to a red pesto, for dipping. The Manchego — there was not a lot of it, and there shouldn't be for my taste — added a saltiness that kept me sipping my wine.

The salumi plate was just that, a generous portion of cured meats — salami, prosciutto, sweet coppa, and mortadella. I munched it with torn pieces of sourdough.

What I am saying here is that my lunch worked. And when I used the calculator on my iPhone, I discovered I spent \$74.75, plus tip. OK, considerably more than I usually spend for lunch. But, as I said, it worked. I had a fine time and enjoyed myself. And no one forced me to buy a \$34.95 bottle of wine. I could have ordered by the glass and not dented my impoverished wallet that much.

A perfect burger

by bill knutson

EVERY SUMMER, YOU CAN PREDICT the trends of the major food publications. First comes the grilling issue, then comes the burger issue. And it's not just any burger, they spread their adjectives around like fertilizer: the ultimate burger, the perfect burger, burgers to die for, the best burgers ever, and so forth. This made me think about what I would consider the perfect burger. Is it stuffed with aged Danish blue cheese and drizzled with black truffle oil? How about a filet mignon freshly ground and barely seared, topped with a port reduction sauce? Or could it be a burger Rossini, with seared foie gras and a cherry-cabernet sauce?



Now that's a hand-burger PHOTO: ELIZABETH ARMSTRONG

consider many things. The size should match the diameter of the burger. It should be sturdy enough to hold together when all the juices and sauces soak into it. Yet, not so dense that your burger squeezes out the bottom with every bite. The bun can also be a means of adding flavors to your burger; many grocery stores make fresh rolls flavored with garlic, onion, or jalapeño-cheese. Or look for a potato roll if you want a little sweetness. One of my favorite ways to eat a burger is on a toasted English muffin with a thick slab of sharp cheddar. Burgers can be cooked using a variety of methods, but most people agree that nothing beats a burger grilled over an open flame. Here is my simple recipe for great burgers every time.

THE PERFECT BURGER

(serves 4)

1½–2 pounds 80–85 percent lean ground beef
Salt & pepper to taste
Cheese (if desired, your choice)

Roll ground beef into balls. On a flat surface, gently flatten with the palm of your hand until one inch thick.

Grill directly over a medium high flame for 5–6 minutes. Turn over and season with salt and pepper. (Adding salt before cooking will dry out most meat.)

Cook for an additional 5 minutes for medium rare. Adjust time for desired doneness. *Note: Avoid pressing down on the patty. It squeezes all the juices out and causes a dry burger.*

Place cheese on the burger early enough to melt; for example, American cheese takes about one minute, but a thick slab of cheddar will take about two.

Invite some friends over, fire up the grill, set out a spread of incredible toppings and have everyone make their own perfect burger.

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Perhaps, but when I think of the perfect burger, I usually remember who, what, where, and when. Burgers are a great food for gatherings of friends and families. They are generally inexpensive, only require a minimal amount of prep time, and the cook doesn't have to slave away all day and miss the party.

Of course, they still have to taste great. But that doesn't mean you should spend more on your ground beef than you would a steak. On the other hand, look for ground beef that has the color of a raw steak, not too lean, nor too fatty. I usually look for the 80 to 85 percent lean. Don't over-season. Stick to salt and pepper. This allows the flavor of the beef to shine. Let your creativity show in how you top it.

I like to think of the burger as a blank canvas on which you can paint your own individual masterpiece with a variety of colorful and flavorful condiments. This could include the standards: lettuce, tomato, onion, cheese, ketchup, mustard, relish, and mayo. Or you could create a more exotic palette of flavors: chutney, aioli, salsa, pineapple slices, mixed greens, fried egg, roasted peppers, and artisanal cheeses.

One ingredient that often transforms a good burger to a great burger is the bun. When choosing the bun, you need to con-

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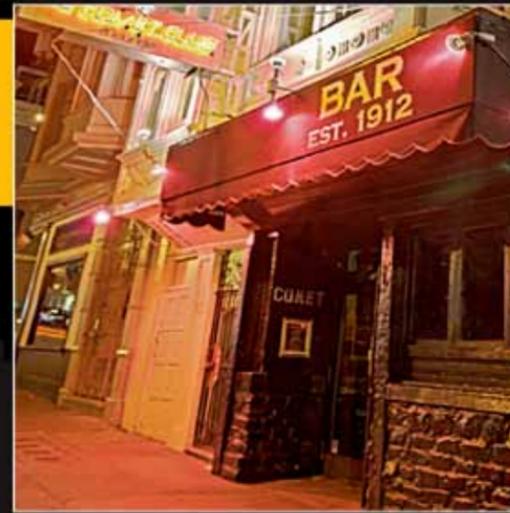
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Chef Bruce Hill, who recently opened Fog City in the space of the legendary Fog City Diner, invented the Chef's Press when he



The grill's best friend

was working as executive chef at Bix due to a lack of space in the kitchen, where every second counts in getting food out to customers. Hill also didn't like that the traditional cast-iron presses trapped steam and were

too heavy for more delicate ingredients like fish.

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THE BACK STORY ∴ Play me a song



Tickling the ivories has entertained the locals and visitors for decades in North Beach PHOTO: ROBERT JINKS / FLICKR

The glory days of saloon piano players in North Beach

by ernest beyl

THE OTHER DAY I CLEANED OUT a closet and found a March 1970 *Holiday* magazine, then a big glossy publication read by big, glossy, discerning travelers with lots of discretionary income. That issue, which I saved all these years, devoted a 120-page special to San Francisco, “The city of infinite possibilities.” Tucked into those pages was a piece called “Culture and Counter-Culture.”

A full-page color photo of a group of serious and determined San Franciscans at the Minimum Daily Requirement — a North Beach coffeehouse — accompanied the article. It was captioned: “The literati gather at the MDR.” In the center of the portrait was a small man in a blue work shirt identified only as Don Asher. He was surrounded by a group of heavy-hitting, high profile, local writers: Jessica Mitford, Paul Jacobs, Evan Connell, Jr., Don Carpenter, Barnaby Conrad, and Herbert Gold. Gold had written the *Holiday* article. Asher stared out of the photo of that powerhouse circle displaying both confidence and modesty.

He’s been gone now since 2010. Seeing his image in the old *Holiday* magazine got me reflecting on saloon pianists, a wonderful subspecies of professional musicians that bring a high degree of excitement into our saloons — a few standards from the Great American songbook, some blues, a little Harlem stride, and maybe even a bit of lock-hand boogie woogie like Meade “Lux” Lewis’s “Honky Tonk Train.” That’s the essence of saloon piano. It’s like having a pianist playing your favorite tunes in your living room. So here is the quintessential saloon piano player Don Asher and a few comments on some of his keyboard compatriots.

NOTES FROM A BATTERED GRAND

Asher came to San Francisco in 1959 from his hometown Wooster, Mass. and discovered that the city did have “infinite possibilities.” He became house piano player for Enrico Banducci’s groundbreaking nightclub-theater the hungry i.

“I used to go almost every night to the hungry i to catch Don Asher, the pianist. Or Mort Sahl or Woody Allen when he was just starting.”

— Barnaby Conrad

Author, artist and nightclub operator, in his book *Name Dropping*

“I needed a piano player to back up the acts. It was as simple as that. Asher was a nice quiet man. He said what he had to say with the piano and also with words on the printed page.”

— Enrico Banducci

Dean of the talent spotters who brought 19-year-old Barbra Streisand and many other soon-to-be famous stars to the hungry i

“I had no idea he was a writer. I thought of him only as a piano player. He asked me to read some of his short stories. They were

good. I told him to tell the story of his life as a piano player and make it funny. He did. He wrote a memoir called *Notes from a Battered Grand*, and a fine, semi-autobiographical novel, *Piano Sport*.”

— Herbert Gold

Prolific San Francisco writer of award-winning novels and nonfiction

PIANO LESSONS FIFTY CENTS

Many years ago, I interviewed Don Asher for a magazine piece. This is what he told me:

I am the product of a nice middle-class Jewish family from Wooster (he pronounced it “Woosta”). My mother pushed me, and I took lessons from a classical piano instructor. One dollar for a half hour lesson. I did well with my scales and arpeggios but something else was in the air, or rather the airwaves — Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Count Basie, just to name a few giants. That was when there was two-a-day vaudeville in movie houses, and I heard Charlie Barnet and the Tommy Dorsey and Jimmy Dorsey bands. And 40 miles away in Boston was the Hi-Hat, and playing there was the piano god of us all, Art Tatum. Like many other kids at the time, I made an exciting passage from classical piano to jazz.

Right in my hometown, I met a piano-playing demon named Jaki Bayard, who later became a jazz legend. He was the fire by which all of us warmed our hands. So I dropped my one-dollar classical piano

teacher and gave Jaki fifty cents a lesson. I got good enough to play in dives, gin mills and stripper joints. Then it was on to resorts and dancehalls along the Boston Turnpike.

BANDUCCI'S HOUSE PIANIST

One day something stopped me cold in *Time* magazine. It was a photo of a buddy from Cornell, which I had attended. The photo showed Kenneth Rexroth reciting his poetry to a jazz accompaniment in a San Francisco club called *The Cellar*.

And there was my buddy from Cornell playing tenor sax behind Rexroth. This was in 1958, near the end of the Beat era. At that moment I

decided San Francisco was where I wanted to be, so I moved west.

In North Beach, I ran into Faith Winthrop, a girl singer I knew from Cape Cod. She was singing at the hungry i. She needed a piano accompanist. I got the job. After the last set, Enrico took me aside and said, “When can you start steady?” Suddenly I was house pianist at the hungry i. I played the acts on and off stage, accompanied them, or played soft background music throughout their routines.

PIANO PLAYERS AND COMICS

For some reason comics always think the piano player is funny. Frequently they direct parts of their routines at piano players, actually including us in their acts. Jack E. Leonard thought it was open season on piano players.

“What key are you in sonny boy?”

“D-flat.”

“And you certainly are.”

One night after playing introductions for Mort Sahl, I slid off the piano bench and headed for the bar. Sahl’s voice knifed over the speakers.

“Mister Asher, have you ever contemplated another means of livelihood?”

“No, have you?” I replied. It got a big laugh. But I’m not a comic; I’m a saloon piano player. You have to be fast with your fingers

and be able to improvise. Once, a very good piano player, Jess Stacey, said, “I don’t look for every note to be a pearl. Sometimes they turn out to be meatballs. If you sense a meatball, a clinker or a clam coming on, you have only a few seconds at most to figure out how you are going to use it to your musical advantage.”

THE GLORY YEARS

I am indebted to Mary Etta Moose, one of the treasures of North Beach, for helping me recall the glory days of the saloon piano players, many of whom I had forgotten.

Ed and Mary Etta Moose and their business partner, Sam Deitsch, brought many top saloon pianists to their much-missed Washington Square Bar & Grill, and later across the park to Moose’s. I was around for those glory years.

There was a Sunday afternoon when Norma Teagarden, sister of the legendary jazz trombonist Jack Teagarden, played at *The Square* (as we regulars called it). Norma and her mother, Helen, played fourhanded piano. Jack played his trombone and his brother Charlie blew trumpet licks. What an afternoon.

Mike Lipskin, stride piano man — now an entertainment lawyer — had an intellectual exercise when he played *The Square*’s old upright. He propped a copy of the *Wall Street Journal* on the music stand and affected reading it while he played. I was suckered into believe him.

And you might remember Dick Vartanian, the saloon piano player who wore a turban when he played at the old Rickshaw Bar in Chinatown’s Ross Alley. I thought I owned the Rickshaw, I hung out there so much. Whenever I walked in and Vartanian spied me from the piano bar, he stopped playing whatever tune he was into and began a slow, sexy version of “Teach Me Tonight” — my favorite show tune to this day.

But digressions are creeping into this Back Story, and there’s no room to expound on other saloon pianists who frequently made my day — and my nights. Other artists like Lou Levy, who played for his partner-vocalist Pinky Winters; Burt Bales; Mike Greensil; Jeannie Hoffman; Gini Wilson; John Horton Cooper; and the incomparable Earl “Fatha” Hines. I’m sure there are other giants that I have forgotten. My memory needs refreshing.

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The blockbuster burden

by michael snyder

THE MOVIE BUSINESS HAS undergone radical changes in the past decade. That would be the *movie* business, not the film business. The industry is still producing moving pictures, but less and less of them are on actual film. High-definition digital video projection of feature-length narratives was a novelty when George Lucas insisted that his first *Star Wars* prequel be shot and subsequently presented in theaters on digital video. In a comparatively short time, it's become the rule, not the exception.

Celluloid is so last-century. In general, digitally projected movies shown properly at any halfway-decent theater look sharp and clear and are never sullied by scratches or missed frames. Although we must endure pixels and artifacts on rare occasions, it's a small and infrequently assessed price to pay for all of those pristine images.

Theater conversions are in progress, but a more significant change is impacting the movie business: prodigious home-entertainment systems with enormous HD plasma or LED widescreen monitors and surround-sound, offering an experience that can be a satisfying alternative to public movie houses. We've seen the corresponding

rise of video-on-demand services, Netflix and Amazon streaming, and Redbox kiosks contributing to shrinking DVD sales and a shorter window before films go from the multiplex to people's homes and laptops. So advances on the home-front undermine box-office receipts. Accordingly, the longtime major studios — Fox, Sony-Columbia, Disney, Warner Brothers and Universal — perceive that they're backed into a corner by economic necessity. Which brings me to Hollywood's blockbuster conundrum.

Technological innovation? Economy in distress? Low-budget indie films and foreign imports are unlikely to pack theaters when cash is in short supply for the masses. Middle-budget studio-backed films with so-called stars who no longer ensure ticket sales seem like a risky proposition. The answer for a bottom-line-obsessed industry on the ropes? Blockbusters! More massive and immersive special effects-heavy films shown first-run in 3D and/or on IMAX screens — and generally developed from proven properties: best-selling espionage and fantasy novels, time-tested superheroes, animated cartoon franchises, remakes of sci-fi classics, and so on.

The Big 5 are determined to bring the paying customer thrill rides that can't really be duplicated

in your living room, unless said living room happens to be coliseum-sized with state-of-the-art equipment beyond the home console.

The powers that be are concentrating on the pursuit of tentpole movies — releases that prop up earnings for a company, could launch a series of features and spin-offs as franchises, or promise ancillary revenue from merchandise. It doesn't matter that action "schlockmeister" Michael Bay's *Transformers* movies, (inspired by a toy line and cartoons about giant robots) are played out, dumbed down and frenetic with barrages of computer-generated effects, weak quips, cheap stereotypes, and ham acting whipped together courtesy of Bay's feckless direction.

This fourth *Transformers* "event" is Bay's latest insult to thinking humans — chock-a-block with inescapable product placement that's more blatant than 10 Times Square billboards. It introduces the magical alien compound clumsily dubbed Transformium, which alone should ensure the movie's vilification. It's also rife with Chinese locations, the better to tap into China, the largest and fastest growing movie-going demographic in the world. If only the title of this installment was right about the series: "Age of Extinction." Its massive success suggests other-



My Dinner with Andre, this isn't PHOTO: © PARAMOUNT PICTURES

wise. In other words, get ready for "Transformers 5."

Why bother bankrolling a serious drama with a high-priced cast that's lost its commercial clout when the profit margin is so piddling compared to the high-risk high-reward tentpole? As for lemons-producing-lemonade, a few of this summer's blockbusters satisfied on multiple levels: *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* and *X-Men: Days of Future Past* (two relatively clever, exciting continuations of super-heroic Marvel comic-book properties); *Godzilla* (a reverent, well-executed Hollywood homage to the original Japanese monster series); and *How to Train Your Dragon 2* (a follow-up to the DreamWorks cheery, exciting, family-friendly Viking cartoon feature).

Finally, there's the comparatively thoughtful and visually impressive sequel to the 2011 reboot of the 1968 movie adaptation of Pierre

Boulez's novel *Planet of the Apes*. That's right. A sequel to a reboot of a big-screen adaptation of a novel. How's that for proof of concept? *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* is fun and a little scary. In addition to actor Andy Serkis's phenomenal, emotive, believable motion-capture performance as super-intelligent ape leader Caesar, we also get to see downtown San Francisco devolved by the special-effects geniuses into a realistic post-apocalyptic shambles. It's very cool, even if I fear that the tableau will be a little too close to the state of Hollywood if the masses start to tire of blockbusters.

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

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Carla Marinucci: *Republicans have to watch where they're going with women voters when they try to knock Hillary Clinton down this far in advance on age issues. Clinton at this point is not just the 800-pound gorilla, she's the King Kong.*

Bill Whalen: *Karl Rove ... is trying to get to a word seldom used with the Clintons, which is "forthcoming."*

Larry Gerston: *I think health and age are legitimate issues to raise anytime. Some Democrats were getting really upset about the age thing. But weren't people saying that about Ronald Reagan?*

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HUMOR ∴ A change of attitude

Sunny today with a chance of an apocalypse

by sandy fertman ryan

YOU CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THE unseasonably warm weather we've been having in San Francisco this year. When I asked a sun-kissed couple wearing shorts at Fisherman's Wharf where they were visiting from and they responded, "The Outer Sunset," I knew something had really changed. Yes, people are almost giddy about our new semi-fogless city, and although I don't miss my winter-summer parka, I do wonder if I'm the only one who's worried that this may be a sign that the end of the world is near.

So I figured it's time to prepare myself. If this were my last day in San Francisco due to the apocalypse, an invasion by aliens (and not the *E.T.* adorable-type), bacteria-gone-wild or more realistically, a cataclysmic climate change, here are a few of the things I would like to make sure to do. Call it my End Of The World Bucket List:

- Order every ice cream sundae at the original Ghirardelli Ice Cream and Chocolate Shop and share them with everyone within melting distance.
- Ask the cable car conductors to let me ring their bell to the tune of Beyonce's "Put A Ring On It" while riders sing along. Post it on Youtube. Go viral in three hours.
- Sun myself alongside those gargantuan sea lions at Pier 39 K-Dock. Note to self: Bring a lot of fish.
- Have a truckload of Allstar Donuts delivered during my last yoga class.
- Have Francis Ford Coppola inform the waiters at his restaurant, Cafe Zoetrope, that yes, they can serve the Chicken al Apocalypse now.
- Adopt every animal housed at Animal Care and Control even though our apartment building only allows one pet per household.

- Try to figure out how Noah would have built an ark in a tiny San Francisco apartment.
- Feed all of my new pets roast beef dinners from the House of Prime Rib. To go, of course.
- Flagrantly pick all of those enormous, beautiful hydrangeas blooming at Fort Mason and the Presidio and deliver them to the residents of old-age homes. Tell each resident they are from a secret admirer.
- Bag all of my groceries at the grocery store using the bags from the produce section to avoid being charged 10 cents a bag.
- Get on the Jumbotron at AT&T Park during a Giants game and announce, "Hey, everybody! This round's on me!"
- Stir our compostables and combustibles in with our regular garbage.
- Yell "I love you!" to every fireman I see on the street. Wait, I already do that.
- Belt out karaoke of The Doors' "The End" with Diane Feinstein and Nancy Pelosi at Silver Clouds.
- Do a *Risky Business* slide in my underwear in that long de Young Museum lobby.
- Stalk Tim Lincecum at AT&T Park and give him a huge, Morganna-style kiss. Then tell him he was cuter with long hair and that he should lose the "mustache."
- Jump the fence at the buffalo paddock in Golden Gate Park and hug some buffalo. Then run.
- Rent Larry Ellison's yacht on our credit card and go for a (very) quick spin around Stow Lake.
- Climb Sutro Tower and hang a pair of tennis shoes from the antennae.
- Drive up the crookedest street in the world — but only after 4 p.m. on weekends due to the new Lombard Street traffic regulations.
- Cancel my facelift.

E-mail: sandy@marinatimes.com

THE BEST OF BOOKS ∴ What you're reading



compiled by brian pettus

BOOKS INC. BEST-SELLER LIST

- The Goldfinch**, by Donna Tartt
- #Girlboss**, by Sophia Amoruso
- Flash Boys: A Wall Street Revolt**, by Michael Lewis
- The Vacationers: A Novel**, by Emma Straub
- Hard Choices**, by Hillary Clinton
- The Silkworm (A Cormoran Strike Novel)**, by Robert Galbraith
- Chicken Squad: The First Misadventure**, by Doreen Cronin (Ages 7-10)
- Lost for Words: A Novel**, by Edward St. Aubyn
- Bohemians: A Graphic History**, by Ben Tarnoff
- My New Friend is So Fun (An Elephant and Piggie Book)**, by Mo Willems (Ages 6-8)

FICTION

The Heist: A Novel, by Daniel Silva

The latest high-stakes thriller from best-seller Daniel Silva starring former Mossad agent and now art restorer Gabriel Allon involves Caravaggio, international espionage, art forgery, and a whole lot of chases. Silva doesn't disappoint fans or newcomers alike with his latest.

All the Light We Cannot See, by Anthony Doerr

This book has won much praise for its lavish World War II plot and dramatic detail. A story of humanity and love during one of the lowest points of civilization, this book has touched us like very few have recently, with one reader sending a company-wide e-mail praising it effusively. Highly recommended.

NONFICTION

The Knowledge: How to Rebuild Our World From Scratch, by Lewis Dartnell

Exploration of how we could come back from the brink of extermination. Dartnell plots a course of research and construction that would return humanity to the modern day, and in the process explores the remarkable history of innovation and cumulative knowledge.

Chez Jacques, by Jacques Pepin

Our featured sale book this month, *Chez Jacques* is one of Pepin's numerous cookbooks, focusing on more than 100 recipes with complete presentation ideas and wonderful wisdom from one of the world's most beloved chefs.

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

Modernism from the National Gallery of Art on display at the de Young

by sharon anderson

"I hope that my painting has the impact of giving someone, as it did me, the feeling of his own totality, of his own separateness, of his own individuality."

— Barnett Newman

SAN FRANCISCANS WON'T have to wait for the MOMA to reopen to get a taste of modern art. Through Oct. 12, the de Young will feature over 40 post-World War II works from the Robert and Jane Meyerhoff collection in a special exhibition that includes works by Robert Rauschenberg, Roy Lichtenstein, Jasper Johns, Barnett Newman, Philip Guston, Frank Stella, and others.

These innovative artworks explore the interaction of shape and color, paring down form to its essentials. Traditional narrative and meaning in this genre are often abandoned. Empty space, shadows and light are employed instead of merely the environment surrounding the



Left to right: Frank Stella, *Flin Flon IV*, 1969, polymer and fluorescent polymer paint on canvas, 96½ x 96½ in., collection of Robert and Jane Meyerhoff; Kelly Ellsworth, *Orange Green*, 1966, acrylic on canvas, 88-3/16 x 65-1/8 in., collection of Robert and Jane Meyerhoff

© 2013 FRANK STELLA/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK; © ELLSWORTH KELLY

work. The identity of the art object becomes mysterious by virtue of its simplicity.

Frank Stella's *Flin Flon IV* exemplifies the austerity of this era in abstract painting. Intersecting semicircular

arcs combine with soft color creating a vibrating interaction of foreground and background that gives the viewer a sense of movement bordering on optical illusion. Ellsworth Kelley's *Orange Green* (1966)

simplifies form even further by matching the tranquility of two intersecting colors like a sharper edged version of Mark Rothko's earlier meditative canvases. Moody works by Jasper Johns and Philip

Guston provide a certain amount of edgy contrast to the cool composure of Stella's and Kelley's minimalism.

The most prominent work in the exhibit, delegated to its own room and space, is Barnett Newman's *The Stations of the Cross* (1958–66). A series of 14 paintings, Newman's *Stations* indicate the movement of vertical forms on large canvases, black lines that change in shape and texture suggesting a kind of procession or movement of undulating sound.

A work of art is like a word. Considered on its own, it has little context. Taken with other words, it forms a sentence. Meaning is revealed. It's the same with art. Modernism often removes the familiar context of recognizable imagery. The resulting landscape of form and color gives us as viewers room to dream.

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



Image: Women playing mah jongg in the Catskills, c. 1960. Collection of Harvey Abrams.

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Project Mah Jongg was curated and is circulated by the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, New York. The exhibition is made possible through the generosity of the National Mah Jongg League. Additional support is provided by Sylvia Hassenfeld and Twice Arts Foundation. Exhibition design by Abbott Miller, Pentagram.

Supporting sponsorship for The CJM's presentation has been provided by Ascent Private Capital Management of U.S. Bank, Gloria and Jack Clumeck, and Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation, in memory of Ben and A. Jess Shenson.

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AUGUST EVENTS

what not to miss this month

MAJOR EVENTS

Eat Drink S.F.: An Epic Foodie Festival

Fri-Sat, Aug. 1-3, 11 a.m.

Bldg. A, Fort Mason Center

Experience the tastes and flavors of the nation's finest chefs, mixologists, brewers, and wine experts at this annual food, wine and spirits festival. \$60-\$175, 415-781-5348, sfchefsfoodwine.com



American Craft Council Show

Fri-Sun, Aug. 8-10, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

With more than 225 of the top contemporary jewelry, clothing, furniture, and home décor artists, see pure craft at its absolute finest in this largest juried craft show in the West. \$14-\$30 (\$5 after 5 p.m. Friday), 612-206-3100, craftcouncil.org

Help is on the Way XX

Sunday, Aug. 24, 7:30 p.m.

Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

Join the Richmond/Ermet AIDS Foundation at this elegant evening of receptions, live entertainment featuring both Bay Area and internationally acclaimed performers, and a dessert party to raise funds for Bay Area AIDS service provider agencies. \$65-\$999, 415-931-0317, richmondermet.org

LAST CHANCE

Intimate Expressionism from the National Gallery of Art

Tue-Sun thru Aug. 3, 9:30 a.m.-5:15 p.m.

Legion of Honor

This exhibition showcases approximately 70 Impressionist and Post-Impressionist landscapes, seascapes, still lifes, interiors, and portraits from the collections of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. \$22, 415-750-3600, famsf.org

33rd Annual S.F. Jewish Film Festival

Daily thru Aug. 12

Various Bay Area venues

The S.F. Jewish Film Festival is the first and largest in the world and a leading advocate for independent Jewish cinema. Festival pass \$30-\$240, 415-621-0556, sfjff.org

Crown Jewels

Wed-Sun thru Aug. 17, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Presidio Trust (103 Montgomery St.)

This exhibition showcases five international parks through the eyes of experts, each with a lifetime's work in that part of the world. Through narratives and photographs, learn about the challenges facing protected areas in Tibet, East Africa, Italy, Amazonia, and Australia. Free, 415-561-5300, presidio.gov



How the Light Gets In: Bay Area Photo & Pauletta Chanco: Living on Shifting Sands

Tue-Sat thru Aug. 22, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

SFMOMA Artists Gallery, Fort Mason Center

Seven artists explore a range of lighting techniques in photography and Chanco exhibits her recent abstract work. Free, 415-441-4777, sfmoma.org



Stern Grove Festival

Sundays thru Aug. 24, 2 p.m.

Stern Grove (19th Ave. & Sloat Blvd.)

A summer tradition, this festival celebrates community, nature and the arts with August performances by Andrew Bird and the Hands of Glory, Todd Sickafoose's Tiny Resistors, Darlene Love, the Monophonics, Sergio Mendes, LoCura, The Zombies, and Vetiver. Free, 415-252-6252, sterngrove.org

COMMUNITY CORNER

CPR Certification

Wednesday, Aug. 6, 13, 20, & 27, 5-8:30 p.m.

Sports Basement Presidio (610 Old Mason St.)

Learn how to recognize and treat life-threatening emergencies, including cardiac arrest and choking for adult, child and infant victims as well as how to effectively use an AED (Automated External Defibrillator). Free, 415-437-0100, sportsbasement.com

Taking the Mystery Out of Retirement

Tuesday, Aug. 7, 6 p.m.

S.F. Main Library

Cristina Collazo from the U.S. Dept. of Labor helps take the mystery out of retirement planning. Free, 415-557-4400, sfpl.org

GALAS & BENEFITS



10th Annual Flower Power Luncheon

Wednesday, Aug. 6, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Sir Francis Drake Hotel

Benefiting the Salvation Army's Back-to-School and after-school programs, this luncheon event features renowned floral designer Ron Morgan, who will show guests how to create his signature designs at home. \$100, 415-503-2736, flowerpowersf.org

American Cancer Society's Relay for Life

Saturday, Aug. 9, 9 a.m.

Great Meadow, Fort Mason

This life-changing event helps our community celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against the disease. 800-227-2345, relayforlife.org

ARTS & CULTURE

41st Annual Nihonmachi Street Fair

Sat-Sun, Aug. 2-3, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.

Japantown and Japan Center

Enjoy food, artisan crafts, local musical and cultural performances while celebrating and learning about the Asian/Pacific American culture. This year's fair features a car show, coed basketball tournament, and the ever-popular Doggie World. Free, nihonmachistreetfair.org

20th Century Expo

Sat-Sun, Aug. 23-24, 10 a.m.

Herbst Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

This show and sale celebrates decorative arts, fine arts, and "fun arts" from 1900 to 2000. \$10, 650-773-4824, 20thcenturyexpo.com

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

North Beach First Fridays

Friday, Aug. 1, 6-9 p.m.

Various North Beach venues

This monthly event features art openings, live music, poetry, and more at over 20 venues. northbeachfirstfridays.com

Museo Italo Americano: Natural Expressions: Works by Alberto Cristini, Vincent Galassi & John Malveto

Tue-Sat, Aug. 23-Nov. 23, noon-4 p.m.

Bldg. C, Fort Mason Center

See paintings, sculptures and photographs at this exhibition featuring three Italian and American artists. Free, 415-673-2200, museoitaloamericano.org

THEATER



Free Shakespeare in the Park: Taming of the Shrew

Sat-Sat thru Sept. 14, 2 p.m.

Presidio Main Post Parade Ground Lawn

Bring your family, friends, a blanket, and a picnic to enjoy the Bard's popular comedy featuring hilarious clowns and ridiculous disguises, along with a subversive and challenging love story. Free, 415-558-0888, sfshakes.org

BATS: Summer Improv Festival

Fri-Sat, Aug. 1-31, 8 p.m.

Bayfront Theatre, Bldg. B, Fort Mason Center

Don't miss a new show every weekend by the Bay Area's finest improvisational actors, including the yearly S.F. vs. L.A. Theatresports Grudgematch on Saturday, Aug. 16, and the 25th anniversary of Improvised Shakespeare on Fri-Sat, Aug. 8-9. \$17-\$20, 415-474-6776, improv.org

Motown The Musical

Tue-Sun, Aug. 15-Sept. 28

SHN Orpheum Theatre

Don't miss the true American dream story of Motown founder Berry Gordy's journey from featherweight boxer to the heavyweight music mogul who launched the careers of Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Smokey Robinson, and many more. \$40-\$205, 888-746-1799, shnsf.com



S.F. Mime Troupe: Ripple Effect

Sunday, Aug. 17, 2 p.m.

Washington Square Park

The troupe's 55th season features a musical comedic tale of intersecting lives and cultures that reflect the familiar neighborhood tensions that are polarizing San Franciscans today from skyrocketing rents to Google Glass. Free (donation requested), 415-285-1717

DANCE



ODC: Summer Sampler 2014

Fri-Sat, Aug. 1-2, 8 p.m.

ODC Theater (3153 17th St.)

Designed to clear the summer fog and satisfy your appetite for art, performances include "Breathing Underwater," a visceral meditation on the realm of young women, "Life Saving Maneuvers" and "Scramble," about the joys and intricacies of pas de deux. \$30-\$45, 415-863-9834, odcdance.org

Post:Ballet Summer Season Program

Thu-Sat, Aug. 7-9, 8 p.m.

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Theater

"Five High" features the world premiere of "ourevolution" and two favorites from the Post:Ballet repertoire, "Mine is Yours" and "field the present shifts." \$30-\$250, postballet.org

Suhaila Salimpour Dance Company: Enta (You Are) Omri (My Life)

Sat-Sun, Aug. 9-10

Southside Theater, Bldg. D, Fort Mason Center

This performance depicts a lifetime of love and loss told through modern belly dance and classic Middle Eastern music. \$20, 510-527-2400, suhailainternational.com

MUSIC

City Opera S.F.

Wednesday, Aug. 1, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Union Square

Take a break from your busy day and enjoy this free, outdoor, lunchtime concert of this new pop-opera troupe specializing in a romantic mix of well-known operatic arias, moving duets, and classic songs in Italian, French and English. Free, unionsquarelive.org, cityoperasf.com

5th International Piano Duo Festival

Thu-Sun, Aug. 7-10

S.F. Conservatory of Music & Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

An array of distinguished international artists perform a series of five concerts and three salon programs culminating in the American premier of a suite from the Russian Ballet and featuring artists from the S.F. Ballet, Smuin Ballet, Marin Dance Theatre, and the S.F. Opera Ballet. \$20-\$150, 800-838-3006, sfmf.org

SFJazz: Joe Henderson Hotplate Festival

Thu-Sun, Aug. 14-17, 7 & 8:30 p.m.

201 Franklin St.

Enjoy performances by Mel Martin, Matt Clark, Adam Shulman, and Michael Zilber that pay tribute to Henderson's greatest recorded moments, in the music space named for the late iconic saxophonist. \$25, 866-920-5299, sfjazz.org

Merola Opera: Grand Finale

Aug. 16

War Memorial Opera House

Don't miss these future opera headliners in the final performance of the young artists' program. Following the performance, toast the artists' successes at a celebratory reception (tickets sold separately) in the War Memorial Opera House Lower Level Café. \$25-\$45, 415-565-6427, merola.org

S.F. Choral Society: Brahms

Fri-Sat, Aug. 22-23, 8 p.m.

Davies Symphony Hall

The choir performs Johannes Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, which elevated Brahms from a mere writer of choral works to a great composer, thereby gaining the ire of a threatened Wagner. \$26-\$34, 415-392-4400, sfchoral.org

Mike Greensill Trio with Wesla Whitfield

Sunday, Aug. 31, 4 p.m.

Old First Church (1751 Sacramento St.)

Delve into the mysteries of the jazz underworld with the songs of Dave Frishberg, Bob Dorough, Blossom Dearie, Fran Landesman, and others, plus some Greensill original compositions. \$14-\$17, 415-474-1608, oldfirstconcerts.org, mikegreensill.com

NIGHTLIFE

Cabaret Showcase

Saturday, Aug. 2

Hotel Rex (562 Sutter St.)

Enjoy new talent from the Bay Area in this intimate venue. \$25-\$45, societycabaret.com

Big Fun: Claptone

Thursday, Aug. 7, 10 p.m.

Vessel SF (85 Campton Place)

Come find out why mysterious German music producer Claptone has made such a splash on the international music scene in the past few years, and maybe find out why he wears the mask with the beak. \$8, vesselsf.com



Men Without Hats

Tuesday, Aug. 26, 8:30 p.m.

Red Devil Lounge (1695 Polk St.)

You can dance if you want to when this group returns with music promising "a hooky song with a bit of edge that can get you thinking." \$15-\$20, reddevilounge.com

Royal Jelly

Wednesday, Aug. 27, 8 p.m.-2 a.m.

Boom Boom Room (1601 Fillmore St.)

Local band Royal Jelly's music has been described as "gypsy blues" and "garage jazz." \$5, boomboomtickets.com

SCIENCE & THE ENVIRONMENT

Beyond Hubble:

The James Webb Space Telescope & the Search for Life in the Universe

Monday, Aug. 4, 7:30 p.m.

Academy of Science Planetarium

Dr. Jason Kalirai, project scientist at the Space Telescope Science Institute, explains the landmark achievements of the Hubble telescope and what we can expect from the next generation space telescope. \$8-\$12, 877-227-1831, calacademy.org



Gardening in the Fog Series: Growing as Much as Possible in 32 Square Feet

Saturday, Aug. 9, 10 a.m.-noon

Fort Scott Comm. Gardens

(Wisser Ct., the Presidio)

Learn techniques common in urban farming to maximize your space, as well as square-foot gardening methods, companion planting, and succession planting. Free, kwooten@presidiotrust.org, parkconservancy.org

Perseids Meteor Shower

Sun-Wed, Aug. 10-13, night-dawn

Northern night sky

Considered one of the best showers each year, the Perseids produces about 60 meteors per hour. Find a dark, secluded place and look toward the Perseus constellation. earthsky.org, stardate.org

Water Underfoot

Wednesday, Aug. 13, 6 p.m.

The Commonwealth Club (595 Market St.)

Will the drought finally drive California to improve the way it uses the water under our feet? \$7-\$20, 415-597-6705, commonwealthclub.org



Shirts.io Hackathon

Friday, Aug. 15, 7 p.m.

Venue TBA

Entrepreneurs, developers, and designers compete to win the "ultimate start-up seed kit." Free, shirts.io/hackathon

FILMS & LECTURES

San Francisco Time Travel Project: Silver City

Tuesday, Aug. 5, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

California Historical Society (678 Mission St.)

The storytellers from Odd Salon explore the city's weird and wonderful history with stories from the past. Free-\$15, californiahistoricalsociety.org

Monty Python Live (Mostly)

Wednesday, Aug. 6, 7 p.m.

Landmark Clay Theatre (2261 Fillmore St.)

In a film recorded at London's O2 Arena, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin perform classic Python skits. \$8-\$10.50, landmarktheatres.com



The NBA's Jason Collins: First Out Athlete in Major American Pro Sports

Monday, Aug. 11, 6:30 p.m.

Castro Theatre (429 Castro St.)

Hear from the first NBA player to come out. \$5-\$70, 415-597-6705, commonwealthclub.org

Film Night in the Park: Bullit

Saturday, Aug. 23, 8 p.m.

Union Square

Bring a picnic, a blanket, and low chairs only to enjoy this 1968 Steve McQueen classic. Free, sfntf.squarespace.com

POTABLES & EDIBLES

Cooking Demo: Joyce Goldstein

Saturday, Aug. 9, 11-11:45 a.m.

CUESA Classroom, Ferry Building

The former executive chef of Chez Panisse and chef-owner of Square One will present a cooking demo featuring seasonal food from the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. Free, 415-291-3276, cuesa.org

6th S.F. Annual Street Food Festival

Saturday, Aug. 16, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Folsom St. (btw. 20th & 26th)

21st St. to 25th (btw. Shotwell & Treat)

Cesar Chavez Elementary School parking lot Hosted by La Cocina, his festival brings together the Bay Area's best food and music and features over 80 vendors. Free, sfstreetfoodfest.com



Bay Area Brewfest

Saturday, Aug. 16, 2-5 p.m.

Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center

Sample dozens of international and domestic beers from dozens of breweries, dine on food-truck favorites (sold separately), and dance to D.J. music. \$40-\$50, bayareabrewfestival.com

Antipasti Dinner

Thursday, Aug. 21, 5:30 p.m.

Museo Italo Americano

(Bldg. C, Fort Mason Center)

Enjoy a dinner featuring Italian regional specialties like salmone con maiones, antipasto sole, cipolle arrostite, insalata di fagioli e gamberetti, and more to support the museum's cultural and educational programs. Includes auction and raffle. \$75, 415-673-2200, museoitaloamericano.org

SPORTS & HEALTH



First Annual Sustainable Race 11k

Saturday, Aug. 2, 7 a.m.

Starts: Beach Hut Cafe (1199 E. Beach St., S.F. Bay Trail)

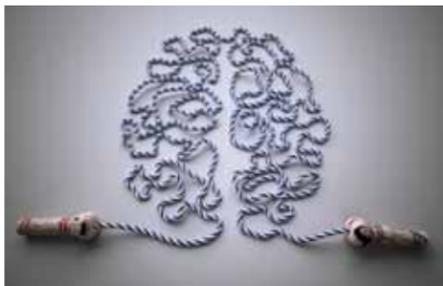
This race along the waterfront seeks to foster awareness focusing on the city's goal of 100 percent renewable energy. Free with registration, evnewsreport.com

Round the Rock Alcatraz Challenge

Saturday, Aug. 2, 9 a.m.

Crissy Field

See great racing and spectacular views at this traditional Polynesian outrigger race offering two exciting and competitive courses between the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges. \$20, alcatrazchallenge.com



Brain Fitness

Monday, Aug. 18 & 25, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Latino/Hispanic Rms. S.F. Main Library

In this very social class you will exercise your brain in fun, challenging and creative ways to maintain and improve your cognitive vitality and memory. Free, 415-557-4400, sfpl.org

Meditation Innovation: Yogiraj

Saturday, Aug. 23, 7-9 p.m.

Conf. Cntr., Bldg. A, Fort Mason Center

Learn to harness both breath and mind to restore physical vitality, clear emotional suffering, enhance creativity and mental acuity, and assimilate the deepest realities of the self. Free, (donation requested), 415-377-5310, siddhanath.org

CHILD'S PLAY



Bean Sprouts Family Day

Saturdays thru October, noon-3 p.m.

S.F. Botanical Garden

Enjoy nature crafts, garden care, outdoor games, and exploration in the Children's Garden with a variety of self-paced activities — water plants, create a crazy critter, dig in the dune sand pit, or share a book in the Living Room. Bring lunch and enjoy a picnic in the garden. 415-661-1316, sfbotanicalgarden.org

Doing and Viewing Art

Most Saturdays, 10-11:30 a.m.

Kimball Education Gallery, de Young Museum

Bring the family for a tour of the permanent and current exhibitions followed by related hands-on studio workshops taught by professional artists-teachers. Ages 4-12 (under age 8 must be accompanied by an adult). Free with museum admission, 415-750-3658, famsf.org



Bubble Lady

Tuesday, Aug. 5, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Moscone Recreation Center (1800 Chestnut St.)

Bubble artiste Rebecca Nile enchants children of all ages as they watch her amazing bubble tricks with wonder and awe. Free, 415-384-0619, thebubblelady.com

Summer Fest

Sunday, Aug. 3, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Montgomery St. Barracks (Building 103, the Presidio)

Part of the Create with Nature series, kids will build sculptures and create unique works of art with natural materials found in the park. 415-561-5300, presidio.gov

Family BikeAbout

Saturday, Aug. 16, 8:30-10 a.m.

S.F. Zoo

Grab the bikes and head to the zoo for this informative docent-led cycling tour and watch the animals start their day. \$18-\$23, 415-753-7080, sfzoo.org

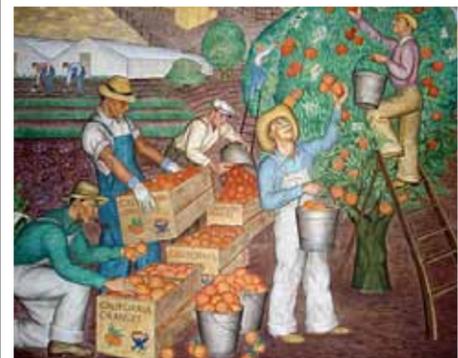
Family Day at Oberlin Dance Collective

Sunday, Aug. 25, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

ODC Dance Commons (351 Shotwell St.)

This special open house for children and adults of all ages is to learn more about the ODC School Youth & Teen Program. Sample free classes, enjoy refreshments, and talk to faculty and returning parents about the program. Free, 415-863-9830, odcdance.org

JUST FOR FUN



Coit Tower Murals Guided Tour

Wed & Sat, year-round, 11 a.m.

Coit Tower, Telegraph Hill

Created by 25 of California's leading artists of the 1930s, these recently restored murals reflect scenes of the Great Depression, landscapes, farm workers, industries, a stylish soiree, and vibrant city life. Includes some murals not usually open to the public. Free (donations welcome), 415-557-4266, sfcityguides.org

Chantey Sing

Saturday, Aug. 2, 8 p.m.-midnight

H.V. Balcultha, Hyde Street Pier

Sing traditional working songs aboard this floating historic vessel. Dress warmly and bring a mug for hot cider served from the ship's galley. Free, reservations required at 415-561-7171, nps.gov

Swing in the Square

Wednesday, Aug. 27, 6-8 p.m.

Union Square

Dance to the tunes of the rockabilly group The Rumble Strippers. Arrive early for dance lessons by professional instructors. Free, visitunionsquare.com

E-mail: calendar@marinatimes.com

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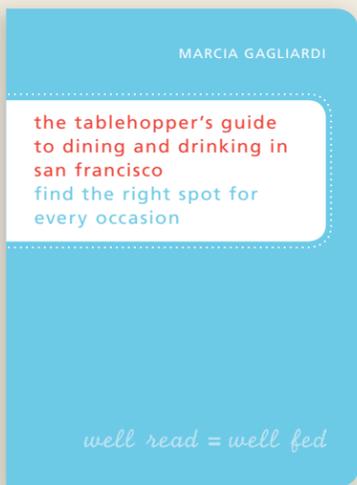
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Clockwise: Cardio Kickboxing with Kendra; Absolution with Deb; Athlete's Workout with Justin PHOTOS: CRUNCH LIVE

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Summer wreaking havoc with your workout? Get fit online

by julie mitchell

SUMMER IS UNDERWAY, and for many fitness fans that means getting outside to walk, run, bike, or hike. But summer can also mean spending more time with the kids, family vacations, and other diversions that pull

costs \$9.99 per month, and actual Crunch instructors lead the videos shot during class, so the experience is as close as possible to taking a real class. There are also "quickie" workouts that last just 15 minutes. According to Crunch's regional director of group

website that broadcasts live classes recorded from gyms across the country on an on-demand basis. You simply log in and select the type of class you want, from kickboxing to step aerobics, and new classes are added regularly. New users can sign up for a free class, and all classes are \$2 per class or \$19.99 for an unlimited monthly membership.

YogaGlo (yogaglo.com) follows a similar format. For \$18 a month, users

Simply log in and select the class you want, from kickboxing to step aerobics.

us away from our regular fitness routines.

One solution is to turn to the Web for a convenient online workout. Whether you want to follow a yoga routine, find a ballet barre-based toning program, or you want a combination of strength training and cardio conditioning, there are many websites from which to choose. And you can find workouts that last from 10, 20 or 30 minutes up to an hour. Most online fitness programs are offered on a pay-by-the-month subscription basis for as little as \$10 a month. Here are just a few to check out:

Crunch Gyms, with several locations in the city, introduced Crunch Live (crunchlive.com) last October. The website features workout videos of some of the health club's most popular workouts like yoga body sculpt, cardio kickboxing, and aerobics with attitude. Crunch Live

fitness in San Francisco, "People want quick, efficient workouts, and with Crunch Live, you can pick and choose among your favorite classes. You can do a mini-class for 15 minutes or pick four 15-minute segments and put together your own longer workout."

Barre3 (barre3.com) has popular studios throughout the United States that focus on balance and strength with

can access more than 2,000 yoga classes in different styles including ashtanga, hatha, vinyasa flow, and even meditation. The website offers a video tour to let yoga newcomers find the classes and teachers that most interest them.

Among the advantages of signing up for an online workout program is the ability to pick and choose styles of exercise that best suit you and

Advantages include the ability to choose styles of exercise that best suit you.

moves inspired by ballet, yoga, and Pilates. It offers online workouts for \$15 a month, \$70 for six months, and a year's membership for \$120. The Barre3 website offers unlimited 10, 30, 40, and 60-minute workouts as well as seasonal recipes.

EMG Live Fitness (emglivefitness.com) is a

your needs, and they are all less expensive than a gym membership. Just remember that it's best to create a dedicated space for working out — trying out a cardio routine in a room crowded with furniture is asking for disaster!

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Summer lessons learned

Looking back on what worked

by liz farrell

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE IN JUST A FEW short weeks school will be starting again. Summer always seems to come and go like the blink of an eye. Each is so different, bringing surprise adventures and new challenges. I find it helpful at the end of each summer to take time to reflect on

is all about building lasting memories, so don't be afraid to let your children stay up late every once in a while, go for a night swim on vacation, or even surprise them with a trip to the ice cream parlor.

It's OK to be bored. In our house, it didn't take but a few days of summer before I heard, "I'm bored" for the first time. My sister has a great response to this, so I quickly adopted it: "Only boring people get bored, and you are not boring." As parents, sometimes when we hear our children say this, we feel the need to solve their problem by suggesting things for them to

do or even putting a screen in front of them. It was a bit challenging at first, especially for my son who immediately thinks if he is not playing a game on the iPhone or iPad, he is bored. When you take the electronics away and give them time, children can get very creative with ways to entertain themselves. I loved

watching my daughter curl up with a good book or my son build a fort in the living room. There were even a few times they bonded over their boredom and found something to do together like playing a card game or

kicking around the soccer ball.

Summer time is supposed to be relaxing and filled with fun, but it can also be a bit stressful. I hope these tips come in handy for either the last few weeks of this year or you may even tuck them away for next year. In the meantime, try to avoid cramming in a summer's worth of fun in

We may feel the need to overplan children or "book them out" for weeks.

the activities we did, places we went, and most important, what worked and what didn't. This month, I thought I would share some of those thoughts with you.

Be organized but don't over plan. It can be a little daunting to think of having the children home all day for the whole summer; therefore, we may feel the need to over plan or "book them out" for weeks at a time. This summer, I realized that allowing some weeks for camp and some off weeks created a perfect balance. We made a bucket list of things we wanted to do: peach picking, Giants game, and bowling were tops on



Siblings bonding over a game of cards
PHOTO: WOODLEYWONDERWORKS / FLICKR

the list. I also made sure to allot time for some of those lazy summer days that kids need. The school year is all about routine and so scheduled that it's nice for everyone — parents included — to have a leisurely morning in their pajamas or to find a neighbor and play catch.

Share being the social chair. Summer does require a bit of planning so everyone is not staring at each other every-day going crazy. For me, one of the hardest things is that I have to force myself *not* to become the "cruise director" in charge of everyone's entertainment everyday. To combat the "what are we doing today?" question, I loved surprising my children by letting each of them plan a day. We ventured to the Academy of Sciences, different parks, and the library. All simple and wonderful excursions we don't have enough time for during the year. I also think summer is a great time to bend some of the rules, and as the social chair you can do this. Summer

When you take the electronics away, children can get very creative entertaining themselves

these last few weeks. Start now to ease back into a school-time routine — less screen time, earlier bedtime, and maybe less sugary snacks. Trust me, you will thank yourself later.

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



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URBAN HOME AND GARDEN :: Bright ideas



Shedding light on lighting

by julia strzesieski

FEW CHANGES IN YOUR HOME WILL make as much difference as a change in lighting. With all the types of lightbulbs available, you may wonder what differentiates them. Variations in bulb technology affect spectral distribution, bulb life expectancy, and energy efficiency, the latter being of increasing importance these days. Each type of bulb has its advantages.

FLUORESCENT

A fluorescent bulb produces light when electricity arcs between electrodes at both ends of a glass tube that is filled with low-pressure mercury vapor and other gases. Electrons flowing between the electrodes collide with vaporized mercury atoms, causing the mercury to release ultraviolet energy. A phosphor coating inside the tube absorbs the UV energy, causing the coating to emit visible light. Once known for casting a harsh glow, fluorescent technology now provides excellent color rendition; light emitted by a "warm white" fluorescent bulb is virtually indistinguishable from light from an incandescent bulb.

Because of the mercury in these bulbs, they should not be put in the regular trash and should be disposed of properly (visit sfenviroment.com for a list of recycling sites).

COMPACT FLUORESCENT LAMP (CFL)

Among the commonly available bulb types, compact fluorescent bulbs provide the most economical and energy-efficient lighting, using about one-fourth the power to produce the same amount of light as incandescents. CFLs last approximately 10,000 hours, so over the life of a single bulb, you will realize a savings compared to the cost of incandescent bulbs.

It's important to remember that CFLs contain a very small amount of mercury and therefore, like fluorescent bulbs, must be recycled and not thrown in the regular trash.

INCANDESCENT

Basic incandescent light technology is essentially the same as Thomas Edison's Victorian era invention: Electricity passes through a tungsten filament inside a sealed glass bulb. The tungsten resists the electrical current, causing the filament to heat up and glow. Over time, the filament gets thinner until it breaks. However, because incandescent lighting is the most inefficient of the common lighting choices, federal legislation now mandates increased efficiency standards for these bulbs, and these traditional bulbs will eventually be phased out.

The 100-watt incandescent bulb was the first to be affected by the new law. The same amount of light produced by a 100-watt bulb, which is 1,500 to 1,700 lumens, must now be generated using 72 watts or less.

FULL-SPECTRUM

Full-spectrum lighting is actually a color-corrected variation on incandescent tech-

nology. Full-spectrum lightbulbs often use neodymium glass to filter out significant portions of the yellow spectrum common to standard incandescent bulbs. The resulting spectral distribution is much closer to what you see when you walk outside on a clear day — the closest replication of natural sunlight available. Colors show up accurately, and the contrast between black and white is increased. Research suggests that full-spectrum lighting provides improved visual acuity (sharpness), decreased glare and eye-strain, reduced fatigue, improved neural functioning, reduced seasonal depression, reduced hyperactivity, reduced stress, greater attentiveness, and improved mood.

HALOGEN

The halogen lighting design is another variation on incandescent technology that is somewhat more energy-efficient. The sealed bulb contains a tightly coiled tungsten filament surrounded by halogen gas. During use, halogen combines with evaporating tungsten, redepositing tungsten on the filament, thus slowing down the rate at which the filament breaks down. Light output levels over the life of the bulb do not diminish as noticeably as with standard incandescent bulbs. The light produced by halogen bulbs is whiter than standard incandescent, making colors appear brighter and more intense. Halogen bulbs are commonly used in the home environment for track lighting, accents, torchiere lamps, and recessed lighting.

LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED)

These appear to be bulbs, but light-emitting diodes are actually tiny semiconductors. When power is applied, the movement of electrons stimulates them and creates photons, or light, that is visible to the human eye. Because LEDs do not use filaments like incandescent bulbs, they emit much less heat and are more efficient in consumption and output.

Unlike incandescent lights, LEDs are built inside solid protective cases, making them extremely durable. LED lights are commonplace in everyday applications and are used in traffic signal lights, as status indicators on electronic equipment, in exit signs, and in emergency vehicle lights.

SOLAR

Solar lights use a solar panel that converts sunlight into electricity. During the day, the electricity converted by the solar panel is stored in a rechargeable battery. At night, the battery powers the light using the stored electricity. Operating times depend on geographical location, season, and weather. For best results, fixtures should be placed in direct sunlight. Solar lighting is popular for lighting outdoor areas including walkways.

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

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When will San Francisco take assessors seriously?

by john farrell

ONE OF THE MOST, IF NOT the most, important revenue producing department in the City and County of San Francisco is the assessor's office. The assessor's office is responsible for identifying and appraising all real and business property within San Francisco, resulting in approximately \$2 billion in tax revenue annually. These monies provide funding for our police and fire; for social, recreational, and educational programs; and for administrative offices such as the mayor's office, Board of Supervisors, and controller, to name a few.

Then why do we not take the assessor seriously?

Since the two-term limit passed in 1990, there have been five assessors — all politicians. Former Supervisor Dick Hongisto, who resigned as assessor to become police chief and later was fired for taking neighborhood newspapers; former Supervisor Doris Ward, who hired her campaign manager on a city contract to run her campaign; former Supervisor Mabel Teng, who resigned midway through her first term in office; Phil Ting, who used public financing to run for mayor to help boost his bid for the Assembly; and now former Supervisor Carmen Chu,

who was being termed out as District 4 supervisor and needed a place to go and was appointed by Mayor Ed Lee.

If this were private industry, none of these people would be considered for the assessor position based on their qualifications and experience. Before the two-term limit, the assessor came up through the ranks and had the experience and qualifications needed to run the office. Just like it is in the real world in private industry. However, this is government and, as you know, qualifications are secondary to political payback. Three of the five former assessors resigned and were replaced with mayoral appointments. The last real assessor was Sam Duca, who retired in 1988.

The city will receive a substantial increase in property tax revenue due to new construction going on all over the city and due to transfer tax revenue from increased sales. But those who know the business know that these positive increases in tax revenue over the years were made by assessor staff in spite of these political assessors. Based on my own experience and on discussions with former and current

staff members, the office would do a much better job and increase revenues more if there was a professional, qualified, and independent assessor. In fact the city would bring in tens and potentially hundreds of millions more in additional tax revenue annually if there was a professional, experienced, and independent assessor. Not a politician.

The assessor's office has been backlogged in new construction for over 10 years, as well as being backlogged in assessment appeals. Due to the substantial backlog in new construction, the State Board of Equalization (SBE) noted in its June 2013 report on the San Francisco City and County Assessment Practices Survey, that there are lengthy delays in processing building permits and adding value due to the new construction. They found numerous cases in which new construction was not made until four years after the date of completion. This results in delayed property tax bills for taxpayers and delay in collection

of tax revenue. Further, this causes an unnecessary burden on the taxpayer for payment of taxes.

The assessor's job is to appraise in-progress new construction as of January 1. The SBE found ongoing projects over several years in which the assessor did not enroll any value even though there was evidence of partially completed projects. The SBE noted that "the assessor's failure to assess new construction as of Jan 1st is contrary to statutory provisions and results in a loss in revenue and inaccurate assessments."

Based on a small sample, the SBE also found many procedural deficiencies and noted "We found a number of parcels that were not assessed even though the assessor was aware of the transfer." Just think if they took a larger sample.

Over the past year, I have identified nearly \$200 million in tax revenue to the city that is not currently being appraised by the assessor's office, such as the unconstitutional loophole in the Presidio Trust that tax-exempts tenants, the non-assessment of naming rights at AT&T Ballpark and of the PG&E franchise fee by the SBE, and the appalling appeal by the Giants to reduce their ballpark value to \$140

million after they built it 2000 for over \$350 million, to name a few. If these properties are not being assessed appropriately, what about other properties in the city?

Where is the *Chronicle*? Where is the *Examiner*? Where is Harvey Rose? How can a mayor approve a budget knowing that there is this excessive backlog and that property tax revenues are not all being accounted for fairly and equitably?

Since the advent of the two-term limit, the assessor position has never been taken seriously and was considered a place where someone would be politically rewarded and then retire at a high pension. However, since Phil Ting became an assemblyman, it is now looked at as a stepping stone to higher office. I hope the current assessor will take this opportunity to provide a professional environment and not just use the position like her predecessors.

A professional, qualified, and independent assessor means at least \$100 million more annually in tax revenue to the city.

Everyone should pay their fair share.

John Farrell, MBA, is a broker/ Realtor with Farrell Real Estate, and is a former city assistant assessor for budget and special projects. E-mail: farrellreinvestments@yahoo.com

Close to \$200 million in tax revenue to the city is not currently being appraised.



Presidio Heights
Offered at \$7,995,000
Modern 5BD/5BA View Home. This home is on a large lot in a terrific location with views of the Golden Gate Bridge. A lovely private deck provides the perfect setting for indoor/outdoor living. 4-car parking and plentiful storage.
AnnieWilliamsHomes.com
Annie Williams
415.819.2663



Pacific Heights
Offered at \$4,600,000
Rare Opportunity to Own a Lovely Investment Property. Significant upside rental potential in this well maintained 7-unit building in excellent condition. Charming classic details, hardwood floors, dishwashers and attractive layouts. Garage parking for 4 cars (tandem) and common garden.
3080Jackson.com
Eva Daniel
415.517.7531
Robert Vernon
415.595.5157



Pacific Heights
Offered at \$3,395,000
Contemporary 3-Level View Home. This 3BD/3.5BA townhome is like a single family home. There are no common walls or roof, and the garden is all yours. The home features beautiful craftsmanship and refinished hardwood floors, high ceilings, skylights, granite counters and two fireplaces. 2-car garage.
1911-bVallejo.com
Stephanie Ahlberg
415.321.4232



Pacific Heights
Offered at \$3,199,000
Grand Condominium with Expansive Golden Gate to Alcatraz Views. Exquisite grand-scale full floor 3BD/2BA penthouse in a handsome, classic and detached 3-unit building. Shared garden and deeded storage room. Rarely available home. The condo was renovated in 2006 with high-end finishes throughout.
2454VallejoSt.com
Jessica Waterston
415.218.6634



Corona Heights
Offered at \$2,395,000
Beautifully Maintained 3-Unit View Building - Delivered Vacant. Perfect setup for an owner occupied with income property, or simply income property. Building includes a 2BD/2BA unit, a 2-level 1BD/1.5BA unit and a 1BD/1BA unit. All three have side by side parking.
89RooseveltWay.com
Trent Fashimpaur
415.321.3112
Eileen Mougout
415.302.9086



Lone Mountain
Offered at \$1,150,000
Classic Cape Cod Style Home. Built in 1938 this charming home features views of the city lights and ocean. Light, bright and airy in its floor plan 2BD/2.5 BA. Entry foyer, formal living room with corner wood-burning fireplace, formal dining room, gourmet kitchen. 2-car garage.
233Stanyan.com
Eva Daniel
415.517.7531



Russian Hill
Offered at \$1,100,000
Stylish 2-Level, 2BD/2BA Condominium. The perfect blend of classic San Francisco architecture and modern amenities. State-of-the-art kitchen, large formal dining room. Living room with wood burning fireplace with marble surround, 10 foot ceilings on main level, city views, 2 patios, hardwood floors. In unit laundry and storage.
1328Greenwich.com
Ron Sebahar
415.321.4295



Glen Park
Offered at \$725,000
Appealing Location! 2BD/1BA. Main level features a large, eat-in kitchen, living room with vaulted ceilings, two bedrooms, one bathroom, and a laundry area. Upstairs is a great loft space with extra storage and great natural light from the skylight. Landscaped back garden.
ChiltonHome.com
Brooke Krohn
415.321.4298

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The Marina Times Real Estate Market Report: June 2014

By Hill & Co.

SINGLE FAMILY HOME SALES

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/ BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow	2652 Chestnut Street	5BD/6BA	\$7,025,000	Above	28
Lake (no sales)					
Laurel Heights	156 Commonwealth Avenue	5BD/3BA	\$3,925,000	Above	7
Lone Mountain	307 Parker Avenue 39 Paramount Terrace 2830 Golden Gate	3BD/2BA 3BD/2BA 5BD/3BA	\$1,710,000 \$1,810,000 \$1,850,000	Above Above Above	13 22 14
Marina	1420 Chestnut Street 1825 Beach Street 3211 Baker Street 12 Rico Way 196 Avila Street 653 Marina Boulevard	3BD/2BA 2BD/1.25BA 3BD/2BA 4BD/3BA 4BD/4BA 4BD/3.5BA	\$1,150,000 \$1,441,000 \$2,435,000 \$3,190,000 \$3,680,000 \$4,000,000	Above Above Above Above Below Above	14 27 0 16 65 13
Nob Hill	1061-1063 Pacific Avenue	3BD/3BA	\$1,789,250	Below	62
North Beach (no sales)					
Pacific Heights	64 Perine Place 1948 Pacific Avenue 2858 Vallejo Street 2711 Scott Street	3BD/2BA 6BD/3.5BA 5BD/3BA 6BD/5.5BA	\$1,550,000 \$5,000,000 \$6,100,000 \$8,225,000	Below Below Above Below	24 23 13 38
Presidio Heights	3902 Clay Street 3210 Jackson Street 3300 Washington Street	4BD/2BA 3BD/3.5BA 5BD/4.5BA	\$2,700,000 \$4,350,000 \$6,550,000	Above Above Below	10 13 37
Russian Hill	49 Florence Street 801 Francisco Street	2BD/2.5BA 5BD/5.5BA	\$2,757,000 \$8,330,000	Below Below	53 114
Sea Cliff (no sales)					
Telegraph Hill (no sales)					

CONDOS

NEIGHBORHOOD	ADDRESS	BEDROOMS/ BATHROOMS	SALE PRICE	ABOVE/AT/BELOW ASKING PRICE	DAYS ON MARKET
Cow Hollow	282 Moulton Street 2832 Pierce Street 2820 Greenwich Street #3	1BD/1BA 3BD/2BA 3BD/3BA	\$880,000 \$1,750,000 \$2,200,000	Above Above Below	22 23 17
Lake	3923 California Street #2 83 6th Avenue	3BD/2BA 3BD/1BA	\$1,075,000 \$1,550,000	Above Above	21 12
Laurel Heights	631-633 Spruce Street #633 28 Parker Avenue #102 76 Collins Street 74 Collins Street	2BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 3BD/3BA 3BD/3BA	\$585,000 \$750,000 \$2,600,000 \$2,625,000	Below At Above Above	119 33 14 8
Lone Mountain	763 Spruce Street #1 3129 Geary Boulevard #2	3BD/2BA 3BD/2BA	\$840,000 \$999,000	Above Below	42 39
Marina	58 Casa Way 3789 Fillmore Street #3 3330 Octavia Street #1 2230 Francisco Street #102 3700 Divisadero Street #203 1570 Chestnut Street 2257 Francisco Street 263 Mallorca Street	1BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 2BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 3BD/2BA	\$620,000 \$870,000 \$900,000 \$975,000 \$1,208,000 \$1,500,000 \$1,550,000 \$1,750,000	Above Below Above Below Above At Above Above	7 62 29 18 43 0 17 6
Nob Hill	1650 Jackson Street #707 1720 Clay Street #T7 1461 Broadway Street #404 1201 California Street #1202 1776 Sacramento Street #409 1101 Pacific Avenue #401 1310 California Street 1170 Sacramento Street #9A 1333 Jones Street #1005 1100 Sacramento Street #302 1100 Sacramento Street #402	1BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 1BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 3BD/2BA 3BD/2BA 2BD/2.5BA 2BD/2BA 3BD/3.5BA 3BD/3.5BA	\$650,000 \$690,000 \$849,000 \$855,000 \$1,225,000 \$1,600,000 \$1,825,000 \$2,000,000 \$2,925,000 \$2,995,000 \$3,295,000	At Above At Above Above Above Above Below At At At	45 40 91 49 20 16 42 52 55 243 80
North Beach (no sales)					
Pacific Heights	2999 California Street #602 2295 Vallejo Street #302 2170 Vallejo Street #302 2971 California Street #4 2299 Sacramento Street #14 3294 Clay Street #4 1701 Jackson Street #501 2090 Pacific Avenue #603 2114 Divisadero Street 2205 Sacramento Street #104 2801 Jackson Street #304 2040 Laguna Street #201 2410 Pacific Avenue #9 1969 Clay Street 2090 Pacific Avenue #304 1925 Jackson Street 2200 Pacific Avenue #10F 2530 Broadway Street 3191 Pacific Avenue 2207 Pacific Avenue	1BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 2BD/1BA 2BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 2BD/2BA 1BD/1BA 2BD/1.5BA 2BD/1.5BA 2BD/1BA 3BD/3BA 3BD/2BA 3BD/2BA 2BD/2BA 3BD/2BA 2BD/2BA 3BD/3BA 3BD/2.5BA 3BD/3BA	\$655,000 \$840,000 \$920,000 \$975,000 \$1,150,000 \$1,165,000 \$1,185,000 \$1,200,000 \$1,310,000 \$1,325,000 \$1,450,000 \$1,525,000 \$1,650,000 \$1,670,000 \$1,800,000 \$1,850,000 \$1,852,000 \$2,366,000 \$2,605,000 \$4,605,000	Above Above Below Above Above Above Above At Above Above Above Above Above Above Above Above Above Above Above Below Above	25 26 92 25 35 36 7 0 17 2 13 37 20 59 29 36 3 20 59 9
Presidio Heights	425 Spruce Street 345 Maple Street 3561 Sacramento Street #A	3BD/2BA 3BD/2BA 5BD/4BA	\$1,270,000 \$1,285,000 \$3,195,000	Above Above At	13 20 247
Russian Hill	1000 North Point Street #204 2 Fallon Place #47 1050 North Point Street #1604 1050 North Point Street #707 2 Fallon Place #21 1342 Green Street #4 1425 Vallejo Street #105 1257 Chestnut Street #5 1041 Filbert Street 2250 Hyde Street #3 870 Chestnut Street 1057 Lombard Street 827 North Point Street #2 1750 Taylor Street #2301	0BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 0BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 0BD/1BA 1BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 1BD/1BA 2BD/1BA 2BD/2BA 2BD/2BA 2BD/2.5BA 2BD/2BA 2BD/2BA 3BD/4.5BA	\$415,000 \$550,000 \$588,000 \$640,000 \$705,000 \$750,000 \$774,500 \$900,000 \$1,055,000 \$1,400,000 \$1,550,000 \$2,335,000 \$3,000,000 \$7,100,000	Above At Above Above Above Above Above Above Above Above At Below Above Above	34 10 10 4 14 31 323 21 34 65 10 117 7 47
Sea Cliff (no sales)					
Telegraph Hill	243 Chestnut Street 1725-5 Kearny Street #5	2BD/1.5BA 2BD/2BA	\$1,495,000 \$2,450,000	At Above	49 14

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.

REAL ESTATE ROUNDUP : News briefs

Not enough housing at any level

by john zipperer

FLIP FLOPPERS

Last month, we reported on attempts by some local politicians to make it more difficult to flip homes — buying and reselling them within a year at sometimes significant profits. The pols believe the practice is a culprit in the spiralling house prices in San Francisco. Redfin has some data that they might welcome to support their worries.

Nationally, flipping a house in 2013 brought an average gain to the seller of \$90,200.

But in San Francisco, that was an average of \$194,000. Some flippers are just buying a property, sitting on it for a short time, and then selling to reap the market appreciation without having invested anything in it in the interim. But many others are buying, remodeling, and then reselling the upgraded property, so that \$194,000 isn't all profit, Redfin notes. And in the land of the \$50,000-\$90,000 kitchen remodel, the costs can add up fast.

CITY'S HOMELESS PLAN UPDATE

Any walk downtown or through many of the city's neighborhoods will convince people that San Francisco's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness hasn't lived up to its name. But city leaders nonetheless heralded the achievements of the 2004-14 effort this summer. Mayor Edwin Lee and District 2 Supervisor Mark Farrell announced a new Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness that will coordinate local homeless policy implementation.

"We must do even more to help our most vulnerable residents by taking a 'housing-first' model and build on the effective strategies, policies, and programs that have brought our city so far already," said the mayor. "Through housing or family reunification, the city has already helped more than 19,000 people leave the streets in the past decade, despite dealing with one of the worst recessions in a generation."

Farrell, calling it "imperative" for the city to continue its work, added that "there are still far too many living on our streets and in shelters with no place to call home."

Though homelessness has not "ended," the city does boast about reducing the numbers of chronically homeless here by 51 percent between 2009 and 2013; creating 2,699 units of permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless, with an additional 407 units planned by 2017; placing 11,362 people in the city's permanent supportive housing programs; helping 8,000 homeless persons reunite with family members who can help provide support; and

decreasing by 30 percent the population of homeless veterans between 2011 and 2013.

MARKET UPDATE

Home prices across the state and the country have rebounded from their levels at the depth of the Great Recession, but they are not yet at new heights, according to research by Paragon Real Estate Group. One obvious exception, to no one's surprise, is San Francisco.

California's median home price as of May 2014 was \$466,000, still below

the high of \$560,000 seen in 2007; nationally, the median of \$213,400 is still a bit below the high of \$230,000. But in San Francisco, the median home price for the first half of 2014 is \$1,050,000, up not only from the \$695,000 of the nadir in the recession but even over the previous peak of \$895,000 in 2007.

When neighborhoods are broken down, there's another not-surprising result: neighborhoods in San Francisco's Northside are performing very strongly. In the category that includes Pac Heights, Presidio Heights, Cow Hollow, and the Marina, Paragon found the following activity for the first half of the year: 51 homes sold at a median price of \$4 million (at an average of \$1,272 per square foot); 138 condos or co-ops at a median of \$1.32 million and \$968 per square foot; and 13 TICs at a median of \$1.16 million (square foot price not given).

In the category that includes Russian Hill, Nob Hill, Telegraph Hill, and North Beach, there were 12 home sales at a median of \$3.46 million and \$1,279 per square foot, and 111 condo or co-op sales at a median of \$1.16 million and \$1,032 per square foot.

STILL NOT ENOUGH

San Francisco's available housing inventory crisis continues, according to online real estate firm Redfin. Despite a national increase in home listings of 6.5 percent in May 2014 compared to a year earlier, San Francisco had fewer listings, declining by 7.2 percent, making it the worst-performing city out of the 30 markets surveyed by Redfin. Not surprisingly, continued constrained for-sale homes pushes up pricing, with San Francisco's median sale price rising 10.2 percent from a year earlier.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

"Unless we can make measurable progress in building more housing, we will continue to see residents priced out and forced out of this region, and we will quickly see our economic growth come to a grinding halt." — Jim Wunderman, CEO of the Bay Area Council, in the *San Francisco Business Times*

Tips? E-mail: john@marinatimes.com



City leaders are trying to implement a more effective way of helping the homeless
PHOTO: ED YOURDON

The numbers of chronically homeless fell by 51 percent.



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New Agreement Options



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Margaret Handelman, resident since 2011

The Life She
WANTS

In The City She Loves.

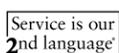
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REAL ESTATE

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Leave your home in pristine condition for your buyers so they can have a fairy-tale ending to their home search PHOTO: MERCY / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

A real estate fairy tale: a message to sellers

by carole isaacs

ONCE UPON A TIME, a couple decided they wanted to buy a house. They took this major investment seriously and researched the steps for buying a home. Completing the first step after filling out what felt like an endless amount of forms, they received their loan preapproval letter. During the loan pre-approval process, I kept reminding them that they were not singled out for torture by the lender. All borrowers were asked the same questions.

Excited to have completed step one and with preapproval letter in hand, the buyers began their search, dedicating their Sunday afternoons to visiting open houses. There is not much on the market, and I warned them that their search would take a while. A few months later, they found a home they felt was the home of their dreams and made an over-asking offer hoping to capture the seller's attention.

To the couple's dismay, the home of their dreams was also the dream home for 10 other buyers. They were not successful in their first attempt to buy a home. Again I assured them this was not unusual and that they would meet with success, though it might take a few offers before this happened.

The value of real estate in San Francisco kept going up, and the couple became anxious that they would be priced out of the market. We talked about choices: Looking in a different neighborhood or settling for less. They decided they didn't want

to change their neighborhood focus, and they had worked hard and saved their down payment and in the end were willing to take a leap of faith that the market would continue to go up, or at least not go down.

An over-asking offer that took the couple's breath away brought them success. They were excited and their family and friends were excited for them. Escrow closed and

and in the mood to find fault with their new home.

Home ownership is a long-term investment that always involves expenses over the years. Some will be expected, like the need to paint or a new roof. Other problems, like water intrusion, especially after a dry year like we have just experienced, can be costly and leave a homeowner in a mood to look to the seller to pay the expense of repairs. This is a road none of us wants to take.

Leaving a home spotless for a buyer might seem like a small thing in the scheme of all that goes into buying

and selling a home. Actually it is important for more than the obvious reason of meeting the conditions of the contract. Buyers who are happy with the condition of their home at the close of escrow may be more likely to look past future maintenance issues as a natural cost of home ownership rather than a shortcoming in the disclosure by the seller.

The moral to this story is that professional cleaning is a small price to pay to be sure that buyers cross the threshold of their new home, smile, and say: "I love this place. We are so lucky!"

Sellers, in your excitement to take your money and run, be sure to leave your home as clean for the new owners as you would like to find it if you had just bought the home.

Happy endings are the goals of sellers, buyers, and all real estate agents.

Leaving the house dirty was a mistake they had to correct.

I delivered the keys to the buyers that were provided to me by the seller's agent.

Soon thereafter I received a call from the buyers, who were standing in their new home. They were not happy. In fact, they were quite upset. The sellers had not cleaned the house, though the seller's agent assured me they said they would do this. Apparently the sellers were rushed moving out and ran out of time.

The buyers were not sympathetic. The sellers had made a lot of money on the sale, more than they would have ever dreamed possible. Leaving the house dirty and smelly was a mistake the sellers would have to correct.

The result was that the seller's agent sent over a cleaning crew who left the home spic-and-span for the new buyers. Still, this never should have happened and is so easily avoided. "Broom clean" is all that is required, but the last thing a seller wants is for buyers to be angry on the day they close escrow

Carole Isaacs is a Realtor with McGuire Real Estate. Visit her online at caroleisaacs.com or call 415-608-1267.



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POLITICAL ANIMAL



Mitch's pit bull Pork Chop naps with Mitch and abused pit bull Capone, renamed Magoo PHOTO: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

A happy home is found for abused pit bull Capone

by susan dyer reynolds

WHEN MITCH, A LONG-TIME volunteer at San Francisco Animal Care and Control (ACC), heard his name called over the intercom, he joked that he was being called to the principal's office. "The voice on the loudspeaker was Rebecca Katz," he says. Katz, executive director of ACC, had called Mitch to ask if he would consider fostering Capone, a badly abused and emaciated pit bull who won the hearts of ACC's staff and volunteers.

"I was one of Capone's many advocates," Mitch says. "I had recently fostered three pit bull puppies for ACC who all found great homes, so I told Rebecca as long as he got along with my pit bull, Pork Chop, of course I would."

It had been a sad time at the shelter. Another pit bull, Fiona, had been held off the ground on her leash by her owner and punched repeatedly in the face. Despite heroic efforts, Katz couldn't find anyone with the high level skills necessary to take on a dog so emotionally broken, and

on a bare-bones budget, ACC didn't have the resources or staffing to do it themselves. The private San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SF/SPCA), located just across the street, recently spent nearly as much as ACC's entire annual budget on a remodel for their already state of the art facility (replete with San Francisco-themed decorations in condominium-style rooms for cats), but they weren't willing to offer any of their enormous financial or staffing resources to help Fiona.

POLITICAL ANIMAL, continued on 32

CATHOUSE : Diem horribilis

Charlie's bad day

by john zipperer

CHARLIE IS USUALLY A VERY HAPPY CAT. HE THINKS he's the greatest creature on the planet, and as long as the food keeps coming, he has comfy places to sleep, and we treat him well, he's living a dog's life.

So on a day-by-day basis, Charlie is a sweet and fun cat. That's one of the reasons he was popular during his time at the SPCA. He's a gorgeous, smart, playful cat whose personality is so evident shining through his big green eyes and echoed in his frequent and very loud purring.

It takes a lot to make him lose his composure. But the time he got the most upset, the angriest, the most discom-bobulated, it was almost as upsetting to us as it was to him.

In the apartment where we lived for the first eight years that we had Charlie, he had lots of space in which to run around and lounge around, and there were many windows through which he could watch city life happen. But that old building had a big drawback: It was terrible about keeping out fleas. We had to give Charlie monthly doses of flea killer, which he hated every time. The unfairness of it is that Charlie is a totally indoor cat; he never goes outside, so he wasn't picking up those fleas through any effort of his own.

We hated giving the flea medicine to him, and we tried to use the least harsh, most natural ones out there, but they simply failed to solve the problem. Charlie is a semi-long-haired cat, and he's a big Maine Coon; those fleas were in seventh heaven when they found themselves luxuriating in flea valhalla on his body. So we went with the stronger flea killer, which involved dabbing it on the back of his neck where he couldn't get to it. He always hated it; like most cats, he's a "waterphobe" who will go running out of a room loudly complaining if you accidentally let a couple drops of water fall on his head. So naturally he wasn't going to be happy about us holding him down, spreading apart his fur, and applying a cool liquid to his neck.

He would usually complain and be over it within a minute or so. But on what I think of as Charlie's worst day, it was only the latest of a series of things that pressed every one of his buttons. It was the only day he ever looked really, really angry.

Our downstairs landlord at the time was renovating her flat, so there was noise all day long, with strangers coming into the building and disrupting Charlie's daytime beauty sleep, and it culminated in her staining her new floors with

BAD DAY, continued on 32

YAPPING WITH : Give Me Shelter Cat Rescue

Saving the cats

A group dedicated to giving cats a tenth life

by susan dyer reynolds

Your names, your rescue's name, and your titles at the rescue?

Lana Bajsel, Give Me Shelter Cat Rescue, Director

Michele Blunt, Give Me Shelter Cat Rescue, San Francisco Adoptions

Number of years involved with animal rescue?

Twenty years

You rescue's contact information?

Lana at 415-810-7284, Michele at 415-283-9895, or info@GiveMeShelterSF.org and GiveMeShelterSF.org

Upcoming events?

An adoption event takes place each Saturday and Sunday at our three locations: Petco on Sloat Boulevard and Petco in

the Potrero Shopping Center in San Francisco, and PetSmart on Gellert in Daly City. You can visit our cats there any time or make an appointment with us Monday through Friday. This October, look forward to our annual benefit, Ten Lives. Please check for event date, location, and time that will be posted on our website, GiveMeShelterSF.org, in September.

always had a soft spot for the under-kitty.

Tell us about your organization.

Give Me Shelter (a nonprofit) started in 2003 when Lana had the opportunity to visit the animal shelter and saw how many adult and senior cats were at risk and slipping through the cracks. We get kittens by default through our trapping projects, but our main focus is and will continue to be adult and senior cats with manageable, treatable medical and behavior issues.

What is the biggest challenge facing your rescue right now?

Donations to support our ever-increasing veterinary costs and volunteers, to work with us as adoption counselors, foster parents, transporters, and provide administrative help.

Cats give unconditional love, have playful spirits and entertaining antics.

How did you get involved with cat rescue?

Lana was working at a vet hospital when she started rehoming abandoned animals. Michele was a feral cat volunteer who



Abby's owner passed away and she is looking for a new home PHOTO: COURTESY GIVE ME SHELTER CAT RESCUE

What are some of the qualities that make cats great companions?

Each cat has a unique and complex personality. Cats are proven to be stress relievers. Cats give unconditional love have playful spirits and engage in entertaining antics.

Cats are emotionally responsive to their human guardians and are highly intelligent and sensitive.

What is the age range of the cats at your rescue?

Two months to 17 years

GIVE ME SHELTER, continued on 32



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SKY'S BUYS :: Treats

Freeze-dried whole chicken necks by Fresh is Best

by susan dyer reynolds

SOME DOGS WILL EAT anything. Skylar isn't one of them. From death row to the pickiest pit bull on the planet, Sky has been known to turn her nose up at the most delectable of treats. There is one thing, however, that she will do all three of her tricks for and even drool a little waiting for us to open the bag: freeze dried whole chicken necks by Fresh is Best.

Established in 2001, Fresh is Best was an early player in the "Made in the USA" pet food game. They start with fresh meats and produce raised or grown in the United States and use only USDA-inspected, human-quality meats, vegetables, and supplements. Each package of whole chicken necks is approximately a full pound of raw meat before moisture is removed. The bones

are safe to eat because the freeze-drying process turns them into crunchy "brittle" that is easily chewed and digested. The freeze-drying also makes the necks easy to break into small pieces for cats and small dogs or to use as training treats with larger dogs. For really big dogs, Fresh is Best also offers whole duck necks and whole turkey necks (Sky loves all three, but I find the chicken necks more manageable).

If you are a raw feeder, you can also take these treats on the road and

You can also rehydrate these treats overnight ... fresh without the mess.

rehydrate them overnight to have conveniently fresh chicken necks without the mess. If necks aren't your pet's thing, Fresh is Best also offers freeze dried



Skylar's favorite treats come in small orders and in bulk
PHOTO: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

chicken, turkey, duck, and beef hearts, livers, giblet rounds, meat and veggie morsels, poultry breast tenders, and salmon steak niblets.

Fresh is Best is hard to find at local pet stores (Pawtrero sometimes carries a few items, but not the necks) so I buy them online at justwheatfreedogtreats.com, a family-run small business selling healthy, USA-made food and treats for nearly a decade. Not only

do they have the best prices on the chicken necks (\$9.97 per package), they offer a 5 percent returning customer rewards discount. Shipping is a flat rate of \$6 for orders under \$50, and free for orders over \$50 (I buy the chicken necks in bulk).

You can find the full selection of Fresh is Best freeze dried pet food and treats as well as more information at freshisbest.com.

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com

GIVE ME SHELTER
CONTINUED from page 30

A cat I'd really like to see adopted is ...

Abby. Her owner passed away, and she most definitely misses them and has felt unsettled ever since.

She's an older girl looking for an adopter who will help her feel at home.

She's not overly needy, but she loves to be with you. She's easy-going, so she's great company for sitting and relaxing. She's perfect for someone who is pretty settled in life who just wants a sweet, loving feline companion.

A cat who is a great success story ...

Musya came to us from San Francisco Animal Care and Control after being surrendered by her owner, and her true personality was lost beneath her fear and confusion.

Her behavior notes indicated that her previous owner would punish her by giving her a "time out" in a cage. Consequently, it was less than desirable to place her in one of our adoption

center cages. Due to our full foster network, however, we had no alternative if we wanted to save her.

We realized she would need a very special adopter with infinite patience and a good deal of cat experience. She found that perfect person!

Musya needed an adopter with patience.

Musya's first reaction to her new home was fear-based defensiveness and

lashing out. Her behavior was less than desirable, but her new guardian saw through that behavior and just a few days later she was rolling on her back, looking for belly rubs and engaging with her new adopted siblings, proving once again that behavior is fluid and there is an appropriate home for every cat.

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

Please visit us at GiveMeShelterSF.org. You can also visit our cats at the locations mentioned above, or call us at the numbers listed above to schedule an appointment.

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POLITICAL ANIMAL

CONTINUED from page 30

"It devastated all of us that after suffering a horrible lifetime of abuse, this was the way it ended," Mitch says of the difficult decision to euthanize Fiona. "Her kennel was near Capone's, and when I walked by I could see the hurt and mistrust in her eyes. I wanted to go in and just hug her, but I knew with her unpredictable behavior that just wasn't possible."

Capone, on the other hand, had gradually learned to trust staff and volunteers. He went from cowering and shaking in the corner of his kennel to greeting them happily and showing affection. "He was also incredibly friendly with other dogs, as is Pork Chop," Mitch says. "When they met, Capone hadn't been neutered yet. He's definitely an adolescent pushing his boundaries. When we fostered the puppies, Pork Chop would groom them and they'd try to nurse on her, so she's pretty easygoing. She and Capone got along fine, so we brought him home."

Capone's previous owner named the gentle pit bull after the notorious Chicago gangster, Al Capone, so the first order of business was a new name. "We called him Magoo because he's sweet and goofy," Mitch says.

On a warm Sunday in July, I knock on the door of Mitch's apartment to a chorus of nervous barking. It's been three weeks since Mitch brought Magoo home. "Come on in," Mitch says, and then he turns toward the den. "It's OK, Magoo; come say hi," he coaxes, and an extremely thin but stunningly beautiful white and brown brindle pit bull cautiously emerges. "Hi Magoo," I whisper as I extend my hand. At first he shies away, but within seconds he readily accepts my under-the-chin scratches. Pork Chop bumps him out of the way. She recognizes me from Buena Vista Park,

where she and my pit bull puppy Skylar, also from ACC, have played together. "You always have good treats, too," Mitch chuckles as Pork Chop sits before me, staring deep into my eyes while making her best little gremlin face. A pretty, petite fawn-colored pit bull with a muscular, compact body, Pork Chop's name fits her perfectly. Mitch and his partner, Mario, adopted her from ACC after she was found wandering along Bayshore Boulevard. "She had some litters of puppies young," Mario says.

Mario gives each dog a treat and they retire to the den together. Mario smiles. "He's come so far in just a few weeks," he says. Mario wasn't sure how Magoo would react to him because he had been fearful of people, particularly men. "In the shelter environment he was different. Maybe it's my background as a psychiat-

Magoo is being adopted by an ACC volunteer who fell in love with him at the shelter.

ric nurse, but if you put a dog in a cell, you have a different dog when you bring him to a home. Quickly, I think. After only 15 or 20 minutes, Magoo was no longer afraid of me."

It's a big day for Magoo: He's being adopted by another ACC volunteer, Francesca, who fell in love with him at the shelter. "Francesca was another huge advocate for Magoo," Mitch says. "She's taken him to her home a few times and he gets along great with her son, her husband, and her other dog, and Magoo adores her."

While we wait for Francesca to arrive, Mitch and I go into the den. He sits down on the floor between Pork Chop and Magoo. As Pork Chop snores on a dog bed, Magoo cuddles next to Mitch. "This is his favorite," Mitch says, putting a deer antler chew in Magoo's mouth. Magoo

rolls over on his back, holding the antler between his front paws as he alternately chews it and plays with it. "He's gained a lot of weight since we got him," Mitch says, rubbing Magoo's belly. "When he came to the shelter he was a 3.5 on a scale of 10. But he's eating good now, aren't ya, Magoo?" He pulls Magoo into his lap and kisses his head. "I'm going to miss him," Mitch says, and his eyes well up with tears.

"Francesca is here," Mario calls to us from the kitchen. Magoo barks at the door knocking, but as soon as he hears Francesca's voice, he runs to her. "Hi, Magoo," Francesca says, and bows her head down to accept Magoo's eager kisses; his entire body is wiggling with happiness (a well-known pit bull trait). "When I first met him at the shelter he cowered and wouldn't make eye contact," Francesca says. "It's amazing how he has learned to trust people in such a short time after what he's been through." Mitch nods in agreement. "Pit bulls are such a resilient breed, more than any other," he says.

Mario and Mitch gather up a bag of toys and help Francesca break down the dog crate. "This is his favorite," Mitch tells Francesca as he hands her the deer antler chew. As we all pile into the elevator, Magoo casually sits down beside us. "The first time we got in this elevator, he was scared to death," Mitch says. "But look at him now."

Francesca's husband is waiting downstairs to help load the crate and toys into the family truck. Magoo recognizes him immediately, greets him with that trademark full body wiggle, and then jumps into the truck. He peers out the window at Mitch and Mario, tongue hanging from one side of his huge pittie grin. Mitch and Mario rub Pork Chop's head as they wave goodbye to a very lucky dog on his way to a beautiful new life.

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What? Me unhappy? PHOTO: JOHN ZIPPERER

BAD DAY

CONTINUED from page 30

something that emitted odors that could be smelled up in our unit. The smell was so strong, it made Charlie stop grooming himself effectively.

And then the fleas came back.

So we went into our well-practiced action plan of one of us holding him down (perhaps more than most cats, Charlie hates to be held down) while the other dabbed on the flea medicine. But instead of shaking off the whole experience within a minute or two as the flea medicine dried and was absorbed, Charlie zoomed out of the room and complained. I followed him into the dining room, and saw him half turned around, looking back at me with a face that was both angry and that conveyed a shocked feeling of betrayal. *You did this!*

I felt very sorry for the little guy at that moment. I also realized that for him, this was pretty much the culmination of the worst day possible: He was kept awake by noise from the flat downstairs, whenever he did get some silence he was kept awake scratching at the damn fleas, and then he was held down and had liquid put on his neck.

Like every soft-hearted cat person, I felt sorry for this little monster who was lucky enough that in a world of wars and murders and torture and mass killings, the worst thing in the world that he would have to endure was a bit of further discomfort in a day of disturbed sleep.

"I love my pets so much I'll only give them Halo."
 —Ellen DeGeneres, Animal Advocate, co-owner, Halo

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THE ADVENTURES OF SKYLAR GREY :: Chapter 15



Skylar isn't afraid of couch pillows, chair pillows or decorative pillows — just bed pillows
PHOTO: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

Diagnosing Skylar's Pit Bull Pillow Panic Syndrome

by susan dyer reynolds

*I know you're an emotional girl
It took a lot for you to not lose your faith in
this world
I can't offer you proof
But you're going to face a moment of truth
It's hard when you're always afraid
You just recover when another belief is
betrayed
So break my heart if you must
It's a matter of trust*

— "A Matter of Trust" by Billy Joel

THE EXACT MOMENT MY BATTLE with anxiety began is clear as day. I was freelancing at Pacific Bell and a group of us went to lunch at a Japanese restaurant nearby. I ordered unagi donburi — barbecued eel over rice — and one of the feathery bones went down the wrong way and felt like it was stuck in my throat. My dining companions reassured me that it probably just scratched it a bit on the way down, but I felt an overwhelming sense of panic: My heart started racing, I felt dizzy, my ears plugged, I was sweating profusely. My doctor's office was a few blocks away, and fortunately he had time to see me. After a short exam, he began writing a prescription. "I'm giving you some Valium," he said, peering at me over his glasses. "There's no bone stuck in your throat. You're having a panic attack."

Over the next few months, my anxiety worsened. I refused to eat anything but soup or pasta for fear I would choke. Though I knew it was irrational, I continued to think the unagi bone was still perched in my windpipe. My doctor finally referred me to an ear, nose, and throat specialist for a barium swallow test. After he looked at the results, the doctor sat down in front of me. "You're fine," he said. "Everything is fine ... physically. I think this is psychological. You're having globus hystericus — a sensation that something is stuck in your throat when nothing is there." He referred me to a psychiatrist.

After just one session, the psychiatrist prescribed an anti-anxiety medication called Paxil. "I've never had a panic attack before," I told him.

"You're in your mid twenties and that's an age when anxiety disorder often appears in women," he said.

Willing to do anything to feel "normal" again, I filled the prescription, and within a few months I was back eating solid food (including unagi). Over the years, we've switched up the meds. Some made me gain weight — a lot of weight, which for an athletic person who never had a weight problem caused a whole new anxiety. Because of

the weight gain side effects, I've tried going off the meds a few times, but the anxiety comes roaring back. Anxiety symptoms, my psychiatrist says, are cyclical, so while the globus hystericus waned, others have appeared and disappeared, and occasionally I still have full-blown panic attacks.

When I started noticing Skylar was afraid of a lot of things, I wondered if she had doggy anxiety. She's afraid of surly Chihuahuas and rambunctious children (as my friend Marc joked, "Who isn't"), but she's also afraid of Chillows, those As Seen on TV pillow inserts to keep you cool at night. Recently, however, I discovered an even bigger demon: Skylar is afraid of bed pillows. Not couch pillows, not chair pillows, not decorative pillows — bed pillows.

I first noticed it when we were visiting my stepmom, Kickie, in San Jose. Sky has always slept in the bedroom with me there, but on this particular night there was an extra pillow on the bed — a big, fluffy pillow in a cotton cover adorned with pink flower petals. At one point I adjusted it for a better view of the television and it accidentally fell on Sky, causing her to tuck her tail between her legs and dash off the bed. She refused to come back, sleeping instead on the floor of Grandma Kickie's room.

The next night I lured her onto the bed with her favorite nighttime snack of homemade peanut butter-pumpkin frozen yogurt, but as soon as she saw the pillow, her big green eyes bugged out and she once again left the room and refused to return. By the third night, I decided to put the big fluffy pillow in the closet and, lo and behold, she slept peacefully ... until I reached my arms behind my head to adjust my pillow — an even bigger square Euro style pillow — which sent her flying out of the room.

"I think Skylar has Pit Bull Pillow Panic Syndrome," I told Kickie the next morning.

"What is that?" she asked.

"I just made it up," I said, "but she has it." Sky was curled up on the sofa next to Kickie, soaking up affection and dehydrated chicken necks.

"Have we turned you into a little panty-waist with all this love and attention, Skylar?" Kickie asked, holding Sky's face in her hands. Sky wagged her tail and stole a kiss.

Who knows what caused Sky's Pillow Panic Syndrome. Perhaps, sometime during her first seven weeks of life when she was living with that guy in his car, he threw a pillow at her, or hit her with a pillow, or sat on her with a pillow. Whatever the cause, the fear is real to Skylar, just like the unagi bone was to me. And just like my globus hystericus, I hope Sky's Pillow Panic Syndrome will pass with time. Meanwhile, she'll be sleeping with Grandma.

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com

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

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AIDAN

Aidan is a sweet red Pomeranian mix. This handsome 4-year-old stands tall, weighs 8 pounds, and seems to be all fur and legs. He loves to cuddle, give kisses, and play. Another playful dog in his home would be a bonus. Aidan loves walks and is well mannered on his leash. Aidan came to GDR with crystals in his urine. A special kibble easily remedies his condition. Aidan is such a little guy, but the love he has to share with you is worth a little extra care.



SHILOH

Meet our boy Shiloh. This 7-year-old, white and black rat terrier is pure joy. He loves to go for long walks in the city and enjoys meeting people along the way. Shiloh is completely house-trained and loves his foster home animal companions. Shiloh's perfect forever home would be one with an enormous amount of love and time for daily walks. He knows all his basic commands and is house trained. He would love someone to play with him, toss his ball and rub his belly.



BRUCE

Bruce is a multi-colored mastiff mix puppy. Due to his young age, he will need to keep learning to become the confident, large dog that he is destined to be. At times he is fearful of loud noises, but his foster parents are doing an awesome job of showing him those things aren't so scary. He is a loyal, sweet goofball who loves to eat and cuddle. Being a puppy he will definitely need an owner with dog experience and a willingness to continue his training. Bruce is neutered, housetrained, up to date with shots, and good with other dogs. Bruce is ready and waiting for his new life with you!



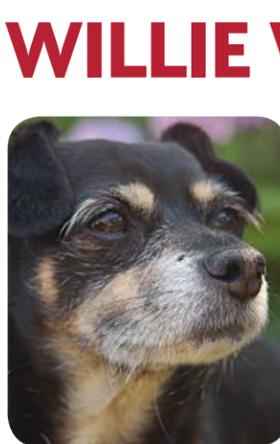
TUCKER

Tucker is a 60-pound chocolate Labrador retriever mix. This six year old has the adorable one ear up and one ear down look. He is the ultimate cuddle bug who loves to play, especially tug of war with his rope. He knows basic commands and is housebroken. Tucker remembers everyone he has ever met and always manages to sneak in a kiss. He is fine being left home alone but loves when you return. He will need a good walk each day. Tucker would thrive in an only dog household.



PEACHES

Peaches' delightful summer name brings to mind her many sweet traits. This little buff-colored, 1-year-old terrier/Chihuahua mix weighs about as much as her namesake at barely 6 pounds. Peaches has received some basic training and is ready for more. She enjoys every opportunity to run and play off leash, she loves to chase and be chased, and she has excellent recall! Peaches is an active young dog that would do very well with another playful household dog. She also settles into a great cuddle dog after she's worked out that puppy energy. She is not so good with cats. Peaches would make a sweet-as-pie companion for summer fun.



WILLIE WANKA

Willie Wanka is as sweet as his name implies. Willie is a tri-colored, 7-pound terrier mix with long luxurious eyelashes. He's a friendly guy who loves people and loves to be held. Once you meet this guy, he casts a spell on your heart. He loves to snuggle and he adores going for walks! His foster mom takes him out to Fort Funston every day to get his daily exercise. Willie is a gentle boy, looking for a gentle home. He does great with other dogs and respectful kids in his life. Willie has been waiting a long time for the forever home he deserves, so come meet this sweet little guy and fall in love!

Check the Grateful Dogs Rescue website for our upcoming adoption events!



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