On March 11 — the one-year anniversary of the earthquake and tsunami that devastated northeast Japan last year — a commemorative community event called “Our Hearts to Japan” will be held at the Peace Plaza at Post and Buchanan Streets in Japantown.

The event caps a year of local activities that have raised more than $4 million to aid the victims of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdowns that followed. More than 20,000 people were killed and thousands more were left injured and homeless.

“The event is a way to memorialize those who have died and to honor the survivors, many of whom still need our help in rebuilding their lives,” said Dianne Fukami, president of the board of directors of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California.

“When I was in Tohoku last month, I witnessed the spirit and determination of the people, but I also realized how huge their losses are and how great the need continues to be,” Fukami said.

An extensive program of events will be held in Japantown on March 11. “Our Hearts to Japan” will begin at 2 p.m., and those attending will observe a moment of silence at 2:46 p.m. — precisely the time the disaster struck Japan.

A MODERN TAKE ON THE TOWN

When architect Michael Murphy came home to San Francisco after a decade in London, his fresh eyes gave him a new appreciation for the city’s architecture — especially the modern buildings that often get overshadowed by the charming Victorians.

So he began creating a series of prints celebrating some of his personal favorites, including several in the neighborhood. There’s the new St. Mary’s Cathedral ("one of the most beautiful spaces in San Francisco," he says) and the Japantown pagoda ("simple, with cherry blossom pink"), modern Pacific Heights ("it’s cocktail time"), and even daytime and nighttime tributes to the much-maligned Jack Tar Hotel on Van Ness Avenue.

More images, page 15.

“IT’S REINFORCED MY NOTION that people are suckers for architecture,” Murphy says. “They love it and they love to hate it.”

The entire series is available at Zinc Details, the emporium of modern design at 1905 Fillmore Street, and on Murphy’s website at designinblue.com.

“THEY’RE A HIT,” Murphy chuckles. “My art has overtaken my architecture.”

LOCAL FALLOUT FROM ‘THE CULT OF BEAUTY’

BUTCHERING IS IN HER BLOOD

Lorain Arruabarrena is a familiar face behind the meat and fish counters.
Dumplings & Buns calls it quits

BETTER BURGERS: Down the ROAM street at 1923 Fillmore, BURGERS has signed a lease to.

The Fillmore Stoop — built over two parking places at 2406 and 2408 California Street — brings the city's parklet program to the neighborhood.

A Parklet Will Soon Sprout on California Street

CAUCUS ALREADY GATHERS outside Delfina Pizzeria on California near Fillmore nearly every day at noon and nighttime. There's waiting for a table, preferably one of the coveted spots out front.

Across the street, ALICE AND OLIVIA is renovating the space formerly occupied by clothier Blu, which has moved to Sacramento Street. Designer Roberta Freymann is overseeing the project, and her Delfina Pizzeria on California near Fillmore will be renamed by Albert Baker, a local resident and former owner of the Fillmore Grill.

The Fillmore Stoop is the creation of Jesica Weigley and Kevin Hackett, architects whose firm, Siol Studios, is located upstairs. They gained the endorsement of neighborhood permits. Most of the work will be done off — and one of the few with a proper name — although the take-back-the-pavement mini-parks are already a big hit in North Beach, on Divisadero and especially along Valencia Street. They transform one or two parking spots into a public space — usually with tables and chairs and a bit of greenery.

The Fillmore Stoop is completed.

It's the first parklet in the neighborhood.

THE LEARNED DOCENT

Like John Gaul, you too can have a Victorian mansion

Up the sidewalk to the imposing Victorian mansion at 2007 Franklin Street — the historic Haas-Lilienthal House — walks a group of senior travelers who call themselves road scholars.

It's not John Gaul's home, although sometimes people think it is. From a passing car comes a shout: “Hey, are you Mr. Lilienthal?” He bows ever so elegantly and welcomes his visitors inside.

For more than a decade, Gaul has been one of about 50 docents who lead tours of the Haas-Lilienthal House, which was donated by descendants of some of the city’s most prominent families as a home for San Francisco Architectural Heritage, the historic preservation group.

Tours of the house are offered on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Docents guide visitors through the perfectly preserved wood-paneled rooms, most still with the original furnishings. They explain the distinction of Victorian architecture and the privileged lives of the family that lived in the house from 1886, when it was built, until 1973.

“ There was polite uplifting conversation in the front parlor,” Gaul says. “ In the second parlor, maybe a little gossip while waiting for dinner. In the dining room, all was refinement, with good food, good wine and good conversation.”

This month Heritage is inviting new docents to join its ranks. The training program begins March 13 at 6 p.m. and includes eight sessions of lectures by historians and architects, plus tips from seasoned docents, including Gaul.

“Style is as important as substance,” Gaul says. “The facts alone don’t make it cool."

Heritage offers one-hour tours on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Docents guide visitors through the perfectly preserved wood-paneled rooms, most still

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Connecting the neighborhood

Every month, 20,000 copies of the New Fillmore are delivered to homes and businesses in the Fillmore, Pacific Heights and Japantown. We thank you for your support and encouragement and welcome your ideas and suggestions.

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Discharging a Firearm as a juvenile
300 West California Street
January 27, 10:25 p.m.

Officers received a report that someone had been shot. When they arrived at the scene, they determined that a person had fired shots from a 9mm handgun, striking two persons. They were taken to a hospital for treatment.

Theft
200-300 Block of California
January 27, 10:40 p.m.

A woman entered a business supply store and took an item valued at $25. She was detained and booked at the county jail.

Theft
600 Block of California
January 28, 9:05 a.m.

A woman entered a business supply store and took an item valued at $50. She was detained and booked at the county jail.

Battery
Franklin and Eddy Streets
February 2, 3:15 p.m.

Officers on patrol spotted a vehicle in a parking lot. The officer observed a man who matched the description of a suspect. When questioned, he said, “Oh shit, I was just getting a blanket out of the car because I am homeless and cold.” He was carrying a paint scraper and had a crowbar in his pocket.

The officers later learned he had a medical condition, called an ambulance and cited and released the suspect to be treated.

Battery
Van Ness Avenue and Pine Street
February 6, 3:15 p.m.

Officers responded to a call with a security guard who told them he had been punched multiple times in the head by an individual who was attending a concert. The suspect told the security guard to mind his own business, then pushed the guard into the hallway, pinned him to the ground and punched him.

The suspect, who was evading the concert, was located and arrested.

CRIME WATCH

Police on patrol spotted a vehicle in a parking lot. The officer observed a man who matched the description of a suspect. When questioned, he said, “Oh shit, I was just getting a blanket out of the car because I am homeless and cold.” He was carrying a paint scraper and had a crowbar in his pocket. The officers later learned he had a medical condition, called an ambulance and cited and released the suspect to be treated.

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THE LOCALS

Lorain Arruabarrena serves up meat and fish — and advice on how to cook it.

One of the Boys

She’s at home with meat and fish

Dr. Barbara Kate Repa
Photography by Kathi O’Leary

“Lorain Arruabarrena serves up meat and fish — and advice on how to cook it.”

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NEW FILLMORE

February 2011

A member of a hunting club since she was five, Lorain Arruabarrena, her hunting buddies, her jeep and her dog head north to hunt and camp out during deer season.
After 3/11 Earthquake, an Outpouring of Support

Japantown leaders

By Jon Kawamoto

While watching footage of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in March, Paul Osaki immediately knew his organization would have to respond. Osaki, executive director of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California based in Japantown, said, “We needed our relief fund to be more than just collecting money.” Osaki said, “We wanted to also link individuals’ sense of helplessness into hope by encouraging them to become active and socially involved.”

Nearly overnight, the group’s offices on Sutter Street in Japantown became a bustling center of activity, with hundreds of strangers, tourists, volunteers, staff and neighbors dropping by with donations and offers to help. Phone calls plugging donations also came into the center — overwhelming the assembled volunteers. And thousands of Eddie Murphy’s and comfort food poured into the neighborhood office from the Bay Area and all around the world.

“We were truly overwhelmed by the outpouring of donations, as well as by the thoughts and prayers for the victims and survivors,” Osaki said. “I learned that we are part of a community that cares — a community without borders, a community that cares about the people of Japan and the work we are doing.”

The local group has a track record of organizing relief campaigns. In 1995, when the Great Hanshin Earthquake struck Kobe, the organization raised more than $600,000. One huge difference since then has been the globalization and respect of social media. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, as well as the ubiquitous use of email and texting.

Matt Mahan, vice president at causes.com, recalled that his staff monitored and tracked the Japan relief donations hours after the 3/11 disaster and noticed that a non-profit they never heard of raised more than $1 million to rebuild a baseball field in Ishinomaki to be used by hundreds of Japanese youth. Mahan said, “It was inspiring to see how quickly the world reacted to this disaster and how quickly funds were raised to help.”

Matt said another project is “Cincinnati for Japan,” funded by the Kintir Yanaguchi Always Donor Foundation, which provides art supplies and toys to daycare and children’s facilities. The supplies will allow the children to express their feelings through art — a book is being produced of their creations.

“Project Aloha,” an 18-member delegation from the Bay Area and Hawaii, led by Olympic gold medalist Kiriti Yanaguchi and former mayor of Ishinomaki Takeaki Kuwahara, counted on more than 3,000 people to help shelter, schools and children’s centers and put on a show in Japan. The delegation also visited the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to meet with U.S. Ambassador John Roos and major league baseball officials, ultimately raising $1 million to rebuild a baseball field in Ishinomaki. A goal that had been to send hundreds of Japanese youth.

Emi and Arjan Mehta

“We’re Neighbors and It’s Important to Partner Up”

Emi and Arjan Mehta

For more information about the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, call 567-5505 or visit kokoro4japan.org.

We are neighbors in Japantown, and it’s important to partner up,” said Osaki. “We also wanted to have a connection to where the donations went and to explain to customers that they were helping a community organization.”

Tuesdays for Tokyo, held every week last April, drew crowds of up to 300 customers for dinner at the restaurants and raised a total of $5,000 for the relief fund. Mehta said the effort was heartening. Regular customers went out of their way to dine on Tuesdays and new patrons were drawn in by the concept.

“The money raised has made it possible to fund a variety of projects: Last September, the ‘Toward Recovery and Healing Project’ hosted a dozen Japanese community-based health care, mental health services, emergency medical training, suicide prevention and support for people with disabilities. ‘Project Aloha,’ a 18-member delegation from the Bay Area and Hawaii, led by Olympic gold medalist Kiriti Yanaguchi and former mayor of Ishinomaki Takeaki Kuwahara, counted on more than 3,000 people to help shelter, schools and children’s centers and put on a show in Japan. The delegation also visited the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to meet with U.S. Ambassador John Roos and major league baseball officials, ultimately raising $1 million to rebuild a baseball field in Ishinomaki. A goal that had been to send hundreds of Japanese youth.

We have the responsibility to do something,” said Mehta. “We found that instead of individual, donors, they had to raise money through food sales and donate to the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, headquartered nearby in Japantown.

“We decided to be supportive since we’re neighbors in Japantown, and it’s important to partner up,” she said. “We also wanted to have a connection to where the donations went and to explain to customers that they were helping a community organization.”

Mitra said the vibe during the event was heartening. Regular customers went out of their way to dine on Tuesdays and new patrons were drawn in by the idea.

“We were truly overwhelmed by the outpouring of donations, as well as by the thoughts and prayers for the victim and survivors,” said Osaki. “I learned that we are part of a community that cares — a community without borders, a community that cares about the people of Japan and the work we are doing.”

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“I thought to continue the relief fund for as long as possible to help the recovery and rebuilding of northern Japan,” said Mehta. “We quickly saw success toward helping to rebuild the human spirit.”

For more information about the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, call 567-5505 or visit kokoro4japan.org.

Good Works

Japantown leaders create a relief fund that’s more than just collecting money

By Jon Kawamoto

While watching footage of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in March, Paul Osaki immediately knew his organization would have to respond. Osaki, executive director of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California based in Japantown, said, “We needed our relief fund to be more than just collecting money.” Osaki said, “We wanted to also link individuals’ sense of helplessness into hope by encouraging them to become active and socially involved.”

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For more information about the Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund, call 567-5505 or visit kokoro4japan.org.
A Hidden Taste of Tokyo

In Japantown, an authentic pair of karaoke bars

By Chris Barrett

C

Japantown, home of the city’s only truly authentic Japanese karaoke bars, is as well hidden as most local sushi bars seem even heard of it, let alone visited. So, behind (or beside!) the Fillmore, in the time-honored tradition of Japan’s bars, will store your bottle until your next visit. More saloon owners could take a lesson from her. Club Mari’s is open seven days a week from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Mari arrives an hour before opening and stays until closing every day, meeting new customers, usually as soon as they walk in the door, greeting and pampering regulars. She

Mari, who wears a kimono every day except Sunday, when she “relaxes” in a black business suit with one or two pearl kanzahis in her hair, is a shrewd businesswoman. Admission to sit on one of the sofas and join in the karaoke is $20 a person. Every third Friday, there’s a Halloween party. Partygoers — and regular customers — come from as far as San Jose and Sacramento. Japanese baseball players join in when their teams come to town.

Like most bars in Japan — and hot dance clubs worldwide — Mari’s has a bottle menu and the spirits are all premium labels, but pricey. Prices start at $170 for a bottle of Chivas Regal, Jack Daniels, Seagram Crown Royal and Johnnie Walker Black Label. They move up to $230 for a bottle of Yamazaki 12-year-old Japanese Scotch and $260 for a bottle of Patron tequila all the way up to $280 for the bottle of Chivas Regal.”

Mogura, which has its own door out to the mall, doesn’t whack your wallet. A karaoke song is $2 plus a one drink minimum which could cost $6 or less. Mogura is closed Sunday and Monday.

While most of the staff is Japanese and there are brochures with full Japanese and English music.

Her answer was Mogura — a casual karaoke bar named after a small village near the city of Kyoto, where she used to live. Mogura’s karaoke menu includes fried chicken, salted minced squid and rice balls, among other offerings.

As for Mogura, the karaoke room is small and cozy, with a huge TV screen and two microphones. The lights are dimmed, and the atmosphere is intimate. It’s a perfect place to relax and enjoy some karaoke.

While most of the mall’s restaurants and shops are bustling spots filled with tourists and locals, Mogura is a hidden gem, tucked away in a small room on the second floor of the mall. It’s a great place to escape the chaos of the city and enjoy some karaoke with friends.

Finnick

Full of love and antics, meet Finnick, a two-year-old Chihuahua mix found in Oakland. This handsome little boy is as adorable at play as he is in your lap, and would love to have another dog companion or kitty friend. He can be a little nervous with sudden movements so he asks that kids be gentle. This little guy is fabulous, so come on down and meet Finnick today!

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March 2012 NEW FILLMORE
T he Victorian era in England was a time of prosperity and wealth. The Aesthetes, a group of artists and thinkers, were influential during this period. They were known for their love of beauty and their focus on the appreciation of art and nature. The Aesthetes were not content with the mundane aspects of life and sought to create a more beautiful and artistic world. They believed in the importance of aesthetics in all aspects of life, from literature to architecture.

The Aesthetes Pay a Visit
A new exhibition explores ‘The Cult of Beauty’

In a somewhat curious twist, the Aesthetes, whose time and vision are often misunderstood, are being celebrated in a new exhibition at the Thomas Reynolds Gallery. The exhibition, entitled ‘The Cult of Beauty: The Victorian Avant-Garde 1860-1900,’ is a tribute to the Aesthetes’ vision and their role in shaping the cultural landscape of the 19th century.

The Aesthetes were a group of artists and intellectuals who were known for their love of beauty and their focus on the appreciation of art and nature. They believed in the importance of aesthetics in all aspects of life, from literature to architecture. The exhibition features a wide range of art media, including painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography, as well as furniture, glassware, and textiles. The objects range over a variety of art media — painting, sculpture, drawing and photography meant to be artistic — but also includes furniture, wallpaper, and porcelain.

Some might argue that the Aesthetes were the Kardashians of their time. From the viewpoint of People National Enquirer, they made outstanding lives; others were ahead of most of us. During one period the poet and artist William Morris, his wife, Jane, and Jane’s brother, Edward Burne-Jones, were at the center of the Aesthetic Movement.

Aestheticism involved a Tudor Revival, Conceived 10 years ago. The exhibition opens on September 10.

By Jerome Tarshis

San Francisco’s Swedenborgian Church, at Washington and Lyon Streets, is celebrated one of the most ironic things is that the business community may well have become aware of a need for something new and different. The Aesthetes, whose hits and misses are handsomely displayed in ‘The Cult of Beauty: The Victorian Avant-Garde 1860-1900’, opened, to great acclaim, in 1895. The church was designed by Joseph Worcester. Although not formally trained as an architect, he was an unusually knowledgeable amateur. He was a member of the Victorian pottery circle and was well versed in the theory of the Aesthetes. He was also a member of the Bay Area shingle style, in houses he designed for himself and others.

The objects range over a variety of art media — painting, sculpture, drawing and photography, as well as furniture, glassware, and textiles. The exhibition features a wide range of art media, including painting, sculpture, drawing and photography, as well as furniture, glassware, and textiles.

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Making a Mark in Pacific Heights
Modern housing at home among the Victorians

By John Field

As in all cities, the housing stock is what you want to make your houses their own, so they remodel. People live differently now than they did before, and their houses reflect the changes. But I still thought my designs were out of place. They may have had a point. I used them published in Sunset and Garden. Also, they almost seem to pick out. There’s no unique window style, no striking modernism, San Francisco wouldn’t stand out for...
The chorus has frequently been pro-duced a number of recordings and can also be heard on several San Francisco Symphony recordings with conductor Michael Tilson Thomas, including five that earned Grammy Awards.

H

u

McMane, who has served as artistic direc-tor of the chorus since 2001. Th e group’s
cardinal reasons for not renewing McMane’s contract, explaining only that it had “decided to take the chorus in a new direction.” A rally of support on Face-book and Tumblr urging reconsideration of the decision was unsuccessful.

The local market is soaring

Although the number of closings this month is down somewhat, the neighborhood’s sales activity is soaring. Properties in all categories are finding appreciable money with multiple offers after only a few days on the market. Th e real estate market is the San Francisco Girls Chorus is an internationally acclaimed center for choral music performances and education for females ages 7 to 18. Th e organization includes the concert alumnae chorus will lend its voices to works by Holst, Chesnokov and others requiring double choirs.

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Not many cities can boast a vibrant section of town that is upscale but approachable, fashionable but not elitist, comfortable without being boring. San Francisco's Fillmore is all those — and, best of all, it's not striving to be original. It just is. — Gourmet magazine