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turns 25

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New

## FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ JUNE 2006

FILLMORE  
JAZZ  
FESTIVALNeighbors  
Vow to Fight  
City CollegeSome concessions as  
traffic study proceeds

Neighborhood opposition to City College's move into Newcomer High School has won three concessions from the college.

Officials have agreed there will be no evening or weekend classes at Newcomer, that the college will continue to seek alternatives for weekday classes, and that no vote on the move into Newcomer will be taken until a traffic study is completed.

The traffic study is due in mid-June.

Skeptical neighbors who testified during a May 25 meeting of the City College trustees cited traffic and parking problems that could be made worse by the college's presence. They said the potential disruption is multiplied because college students, unlike high school students, arrive and depart all day.

Chancellor Philip Day said at a May 1 meeting that the classes moving to Newcomer were those with students who mostly use public transportation, and that many students stay for several classes, reducing turnover. Only 30 percent drive, he said.

Neighbors complained there is insufficient parking even if only 30 percent drive, and that there is inadequate public transportation to handle the other 70 percent.

Day agreed to the traffic study to seek ways to mitigate the problems.

The Pacific Heights Residents Association, which is leading the opposition to City College, is raising funds to seek an injunction to prevent the move.

The School District voted to close Newcomer School and transfer its students and teachers to Mission High School.



## REUNITED

This Webster Street Victorian with a storied past is again a single family home – and a catalyst for change.

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## NEW LOOK ON THE STREET

New street banners are sprouting on Fillmore Street announcing the approach of the Fillmore Jazz Festival, which will be held on July 1 and 2.

This is the 22nd annual festival. It takes place every year on the weekend closest to the Fourth of July. The largest free jazz event on the west coast, it brings 100,000

people onto the street and helps keep Fillmore's jazz heritage alive.

Profile of  
the artist.  
Page 10

The new banners were created by Michael Schwab, one of the nation's top graphic artists. Schwab also created the award-winning posters for the Golden Gate National Parks.

The musical lineup for this year's festival includes vocal favorites Kim Nalley, Jacqui Naylor and Sony Holland. Marcus Shelby's 16-piece stand-up brass band is among the two dozen groups on the bill.

Fillmore Street will be closed to traffic from Jackson to Eddy from midnight Friday, June 30, to midnight Sunday, July 2.



When you go to the polls on June 6, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce recommends a vote of...

**NO on Prop A – Crime Prevention Planning.**

More must be done to fight the rising tide of violent crime, but Prop A ties the hands of the Mayor and Police Commission, and will not put one new police officer on the street.

**NO on Prop B – Anti-Homeownership Ordinance.**

Home buying is complicated enough without more rules from the Board of Supervisors. Uphold the Mayor's veto.

**NO on Prop C – Transbay Terminal Power Grab.**

Do not substitute politicians for transit experts. Keep the Mayor's staff and MUNI general manager working on the TransBay Terminal project – do not hand control to the Board of Supervisors.

**NO on Prop D – Laguna Honda Zoning Changes.**

Keep patient admissions to Laguna Honda Hospital in the hands of the Health Department, not the Planning Department. Protect hospital open space from private development.



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# This Month

## IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD



**FILLMORE FARMERS MARKET**

Every Saturday morning from 9 to 1, Fillmore at O'Farrell

It's a happening: Our local market draws farmers from small farms around the Bay Area, offering the season's bounty at prices far lower than the Ferry Building market. Plus fresh flowers and free jazz.

**UNION STREET ART FAIR**

June 4 & 5  
Union from Steiner to Gough

**SF BLACK FILM FESTIVAL**

June 6 to 11, various venues  
sfbff.org

**JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL**

June 17 & 18  
Fillmore from Fulton to Geary  
sfjunteenth.org

**FENG SHUI WORKSHOP**

Sat, June 24, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Institute for Health & Healing  
2020 Webster  
cpmc.org/services/ihh

**MUSICAL NOTES**

Actor Steven Seagal sings the blues  
Tues, June 6, 9 p.m.  
The Fillmore, 1805 Geary

Community Music  
Center Orchestra  
Mahler, Symphony No. 5  
Sat, June 10, 8 p.m.  
Jewish Community Center  
3200 California  
jccsf.org

"Godspell"  
Thurs, June 22, 7 p.m.  
Calvary Presbyterian Church  
calvarypresbyterian.org



**EXTENDED**

"Harlem of the West," the exhibition of photos from Fillmore's jazz era, was to close June 10, but has been extended through the summer. It's a club-by-club tour, and now a book, too.

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Library & Museum  
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sfpalm.org

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# Japantown Is Special, Planning Commission Says

By DON LANGLEY

Japantown is a step closer to becoming a special use district, which will give the community a measure of control over its future, after a May 25 decision by the Planning Commission.

The move was sparked by the sale of a wide swath of the neighborhood — two hotels and two malls in the Japan Center — earlier this year. That happened as AMC was ordered to sell the nearby Kabuki 8 Theater as part of a settlement of an anti-trust action.

The Japanese-American community feared the changes would erode the cultural and historic aspects of Japantown.

Kintetsu Enterprises sold the hotels and

malls to 3D Investments of Los Angeles, which says it respects Japantown's unique character and has signed guarantees to preserve it. It has hired Joie de Vivre Hospitality to manage the hotels. The Sundance Group has bought the theaters. (See separate stories below.)

These developments have been viewed positively by many Japantown residents.

The special use district was created to preserve and develop Japantown's cultural identity and to enhance its distinctive image as one of only three remaining Japantowns in the country.

Within the district, a conditional use permit would be required to establish a new use or change the use of any space exceeding 4,000 square feet. A conditional

use permit would also be required to merge one or more existing uses into more than 2,500 feet or to open a formula retail, or chain, store.

The size limitations are designed to protect small "mom and pop" businesses, most of which occupy less than 1,000 square feet. The 4,000-foot threshold had originally been set at 2,000 square feet.

The Japantown Task Force and the Japanese Community Cultural Center of Northern California favored creation of the special use district. The Japantown Merchants Association, according to President Richard Hashimoto, worked hard to come up with a compromise and finally reached a consensus simply not to oppose the district.

The manager of the Kinokunya bookstore said he recognized the need for protection against chains and big box stores moving into Japantown. But he objected to the restraints on mergers of units because the bookstore, which owns one of the buildings, wants to expand.

Boundaries of the district will be Bush to Geary and Laguna to Fillmore, a total of nine blocks. But the immediate effect will be only on Japan Center since the Post-Bush sector of the neighborhood will remain under the authority of the Redevelopment Agency until 2009.

One speaker noted that, before redevelopment, Japantown spread over 32 blocks.

The plan now goes to the Board of Supervisors.

## ■ STREET TALK

### Robert Redford buys Kabuki 8, plans center for independent film

Robert Redford's Sundance Group has bought the AMC Kabuki 8 Theater in Japantown and will turn it into a center for independent and documentary films called the Sundance Kabuki.

"San Francisco holds a special place in my heart and is one of the nation's great centers of independent film," Redford said. "I am particularly excited to have found such a perfect home for Sundance in this city."

Sundance assumed ownership of the theater at the conclusion of the San Francisco International Film Festival in May and will extensively renovate the Kabuki complex, maintaining a Japanese theme. According to the Hollywood Reporter, the Sundance Kabuki will have stadium seating in most theaters, larger screens, a retail store selling Sundance merchandise and two new bars. Programming by Sundance is expected to begin in September.

### Joie de Vivre to operate hotels

Japantown's two hotels, the Miyako Hotel and the Miyako Inn, will now be managed by Joie de Vivre Hospitality, operator of a number of boutique hotels in the city and elsewhere. The group already operates the Kabuki Springs & Spa in Japantown and the El Drisco Hotel and Laurel Inn in Pacific Heights. Joie de Vivre plans to remodel the Japantown hotels to "rejuvenate their Japanese cultural nature," a spokesperson said. Once design concepts have been approved by the new owners, the next step will be to seek input from the Japanese community.

### New Cathedral Hill group active

Traffic planning for the Geary-Van Ness corridor will be the topic at the next neighborhood forum of the Cathedral Hill Neighbors Association. The meeting will take place on Thursday, June 8, at 7 p.m. in the St. Mary's Cathedral meeting room, accessible via the lower level Gough Street entrance. The new association has been extremely active since it was formed earlier this year in response to California Pacific Medical Center's plans to build a new hospital at Van Ness and Geary. More information is available on the organization's website is at cathedralhillneighbors.googlepages.com.

### Lafayette Park going herbal

Friends of Lafayette Park are now planning to spice up the park's horticultural mix with rosemary and lavender. Kim Barnes, leader of the Friends, said the park should look much better this summer because a full-time gardener, Ron Harwell, has been named. The Friends gather for a workday at the park on the first Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to noon.

**GOT AN IDEA?** We welcome story ideas and suggestions. E-mail [ideas@newfillmore.com](mailto:ideas@newfillmore.com).



### Ready, set, play

An all-new children's playground atop Alta Plaza Park opened May 27, completing phase two of a \$2 million renovation of the park funded by friends and neighbors. The new equipment in the playground is

installed on a safe, soft surface, and new trees have been planted to replace the aging cypresses that were removed. Now Friends of Alta Plaza is moving into phase three of its master plan, which will focus on horticulture. During phase one, completed at the end of 2004, the tennis courts were resurfaced and a multi-sport court was created.

## Two Condos Now One Home, and a Catalyst

Following yet another Planning Commission hearing on the issue, the city is writing new guidelines for dwelling unit mergers.

The move was spurred in part by the owners of condominiums at 1735-1737 Webster Street, who requested permission to merge two condos into a single family home.

The owners bought one condo and had a right of first refusal to buy the other if it came on the market, as it eventually did. They noted that neither condo had ever been on the rental market, and that therefore no rental unit was being eliminated.

They also pointed to the history of the house, which originally stood at 773 Turk Street as a single family home. It was one of about a dozen Victorians moved to the neighborhood in the 1970s by the Redevelopment Agency to clear space for Opera Plaza.

The Planning Commission on May 25 approved the

application with no opposition and little discussion.

To avoid the need for similar hearings in the future, the commission directed that new guidelines be drafted to allow the staff to handle most merger applications, and at a considerably lower fee.

Most requests to merge dwelling units are approved. The Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals combined have approved 91 percent of the applications to merge two units into one larger unit.

Many of the applications come from Pacific Heights, where homeowners want to make space for growing families or live in grander style. Often this means returning two flats to their original configuration as a single family Victorian.

Advocates of affordable housing decry the loss of any separate residence, especially in Victorian houses, which are covered by rent control.

## Walk Like an Egyptian, Park Like a San Franciscan

Parking in the neighborhood has once again become a matter of international relations, with the Egyptian consulate requesting a 44-foot red zone in front of its building on Pacific at Baker.

The consulate said its request was made for security reasons, but neighbors say the real issue is parking. Staff, with consular license plates, would be immune to tickets for parking in the red zone.

A similar request several years ago by the German consulate on Jackson Street was turned down. Neighborhood activists fear any approvals will result in an avalanche of

requests from the many consulates in Pacific Heights.

When the Egyptians made their request in 2003, they were told to get a letter of support from the State Department. The letter arrived last month.

In an earlier request, made in 2001, the Egyptian consulate had asked for a 130-foot red zone on Baker Street.

A hearing officer for the Department of Parking and Traffic continued the matter until September because of late and inadequate notice to neighbors, but he allowed those present at a May 26 hearing to speak.

All were opposed.



**Methamphetamine Offense  
Fillmore and Eddy Streets  
May 5, 5:28 p.m.**

Officers responded to a report that a man was following a woman and harassing her. Upon arrival at the scene, they observed that the man was speaking extremely rapidly and not making any sense. He was sweating and could not stand still.

When asked if he had smoked crack, the man said he hadn't; he had smoked "shabu" — the street term for the smokable form of methamphetamine. A search of his person revealed a plastic baggie containing grayish white crystals.

He was booked, and the shabu was transported to the night narcotics drop.

**Driving Under the Influence  
Westbound on Post Street  
May 8, 2:03 a.m.**

A patrol car was stopped at a red light while facing north on Fillmore Street at McAllister. In his rear view mirror, an officer saw a silver convertible approaching at a high speed; it jammed to a stop just a foot or two from the patrol car's bumper. As both cars moved on again at the green light, the silver convertible drifted to the right, almost colliding with a parked vehicle. Then the convertible shot forward while weaving into the lane of oncoming traffic. A taxi driver swerved to avoid a collision and sounded his horn.

The officer began pursuit, accelerating to 50 mph, and made an enforcement stop. When asked why he was driving in the middle of the road, the driver replied, "It's my wife's car and it's the first time I've driven it." He slurred his words; his eyes were bloodshot and watery.

The officer asked the man if he had consumed alcoholic beverages. He replied that he'd had "two beers and a kamikaze."

After he performed poorly on all field sobriety tests, the man was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

**Battery of a Police Officer  
1920 Pine Street  
May 9, 5:19 p.m.**

A man at the above address was using crack while making delusional statements and behaving in an erratic and violent manner.

Headquarters advised officers that the man had locked himself inside the bathroom of an apartment building. He was punching out windows, and convulsing and vomiting. Upon arrival, officers were met by a woman who was visibly shaken and in tears. The man in the bathroom was her brother; she had been helping him move out because he'd been evicted. The bathroom door had a glass window on its upper panel, which had been smashed out.

Police shouted to the man to open the door; he refused. Through the broken window they observed him sitting on the bathroom floor clutching a glass pipe; he was sweating and his arms shook uncontrollably. Each time an officer reached through the window to unlock the door, the man lunged at him.

Two more officers were called to the scene. One kicked the door in. As the officers entered, the suspect jumped to his feet and lunged at them. Two officers managed to get bent wristholds on each of the man's arms; they walked him out of the bathroom. He continued to struggle violently. Six officers were required to get the man into handcuffs; one of them suffered a hyperextended elbow in the process.

A computer check revealed the suspect had numerous charges against him for battery against police officers while under the influence of controlled substances.



PHOTOGRAPH BY  
DON LANGLEY

**Ours was first**

Signs noting the boundaries of the Webster Street Historic District and the Cottage Row Historic District were posted in May. The signs went up in historic districts throughout the city two years after Supervisor Aaron Peskin pushed the funding through the Board of Supervisors. The Webster Street District was the city's first, created in 1981 after seven years of research, meetings and hearings. The project was led by neighborhood architectural historian Anne Bloomfield, who also played a leading role in creating many of the city's other historic districts.

**To Stem Rise in Auto Burglary,  
Police Encourage Awareness**

**Most important: Leave nothing visible in your car**

Public assistance is needed to reverse the growing number of auto burglaries in the neighborhood, according to Kevin Dillon, captain of Northern Police Station on Fillmore Street.

The most important thing, Dillon said, is to be sure you leave nothing in your car to entice a potential thief.

A recent survey of 27 cars parked at Chestnut and Pierce streets in the Marina showed that 15 had iPods, briefcases or purses in view.

Even valueless items such as papers and water bottles give a burglar reason to think the owner is careless and may have left something of value behind, but out of sight. Even if there's nothing to steal, Dillon said, those objects may give a thief a reason to break a window or a door lock.

The only things you might keep in a vehicle without too much risk of provoking a break-in are the vehicle insurance and registration, Dillon said. Even so, do not leave the originals. Make photocopies, which are perfectly valid.

Here are other recommendations from the police:

- **Don't use hide-a-keys.** They won't stay hidden for long. A practiced auto burglar, or auto thief, knows where to look, and makes a point of looking when breaking into a car. If you have trouble hanging on to your keys, think about purchasing a key chain that can be affixed to your pocket or purse.

- **Lock your trunk.** Never open a trunk, fill it full of valuables, close it and just walk away. Opportunists look for such missteps and break into the car the minute the driver is out of sight. Plan your excursions so that you load your trunk and lock it up before you drive to your next destination.

- **Watch where you park.** Park in well lighted, well traveled areas, ideally in parking lots or garages with an attendant. If you park on the street, do not park in lightly traveled areas like alleys or side streets. Auto burglars prefer breaking into cars where they will not be observed, and

choose their targets accordingly.

- **Be careful of valet parking.** If you use a valet, hand over only the ignition key, lock the trunk release and find out where the car will be parked. If the valet plans to park on the street, or in an unattended lot, you may as well just park it yourself.

Also, make sure you know what is inside your trunk before you use valet parking, and make sure that everything you put inside the trunk is still there when you leave. Look inside, and if you suspect a valet has taken something from your car, call for police assistance. Tell the dispatcher you think the suspect is still at the scene.

- **Don't store valuables.** Do not keep valuables in your car overnight. Neither should you store valuables in your car if you park in an apartment building garage. The common areas of an apartment building are an easy target. Burglars and unscrupulous co-tenants alike have time to case your vehicle, break into it and squirrel away the objects inside without the inconvenience of being observed.

- **Secure your garage.** If you own a home with a private garage, remember that garage burglaries are quite common. The security devices used on many garages are easily defeated. Should you wish to take added measures to secure your garage, think about installing a padlock on the interior of the door.

- **Install an alarm.** Although most new cars are equipped with alarms, older models often are not. When purchasing an alarm, make certain it comes with an activation light that tells everyone passing by, from burglars to casual observers, that the vehicle is equipped with one.

If the alarm comes with a pilfering sensor, make sure the device is not too sensitive. Vehicles with overactive alarms often end up being towed for disturbing the neighbors' peace.

Being neighborly is, after all, one of the most important urban obligations. Your neighbor may be the one who calls the police if someone breaks into your car.





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# A Neighbor Departs

## Helen Cooke Jones (1928-2006) touched many lives

Things just won't be the same without Helen Jones keeping an eye on the neighborhood while taking her dogs for a walk.

Or having morning coffee at Benkyodo's coffee shop in Japantown with Ben, Glory, Hatsy, and Bobby.

Or holding up James' express line at Mollie Stone's to tell a story.

Or getting treated by Dino to a glass of wine while she waits for a hot slice.

Or discussing the meaning of life with Tan at the Royal Ground.

Or talking about the old Fillmore days with Barbara at the Wash Palace.

Or getting tips on home improvements from Phil at Fillmore Hardware.

Or discussing black history with Karen at Marcus Books.

Or hanging out with friends and sniffing out the best roses at the farmers market on Saturday morning.

Helen Cooke Jones died May 4 after losing her battle with breast cancer. She had lived most of her adult life in and around the Fillmore neighborhood.

"You know what I miss the most? I miss her smile," said Donnie Okry, her neighbor for 28 years. "And the way she always had something nice to say."

Okry was one of dozens who gathered on May 23 at Russelas jazz club to remember their neighbor and celebrate her eventful life as an activist, an actress, a drama teacher, a playwright, a director, a radio and television show producer, a journalist, a historian, a single mother and a proud grandmother.

Her former Japantown neighbors remember her as the only non-Asian at



Helen Jones was on Fillmore Street every day walking her dogs.

neighborhood dances, clad in a kimono, fluent in Japanese. She fought alongside them as they battled the Redevelopment Agency as a founding member of Citizens Against Nihonmachi Evictions (CANE) — and was arrested several times resisting attempts to change the neighborhood.

"Helen had a real fighting spirit," recalled Saichi Kawahara, first president of CANE. He remembered especially a protest in the late 1960s during which seven CANE members chained themselves together and locked themselves inside the

Redevelopment Agency's offices.

"We were in there eight hours, singing songs — and the police were getting madder and madder until they finally knocked the door down," he said. "But it was Helen. She was the one who was there first."

She also participated in reclaiming Alcatraz as Native American land, living on the island with her daughters for several weeks during its occupation in 1970.

She was born Helen Cooke in 1928 in Ithaca, N.Y., of black and Mohawk Indian parents. Lured early by the stage, she moved

to Manhattan after graduating from high school to pursue a career in the theatre. She landed roles in several off-Broadway shows and was active in the Black Friars Theater Group, alongside Sidney Poitier and Ossie Davis. But after a few years she tired of being a struggling actress and returned to Ithaca.

By the time she was 35, Helen was a single mother with three daughters, yearning for a new life and locale. She found it first in Philadelphia, where she became involved with the Quakers and the civil rights movement. In 1969, she and her girls loaded their few possessions into a rental truck and headed west — beckoned by the Rice-a-Roni commercials that painted San Francisco as the place to be.

Once she arrived, she found fertile ground for her activist inclinations and put her theatrical training to use. She wrote and directed plays documenting the history of blacks in California and served as a historian at the African American Historical and Cultural Society.

Her work documented the truth about Mary Ellen Pleasant, a 19th century businesswoman and abolitionist now touted as the Mother of Civil Rights in California, but then widely disparaged as "Mammy Pleasant" and called a madam and a murderess.

"Helen was just this grandmother who was my friend, my philosopher," said Adrian Rojo, a gardener at Alta Plaza Park, who met her during her frequent walks with her dogs, Latte and Simon. "To me, she was humble. I never knew all she did. That's the real meaning of being a human being."



*First & Second Fiddle*

Ruth Dewson, owner of Mrs. Dewson's Hats, lost her husband of more than 40 years on May 4. Ernest H. Dewson Jr. (1926-2006) was a native San Franciscan and a frequent presence on Fillmore Street. Former Supervisor Rev. Amos Brown delivered the eulogy at St. Dominic's Church, saying of Dewson: "He played second fiddle well."

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The new Marc Jacobs store proclaims its presence and its politics.

## Marc Jacobs Goes Funky on Fillmore

The city’s first Marc by Marc Jacobs boutique opened its doors at Fillmore and Sacramento last month.

It’s wildly different from the designer’s upscale outpost on Maiden Lane, where all is austere and spring sweaters run upwards of \$1,800.

On Fillmore, the salespeople are peppy and quick to explain the store’s offerings, which include men’s and women’s clothing and a few items for children and dogs — and also flipflops and fingerless gloves tumbling from wire mesh bins and scores of Marc Jacob-emblazoned tchotchkes, pig-shaped erasers, red heart compacts and orange and purple condoms.

You can also get a 2142 Fillmore T-shirt that celebrates the prime location.

The store wears its politics in its windows, which now sport 7-foot letters proclaiming “Worst President Ever.” And it flaunts its French connection — a similar boutique opened in Paris in January.

“The Union Square store is higher end. We’re fun and funky,” said a sales associate. “And it’s a lovely neighborhood. I love coming to work here. This reminds me of my old neighborhood in Portland.”

She was also enthusiastic about the upcoming fall collection, slated to arrive around July 1: “It’s got great coats. Really great coats.”

## Zinc Doubles — Again

BY GARY CARR

At a time when many retail shops — especially furniture stores — have been retreating and retiring, Fillmore’s Zinc Details has once again doubled in size.

Zinc Details, for more than a decade a Fillmore destination for contemporary furniture and home accessories, in April opened a second store in the neighborhood at 2410 California Street, formerly home of Castro Video.

The new store is two blocks from the original Zinc Details at 1905 Fillmore. The Fillmore store had already doubled in size in 2003 when Zinc expanded into the space next door after Big Pagoda Co. moved to Union Square.

Owner Vasilios Kiniris attributes Zinc’s success in part to 12 years of active involvement in the neighborhood, which has won the store a loyal following.

“We feel at home on Fillmore, so when we had the opportunity to open an additional showroom, we thought there’s no better place to do it than right here,” Kiniris says. “Strolling from shop to shop is a major activity in the neighborhood, so having two Zinc Details within two blocks is perfectly geared to the local lifestyle.”

Zinc’s new California Street location displays its lines of designer furniture, rugs and lamps. The original Fillmore store now has more space for home accessories.

In recent years, Zinc has expanded its mix of brands and products. It still offers work by local designers and artists, but also stocks major international brands such as Kartell and Alessi. In 2004, Zinc Details became the major Northern California distributor of Knoll home furnishings. And when de la Espada departed from Fillmore Street last year, Zinc became the outlet for its popular Atlantico furniture.

“We’re a design store first,” Kiniris says, “and although we sell modern classic furniture, we also stock a lot of other high-design items, from tableware to handbags to children’s toys.”

Wendy and Vasilios Kiniris, a husband and wife team, founded Zinc Details in 1990. They opened their first store on Post Street, with only 200 square feet of retail space, and stocked it with a small collection of one-of-a-kind furnishings by Bay Area designers. They moved to Fillmore Street in 1994. Zinc Details also has a store on Fourth Street in Berkeley.

### ■ BODY & SOUL

#### 3 pampering pleasures: A nirvana for nails

Le Creme, a newish girly oasis just off Fillmore Street, offers a dramatic shift from the ubiquitous assembly line typical of most nail salons. Clients are offered hot tea — jasmine, mint or chamomile in oversize china cups — then nestled into upholstered chairs and settees adorned with fluffy pillows while their nails are trimmed and polished. Magazines are au courant. Depending on the scrubs, soaks and massages you choose, manicures range from \$15 to \$30; pedicures from \$28 to \$55.

**Le Creme**, 1971 Sutter  
415.359.9530; lecremespa.com

#### Buck naked bliss

The neighborhood is home to traditional Japanese communal baths at the Kabuki Springs & Spa. The recommended ritual is to begin with a shower, followed by a stint in the dry sauna or steam room. Then take a dip in the cold pool, which is kept at 55 degrees to stimulate the circulation — and the desire to scream. But screams are verboten, as is talking or any loud noise, in keeping with the contemplative atmosphere. Those who violate that rule are gently silenced by the sounding of a gong. A final soak in a hot pool completes the experience. Towels, bathrobes, sea salts, cold water and tea are provided; \$20 on weekdays, \$25 on weekends.

**Kabuki Springs & Spa**, 1750 Geary  
415.922.6000; kabukisprings.com  
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Co-ed: Tues

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Here’s an at-home beauty treatment that will scare the pants off all within eyeshot. In-the-know beautistas recommend Apivita’s deep cleaning face mask with green argile as their most pampering treatment. It’s a largely undiscovered potion from Greece. Slather it on and wait 10 minutes as the mint green goo does its thing. It leaves you feeling softer and slightly tighter. Kind of like a facelift, without all the bother. It’s a bargain, too, at \$4 for two treatments.

**Pure Beauty**, 2124 Fillmore  
415.346.2511; purebeauty.com

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# Fillamento's Founder Not the Retiring Type

By BARBARA KATE REPA

They've tried a beach town in Southern California. A chicken ranch in Petaluma. A suburban pad with grass to mow. But Iris and Gil Fuller have not quite found their next venue and venture. And still they yearn for Fillmore Street — and for the store.

"The store was so much of my identity. It was my coat of many colors," Iris said recently. "The truth is, I set out to create a good store. It turned out to be a great store."

The store was Fillamento — three floors at Fillmore and Sacramento filled to overflowing with furniture, glassware, linens, bath items and eclectic gifts from the whimsical to the practical. It was a retail museum where everything was for sale — and could be gift-wrapped, free of charge, with a raffia bow and sprig of eucalyptus.

Shoppers near and far still fondly recall the sumptuous displays, the sidewalk sales, the Santa who played his selfsame role for nearly two decades. And they still miss the store that graced the street, now gone for five years.

## In an unlikely site, a magical place

Fillamento opened in April 1981 and led the neighborhood's renaissance as a successful commercial district. "From the day we opened, there was something magical about the place," said Iris. "I had \$300 when I started the store — and the first month, I took in \$14,000."

Over time, the store became a launching pad for new companies and designers on the rise. "I bought Jonathan Adler's first vases," Iris recalled. Adler opened his interior design and home furnishing store — his sixth — on Fillmore Street last year, next door to Fillamento's old home.

Finding Fillamento's location was a mix of happenstance and serendipity. A friend was scoping out the possibility of opening a restaurant in what is now the Elite Cafe, then the China Grill. Iris and Gil went along to check out the street. They happened upon 2135 Fillmore, the former site of Florence's 5 & 10.

"I peeked in the door and that was it," said Iris. "Rent was 32 cents a foot for 3,200 square feet."

The place needed work — lots of it. "When we first saw the store, there was garbage from floor to ceiling and peel 'n stick mirrors on the walls," said Gil. "But we knew what it could be, what we would make it."

They speculate that the site might have housed a bookie joint at one point. In the basement were wires and buzzers everywhere — and sliding metal doors connecting to nearby buildings.



Iris Fuller today: Rabble-rousing with the Downtown Petaluma Association.

*"I set out to create a good store. It turned out to be a great store."*

They cleaned and burnished and painted inside and out, and fashioned a mezzanine that later showcased bed and bath products.

For 20 years, the store flourished. There were plans to grow into other locations, to go global.

Then, fairly suddenly, it all ended.

A farewell sign posted in the window during the store's final days in August 2001 recalled the bitter and the sweet.

*To our dear customers:*

*It is with great sadness that we announce the closing of Fillamento. We expect our last business day to be sometime in September.*

*After 20 glorious years of business, we find that we can simply no longer survive in the current economic climate.*

*Fillamento has been my labor of love, and I have treasured every day of it. Please accept my heartfelt thanks and know that you will all be missed.*

*Thanks for the wonderful memories,  
Iris Fuller and the Fillamento staff*

"I should have closed a year before I did," Iris says now. "The reality of the dot-com bust was that people just weren't spending money. By then, days that had been an easy \$5,000 were only \$1,800."

Fillamento's doors closed on September 3, 2001 — Gil's 60th birthday, and eight days before the terrorist attacks.

"That put everything in perspective," Iris said. "It was a huge reality check. How was I to mourn?"

## A racehorse not allowed to run

Southern California still seemed vibrant, and the migration of friends lured the Fullers downstate to Ocean-side, 35 miles north of San Diego, where they bought a spacious house with a swimming pool near the ocean.

"We went there for a major life change, but we found

that everyone was 40 or 80," said Iris. "I got creatively constipated."

Said Gil, "She was like a racehorse not allowed to run."

California property values worked their magic, and within a few years the house they bought had nearly doubled in value. So they sold it and headed back to Northern California. They considered Healdsburg, but found it too manicured.

"You have to dress up to go downtown," Iris said.

They settled on Petaluma and moved onto a 60-acre chicken ranch with 40 cows and a quaint Victorian farmhouse with a spacious porch offering a sweeping view of the surrounding hills.

"It was like a storybook," recalled Iris. "Then winter came. The whole house got mildew and was freezing."

They had a big moving sale and transplanted themselves into a new home closer to downtown with their impeccably groomed poodle, Rosie.

"We sold the swing right off the tree," said Gil. They're still downsizing their collections — including an assortment of 3,200 wall vases and countless miniature cars and vintage posters.

They like the old-town feel of Petaluma, but find some limitations.

"I'm the kind of gal who needs to walk through Neiman-Marcus every once in a while," said Iris.

## Pondering the possibilities ahead

Now Iris works part time in a local antiques shop, does some business consulting and rabble-rouses with the Petaluma Downtown Association. Gil gardens and indulges his passion for motorcycles. They ponder their next move, which might include a stay in Europe.

And they still harbor fond memories of Fillamento.

"It was such a neighborhood place, but it was known all over the world," said Gil. "People still praise Iris and the Fillamento she created. They say things like, 'Now I have my own business, but you got me started.' And in that way, the store lives on."

"I planned to come back and do it again, but smaller," Iris said. "I thought I'd open up a little store in Petaluma because I'm truly not the retiree type. I'm just not sure I could get married to a store again. But I need to do something."

Iris picks up a copy of the most recent Fillmore map, checking out the stores and restaurants on the street. "Fabulous! This is so fabulous!" she says with her old enthusiasm. "I may have to open up a little store there."

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On a sunny day with its windows open, Crepevine is perfect for people watching.

## Room With a View

Crepevine brings new look, menu – all under \$10

Mother's Day, May 14, was Crepevine's first Sunday morning on Fillmore Street, and the line was snaking out the door and onto the sidewalk.

"God loves mothers," chuckled Ibrahim Dababneh, managing partner of Fillmore's newest restaurant, as he marveled at the crowd teeming in on an unusually warm and sunny day.

It seemed that everybody in the neighborhood had wandered over to try his new place. And most went away satisfied with the menu of hearty basics, served up in large portions, everything priced under \$10.

"We saw an opening in this neighborhood for our concept," Dababneh says. "The energy of the neighborhood and the positive comments from the customers already have been just wonderful."

A big blackboard over Crepevine's bar sets forth the fare: sandwiches, salads, omelettes and crepes. There's also beer and wine and a full bar.

Service is quick and friendly — especially from the manager himself.

"Hi guys," he says with an infectious smile to nearly everybody who walks in the door, directing them to the counter to place an order, take a number and find a table.

"I love people," Dababneh says. "I cannot work in an office. I have to be with people."

Dababneh comes from a background in the hotel and restaurant business. To launch this venture, he teamed up with the owners of four other Crepevines in San Francisco, the East Bay and down the Peninsula. He and his partners all come from the same

town in Jordan, and family friendships go back to their grandparents.

Counter service keeps things moving quickly and leads to more frequent table turnover, which is one reason the prices are surprisingly reasonable. It also means there is no obligation to tip, which saves another 10 to 20 percent.

The full menu is served all day from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. It's casual and kid-friendly.

Those who remember the Alta Plaza, which occupied this corner at Fillmore and Clay for many years, will find little to remind them of its sleek sophistication and three-star cuisine.

And there is little evidence of Leticia's margaritas and Mexican dishes served during its most recent incarnation as a cantina that never caught on.

One thing is for sure: Hardly anyone minds the new paint job that covered Leticia's bright orange wash with a subdued green and gray two-tone.

"I think every single person in the neighborhood has come in and thanked us for painting the building," says Dababneh. "If I had a dollar for everybody who has said they're glad we painted, I could retire right now."

Leticia Luna, who owned Leticia's and previously owned La Posada across the street, still owns the building and has been encouraging to the new owners. She was one of the first customers for brunch on Mother's Day.

Her reaction, as she surveyed the crowd?

"Why couldn't I do this?"

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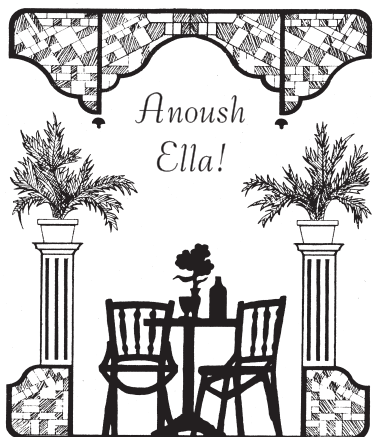
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## Here Comes Slanted Door

Work has begun to turn the former dried flower factory at 2226 Bush Street into a new cafe and food emporium run by the owner of the wildly popular Slanted Door restaurant.

Initially denied permission to open a restaurant at that location, chef-owner Charles Phan in April successfully appealed the zoning administrator's adverse decision.

While plans are still in development, Phan says he hopes to create a neighborhood spot that will offer his inventive Asian cuisine on location, for takeout and for delivery.

Delivery will be concentrated in the neighborhood and may be by bicycle.

Phan says he will also offer partially



Slanted Door will open an outpost at 2226 Bush.

prepared food that can be completed at home.

Home will be nearby for Phan. He and his family will live upstairs. Completion is expected by the end of the year.

The space will be designed by Olle Lundberg of Lundberg Design, the architect who created Slanted Door's minimalist space at the Ferry Building.



# Vivande at 25: Fillmore Then and Now

BY CARLO MIDDIONE



Carlo Middione: at home on Fillmore.

## ■ ONE GREAT THING

### ‘The best chocolate pudding I ever had’

There isn’t much about food I don’t like. I like the taste, the smell and the texture. And now there is something else: I like the way it makes me feel.

For the past year, I thought I had found my mood-altering formula when I discovered a certain chocolate chip cookie. Whenever I felt bad, or sad, I cured myself by indulging in a cookie. It didn’t have to be the whole cookie — even a piece or a tiny morsel, just something to get me through a hard day or night.

A few weeks ago, while wandering Fillmore Street wondering how best to reward myself after having dental surgery, I happened upon Bittersweet Cafe at 2123 Fillmore. Gazing into the display cabinet, I discovered the new object of my affection: dulce de leche pudding. It is the best chocolate pudding I have ever had — soft, cold and squishy. Only \$5. And it has untold medicinal properties.

The cafe has been open since last November, but somehow this happy place escaped my attention. Now I make it a point to stop by as often as I can.

— MO SANDBERG, neighbor and filmmaker

Some thoughts fly through my mind about 25 years of doing business as Vivande on Fillmore Street.

In the early days, Fillmore felt very much like a neighborhood, a little dowdy, certainly dusty, with some old-timey businesses soon to close. Next door to us, even before our much-missed Fillamento was born, was a hardware and variety store called Florence’s. She had some screwdrivers that had not sold in 20 years. I bought a beauty for 30 cents. No amount of money could produce such a tool now.

Then, out with the old and in with the rush of a new business — and upper Fillmore was in full resuscitation. Once again, as decades before, it was a desirable and thriving street.

When my wife Lisa and I decided to open Vivande as a European takeaway with food, pantry items and a small cafe, we scoured neighborhoods to find the right feel.

Laurel Village was great, rents reasonable, lots of free parking — but no storage space. In all, not bad. But what we wanted to do simply did not fit. West Portal was a maybe. Chestnut Street: uh, uh. Union: not for us. And so forth.

One day while driving around we spotted a long, narrow building on Fillmore that had been most recently used as a campaign office — who knows for whom; in the end aren’t all campaigns the same? — and before that, a rug cleaning store. We found the landlord and looked at the space, which was so dark we had to use flashlights. It was a quirky layout, deep, only 19 feet wide at

the widest place. But it spoke to us.

We grappled with the terms the landlord pushed on us. We bargained back and forth, each trying to do the right thing for the other, but warily watching our butts. Finally, we struck a deal and agreed on our almighty rent: \$1 a square foot.

We knew the look and feel we wanted and set about constructing the place. We had architects who were wonderful, thoughtful folks, and who agreed that less was more. And that’s just what we did: less.

One unfortunate incident led to a great addition to our project. A workman rammed a wheelbarrow into the plaster wall, knocking out a piece bigger than a pie plate. At first I was angry. Then I calmed down and we decided to fix the damage, which meant making the hole bigger before repairs could

commence. We kept finding more brick as we went along, and finally we started tearing out the plaster to see what we had. It turned out the entire north wall was brick — old, irregular brick, with a trough chipped out where a gas line or water line once ran. We still love our brick wall, and no designer or craftsman could have made such a look on purpose.

In 1981 we opened the doors, and business grew like a mushroom on a warm damp day. Hordes of eager customers flocked in the doors, making for long lines at lunch. We did not open for dinner for another 14 years, until 1995, because we thought we were not ready. Good food and good service take time to develop.

Many Pacific Heights residents came to find Vivande and said they had not bothered to come for so long because nothing on Fillmore Street seemed for them. We were glad to make our presence felt in tune with the rest of the merchants who have come to make up this diverse street of many goods and services.

Fillmore is still the neighborhood. It is the place for strolling, looking and shopping. The folks who walk up and down Fillmore and its charming side streets are essentially a happy lot. People saunter, and they look, and they seem to have time — such a valuable thing — to enjoy the sights. And it is definitely a street of children and dogs.

That is a good combination. It looks real and it is real, and it truly maintains the soul this street has always had.

*Carlo Middione is the chef and proprietor of Vivande Porte Via on Fillmore Street.*

# The Rosés of Summer

## Drink pink bubbles — they’re so misunderstood

BY MARK J. MITCHELL

Few wines are more misunderstood than rosé champagne.

Americans tend to associate pink wines with the sweet, soda-pop style of white zinfandel. But rosé champagnes are anything but sweet. They are fermented in the brut style — literally “raw” — with a very small dosage of sugar to induce the secondary fermentation in the bottle that produces those magical bubbles.

Rosé champagnes are made in one of two ways. A few houses use the *soignée* method, which allows a limited amount of skin contact with the red pinot noir grapes to provide color. The other method is simply to blend some still red pinot noir wine into the white chardonnay and pinot meunier wines that make up the rest of the cuvee. The great champagne writer Tom Stevenson has a standing offer to blind taste rosé champagnes made by both methods and see if anyone can tell the difference. He has had no takers.

Rosé champagne is a great match for all sorts of foods, and can take you all the way through a meal — from a paté appetizer, through pork tenderloin and onto the tarte tatin finale.

The platinum standard for brut rosé is KRUG rosé. This is an amazing wine, offering an unfolding peacock’s tail of flavors and aromas: quince, spice, strawberry and elusive white pepper. People compete to find words to describe the beauty and intricacy of this champagne, and that’s without mentioning the luxurious mousse provided by some of the smallest bubbles you’ll ever

see. The hard part is that all of this costs a pretty penny: at close to \$300 a bottle, it is definitely a treat.

The gold standard — the rosé by which other rosés are judged — is BILLECART SALMON brut rosé. This is light, floral and intricate. It is another victim of the price wars, however. As the euro has strengthened against the dollar, its cost has topped \$70 a bottle.

But there are brut rosés available in the under \$40 range. JEAN MOUTARDIER brut rosé is a wonderful example of the sophisticated style, showing off mandarin orange flavors, a nutty nose and a lovely tawny color.

It is available for about \$36. CATTIER, from the village of Chigny les Rosés, is lean and racy, with tart citrus fruit, and comes in at \$26. The small, family-owned champagne house of SERGE MATHIEU makes

a deeply sexy brut rosé from its holdings in the Aube. Here it’s the texture, the weight of the wine against the play of the bubbles that fascinates, as it dances through a mouthful of wild strawberry fruit — and it’s only \$30.

Finally, if you want a bargain of a pink sparkling wine, not champagne, there’s GRUET brut rosé out of New Mexico, of all places. This is rich but snappy and clean on the very dry finish. This surprisingly elegant domestic sparkler retails for only \$15.

If you haven’t experimented with brut rosé, you owe it to your gastronomical education — and your pleasure principle.

*Mark J. Mitchell, a neighborhood poet, is the manager of D&M Wine and Liquor on Fillmore Street.*

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■ ART NOTES

### Danielle Steel calling it quits

Neighbor-novelist Danielle Steel is closing her gallery on outer Sacramento Street at the end of the month.

Her publicist says the gallery was doing okay, but that “low price points made it less interesting as a business.” He says she will find other ways to remain involved with art.

Steel opened the gallery in 2003 after she began collecting contemporary art. She said at the time the gallery was a diversion from her career as a romance novelist. “This gallery has gotten me out of my house and my nightgown for the first time in six years,” she said. “Fame is so isolating.”

Even if she stays home, Steel will be surrounded by one of the most spectacular pieces of art in town, since she lives in the Spreckels Mansion on Lafayette Park.

### So is Kay Kimpton

A second neighborhood art venue will also close this month as Kay Kimpton shuts her private gallery on Jackson Street. Kimpton is winding down a 26-year career as an art dealer, the last 12 ensconced in a carriage house just off Alta Plaza Park designed by noted architect Willis Polk. “We’ll have to have more dances in there,” she says. “It’s a wonderful place to dance.”



### Back on view after 50 years

In 1957, the Oakland Museum presented an exhibition of Bay Area figurative paintings that remains a landmark in art history. One of the artists in that exhibition – which also included Richard Diebenkorn and David Park – was a young painter named Henry Villierme.

Villierme disappeared from the art scene for much of his working life. But in retirement, he resumed his painting career, and is represented by the Thomas Reynolds Gallery at Fillmore and Pine. His new show of “Figurative Landscapes” continues through June 24.

Among the work included is one of Villierme’s large-scale paintings from the 1957 Oakland exhibition (above), misidentified for many years as Diebenkorn’s work.

## ART

# Michael Schwab’s bold graphics jazz up new Fillmore street banners

By JOHN RHODES MILLER

Michael Schwab is one of the leading graphic artists of our time, in part because of his award-winning logos and posters for Apple, Robert Mondavi, the Golden Gate National Parks and many others.

Now his work is coming to the neighborhood: He created the poster and street banners for this year’s Fillmore Jazz Festival.

“It’s all about preserving something great,” he says. “I want people to know how important the Fillmore Jazz Festival is, its romantic history and its integrity as a cultural event.”

Schwab was so pleased to be involved with the project that he worked for a fraction of the fee corporate clients pay.

“I love San Francisco, I love jazz and I love posters,” Schwab says. “It all came together.”

His work is distinctive and dramatically simple. It is characterized by large, flat areas of unusual color combined with bold, graphic images, often in silhouette. He also designed his own typeface — another element that makes his posters and logos immediately recognizable.

Music helps fuel Schwab’s passion and his art. He especially likes jazz greats Miles Davis, Bill Evans and Chet Baker. As he stands in his studio in San Anselmo talking about his work, Louis Armstrong is in the background singing “Stars Fell on Alabama.”

The Fillmore poster depicts a bass player in profile. Partly that is because the bass lays the foundation for many jazz bands.

In fact, there is also a more personal element to his Fillmore image. Schwab is himself a musician — “a garage band guitarist,” as he says, since his youth. He has long been interested in playing bass, and his wife gave him a stand-up bass as a 25th wedding anniversary gift shortly before he agreed to do the Fillmore job.

It stands in the corner of his studio, and it became the model for the Fillmore Jazz Festival poster.

“I took on this project because it gave

me an excuse to do a portrait of a bass player,” he says. “Now I hope to become one.”

Poster art as we know it became widespread in late 19th century France. Jules Cheret improved lithography, which had been invented a century before, transforming it from a slow and difficult process with minimal color and design to one that allowed vivid color and striking drawings to be easily mass produced. Their ability to combine text and pictures made for eye-catching advertising.

Posters also made imagery available to everyone, not only those who visited art galleries and museums.

The rest of Europe and America quickly embraced posters. They were recognized as fine art by 1891 when Toulouse-Lautrec’s Moulin Rouge poster hit the streets. Exhibitions and dealers sprang up to complement the public’s interest and thousands of posters became available.

Today, digital processes are changing the commercial printing industry, and digital imaging has modified how Michael Schwab works. On the Fillmore poster, he started by drawing a full-length silhouette of a bass player using pencil, pen and ink and tracing paper. To intensify the image, he kept cropping until only the head of the player and the top of the

instrument remained. When the shapes were right, he scanned the image into a computer and colored it digitally.

“In the old days I used gouache and acrylic paint,” he says. “This way is quicker and a much cleaner process — although sometimes I miss the activity of painting.”

Schwab’s work is archived at Michael-Schwab.com. It is also in the permanent collections of the Library of Congress, SFMOMA and the Achenbach Foundation at the Legion of Honor.

His Fillmore image will be available on posters, T-shirts and sweatshirts at the Fillmore Jazz Festival, which takes place this year on July 1 and 2. But you already knew that from the poster.

*John Rhodes Miller is an artist and a neighbor.*



Michael Schwab designed a series of posters for the Golden Gate National Parks.

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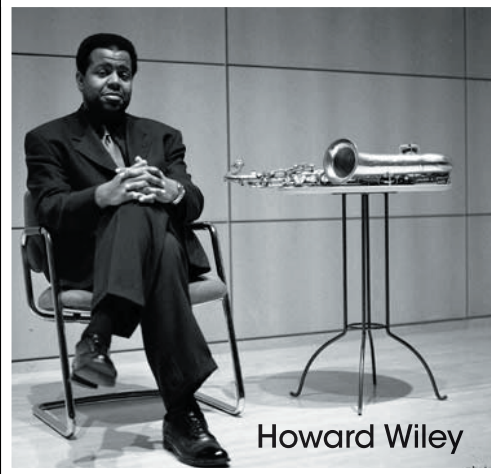
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10:00am - 11:30am <b>Mitch Marcus Quartet</b> Straight Ahead Jazz	10:00am - 11:30am <b>Audioform</b> Jazz/Funk/Soul	10:00am - 12:30pm <b>Big Organ Trio</b> Instrumental Jazz/Funk
12:00pm - 1:30pm <b>UC Berkeley's Young Musician's Program Junior Jazzers</b> Jazz Standards	12:00pm - 1:30pm <b>Soul Sauce</b> Progressive Latin	1:00pm - 3:30pm <b>Kim Nalley</b> Female Jazz Vocalist
2:00pm - 3:30pm <b>Sony Holland</b> Female Jazz Vocalist	2:00pm - 3:30pm <b>Times Four</b> Progressive Jazz/Funk	4:00pm - 6:00pm <b>Sila and the Afro-Funk Experience</b> Afro-Latin Jazz/Funk
4:00pm - 6:00pm <b>Marcus Shelby</b> 16 Piece Stand-Up Brass	4:00pm - 6:00pm <b>Orquesta La Moderna Tradicion</b> Latin Jazz	



Jacqui Naylor



Howard Wiley



Marcus Shelby



Kim Nalley

**Sunday, July 2, 2006**

California Street Stage	Sutter Street Stage	Ellis Street Stage
10:00am - 11:30am <b>Will Bernard Quartet</b> Straight Ahead Jazz	10:00am - 11:30am <b>Terrence Brewer Trio</b> Jazz Guitar	10:00am - 12:30pm <b>Bucho</b> Latin Jazz
12:00pm - 1:30pm <b>Howard Wiley</b> Jazz Saxophonist	12:00pm - 1:30pm <b>Kurt Ribak</b> Eclectic Modern Jazz	1:00pm - 3:30pm <b>Bayonics</b> 9 Piece Hip-Hop Jazz Fusion
2:00pm - 3:30pm <b>Art Khu</b> Straight Ahead Jazz	2:00pm - 3:30pm <b>Eric Wyatt Trio</b> Straight Ahead Jazz	4:00pm - 6:00pm <b>Pyeng Threadgil</b> Female Jazz Vocalist
4:00pm - 6:00pm <b>Jacqui Naylor</b> Female Jazz Vocalist	4:00pm - 6:00pm <b>Brass Mafia</b> New Orleans Brass Band	

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REAL ESTATE

A Good Place to Live  
Is a Good Place to Invest

By KEN BOERI

You probably need little convincing that our neighborhood is one of the best places to live on the planet. The weather is great, Fillmore Street is the best shopping street around, the people are friendly, the neighborhood is safe and the architecture rivals just about any other place.

Consider also how homeowners in the neighborhood are handsomely rewarded for living here. Not only do homes hold their value better, but they also increase in value at a rate unrivaled elsewhere in San Francisco.

As an example, condominium values, based on their cost per square foot, have increased during the past five years by more than 34 percent. And there is little fluctuation in property values in the neighborhood.

Think about what this means.

Say you purchased a 1,000 square foot condo in 2001. Five years ago, your home would have cost approximately \$610,000. Your cash investment of a 20 percent down payment would have amounted to \$122,000. That same condo would be worth approximately \$817,000 in today’s market. That’s a gain of \$207,000. The return on your original \$122,000 investment, before taxes, would be about 65 percent.

It gets even better when you factor in taxes. If you lived in your home for two continuous years, you would owe no taxes. A taxable investment, assuming you are in

the 30 percent tax bracket, with an identical before-tax return would have netted only \$144,900 after taxes. That’s an after-tax gain of less than 19 percent over five years.

When you add the value of your annual tax deductions for loan interest and property taxes, the return on your investment in a condo in the neighborhood (or anywhere else, for that matter) is even greater.

A single person is allowed a nontaxable gain of up to \$250,000, or \$500,000 for a married couple, every two years when you live in your home during that period. Anything above that amount is taxed as a long term capital gain at a far lower tax rate.

The best investment for most people is their home. The federal and state governments have

created tremendous financial incentives for homeowners. Add to these tax advantages the incredible appreciation rate and relative safety of the investment for homes in our neighborhood, and you have an investment that can rarely be matched elsewhere. Consider how home ownership lowers the cost of borrowing money and you have a still better investment.

Then add the tangible benefit of living in one of the most beautiful neighborhoods in one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and you have an opportunity it would be shortsighted to ignore.

Ken Boeri is a neighbor and a real estate agent with Pacific Union.

Action Jackson.

It’s the smell of Tully’s coffee at the corner of Fillmore. The secret delights of that tucked-away B&B on Pacific. The jumble of kids near Lyon when University High lets out.

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If you’d like more information about Jackson Street—from The Embarcadero to the Arguello Gate—or about Pacific Heights, Presidio Heights, or any other neighborhood in the City, call us at 415-921-6000. Or visit our website at www.hill-co.com.

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Single Family Homes	Bd	Ba	Pk	Sq ft	Date	Asking \$	Sale \$
2863 Pacific Ave	6	4.5	4	7,628	05/09/06	6,500,000	7,250,000
2672 Filbert St	6	6.5	2	5,392	05/05/06	6,495,000	6,495,000
2570 Vallejo St	3	3	1		05/03/06	3,550,000	3,650,000
2021 Pacific Ave	4	2.5	2	3,368	05/03/06	3,375,000	3,350,000
Condo /Coop /TIC /Lofts							
2931 Fillmore St	3	2	1	1,780	05/23/06	1,535,000	1,425,000
2701 Van Ness Ave #209	1	1	1	867	05/23/06	599,000	627,000
2549 Post St #1	3	2	3	1,972	05/17/06	1,275,000	1,205,000
1770 Pacific Ave #103	2	2	1	1,500	05/15/06	999,000	1,095,000
2855 Jackson St #301	4	3	1	2,055	05/12/06	1,795,000	2,011,000
3028-1/2 Buchanan St	2	1.5	1	1,300	05/12/06	899,000	1,100,000
1800 Washington St #412	1	1	1		05/10/06	619,000	645,000
2211 California St #300	1	1			05/08/06	639,000	580,000
2944 Pierce St	3	3.5	2	2,798	05/05/06	1,950,000	2,050,000
2701 Van Ness Ave #505	0	1	0		05/02/06	399,000	400,000
3045 Jackson St #602	1	1	1		05/01/06	795,000	837,000

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# A VICTORIAN RENOVATION

## Putting back the gingerbread

By DAVID LANDIS

Owning a Victorian in Pacific Heights is not for the faint of heart. The need for new roofs, new plumbing, new furnaces and new water heaters sometimes make you wonder why you didn't buy that new McMansion in Danville.

But then you remember all those details that make Victorian living special: 12-foot ceilings, ornate moldings, curving stairways, rich hardwood floors, marble fireplaces — all living reminders of a time when craftsmanship was a priority.

Seduced 11 years ago by a Victorian at 2032 Scott Street, my partner, Sean Dowdall, and I took the bait. The house, built by architect Thomas Holt in 1881, was one of two side-by-side twin homes — and, apparently, one of the first houses on the block. The legend is that Holt built the twin houses for his two daughters — and after they moved in, they didn't speak.

Since then, the house has had many incarnations. At one point, the building is said to have housed an illegal abortion clinic downstairs. It became a rooming house during the Depression. In the 1980s, it was equipped with a recording studio for financial magnate Warren Buffett's son, Peter Buffett.

Over the past decade, as we slowly renovated every room on the inside, the most important renovation still lay ahead.

Somewhere along the way, probably in the 1930s or 1940s, the Victorian detail had been denuded from the exterior in the name of modernism and replaced with a very



These Victorians on Scott Street were built as twins. The one on the left was "improved" along the way with a stucco exterior. The current owners are now restoring its original details. We will follow their progress during the next few months.

stark — and ugly — stucco exterior. Our neighbor's twin home fortunately was spared, and to this day retains its original gingerbread. We had always wanted to replace the missing exterior detail to mirror our twin.

But there was that nagging issue of cost.

Nearly 10 years after we moved in, the house was beginning to show signs of needing a new exterior paint job. After receiving the estimate just for painting and then downing a martini, we reasoned, "If we're going to spend that much money, let's do the exterior the way we've always wanted."

We contacted our architect and contractor — and the new estimate for the entire renovation was 10 times that of the original paint job. But by then, we knew this was something we had to do — not just for ourselves, but for our glorious old house, too.

So we began the renovation on April 24. And we are — perhaps foolishly — living in the house during the process. Our contractor first tore the steps away from our front door. We now enter our house through the side entrance, not an easy maneuver with two dogs and a morning cup of coffee. Next, he dismantled the planter boxes in front and jackhammered the driveway, which is now a 5-foot high sand dune. We now search for parking for hours on end,

just like so many others in the neighborhood. And then our expert crew began to rip off the stucco from around the garage door, but the entire front façade still has a way to go. The daily hammering and the knocking sets off the dogs, but luckily it isn't nearly as loud as we thought — and thankfully, our neighbors have been extremely tolerant and encouraging.

Still, despite an architect and a contractor and crew who can make miracles happen, we have already:

- lost our normal entrance to our house,
- moved all our furniture away from the windows so that we're living in only two rooms,
- had budget overruns,
- gone without mail for days, and
- found one morning that the hedge on our property line had fallen into the driveway.

And that's during just the first few weeks. Our contractor promises the project will be completed by the beginning of August. Once it's done, it'll be worth it.

Or so they say.

*David Landis lives and works in the neighborhood. He owns Landis Communications Inc., a San Francisco-based consumer public relations agency.*

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#### ■ ON THE PLUS SIDE

## The Art of Not Doing It

BY HANK BASAYNE

Said Nike: “Just Do It!” But more often than not, I manage not to. At least not now, not right away.

Like you, I do make plans. I do write my to-do lists. I know the outcomes I want. I even know that valuable Swiss Cheese thing — the way a little mouse gets to eat the big piece of cheese — by breaking up a big task into a series of smaller tasks. I know how to start.

But the dishes want washing, I only have two more chapters to finish the book I’m reading, I haven’t talked to Aunt Lucy in a long time, maybe I should call her now.

Having ambled through almost eight decades, I find that my patience with myself is wearing thin. I’m increasingly annoyed with myself for continuing to repeat old patterns that make me feel anxious and frustrated. You’d think that by now I would have developed the self-discipline to just do what needs to be done without fuss:

updating the will, getting the taxes out on time, getting the car serviced before it’s too late.

You’d think so, but you’d be wrong.

There are so many other things I could possibly enjoy in this next hour. I could listen to some music — really listen, not just have it on in the background. I could go for a walk — exercise is good for me, it’s too nice a day to spend indoors and the weather may not be as good tomorrow. I could just take a brief nap — I’d have more oomph to confront the must-do task afterward, and I’d do a better job after a little rest. Maybe just a small snack before I begin — to boost my energy and make me more efficient.

I can think of hundreds of ways to delay doing certain things, and I bet you’ve used one or two of them, too. Staring at TV, emailing friends, adding to my blog or reading the blogs of others, window shopping — just the tip of the top of the list.

The word “procrastinate” comes from the Latin root for “tomorrow,” meaning to put off from day to day, to postpone, to defer. Yes, they dawdled in those ancient days, too; nothing new here. But why? After all, I know the delight of checking something off the list. Doing the task itself can be satisfying, even if it’s not exactly my idea of fun at the time.

So why do I deny myself such an agreeable experience? Maybe I believe that the job must be perfectly executed, and I’m not sure I can be perfect. Maybe doing nothing feels safer than risking failure. Maybe I’m just not a very good person and people will find that out when they see my imperfect work.

It’s clear to me that this kind of delay, this self-sabotage, is based on fear — dreading failure or maybe being afraid of success. If I do this well, will everyone then expect me to always do well? Who needs that pressure?

But no matter how I conspire with myself to push away this chore, there is the small, persistent, nagging voice saying, “Idiot, you’re going to have to do it sooner or later,” or, “You know this isn’t the best use of your time right now.” That unkind inner voice is a sure sign I’m slogging through the Slough of Procrastination.

Too late in the day, or the week, or my life, to start? Need a coffee break first? Not enough

time to finish this project, so why begin? Now, when I hear those kinds of questions in my head, an alarm sounds. It signals the fork in the road: this way to putting it off one more time; that way, the high road. Moment of Decision. Instant of Choice.

And I’ve found that taking the high road doesn’t necessarily mean climbing the whole mountain. It can mean just getting started. Sitting down at the desk. Turning on the computer. Writing the date, maybe the title. There! I’ve begun. Now I give myself permission to take three seconds for self-congratulation, then get on with it.

Maybe it’s a concession to my accumulated years, but in a continuing campaign to be kinder to myself — reducing stress and crisis and tension wherever possible — I seek to put down the burden of frustration my own behavior causes. Included in that bundle is my age-old habit of delay and avoidance.

As the sand trickles through my personal hourglass, I’m increasingly opposed to cluttering up tomorrow with today’s undone stuff. As an ancient sage queried: “If not now, when?”

*Hank Basayne is an active senior in the neighborhood and a minister with the Humanist Society of Friends.*

#### SOUL FOOD...

You are presented with two peace potions. One will keep you peaceful only when events turn out as you wish. The other will keep you perfectly happy no matter what happens. Which would you choose?

The second, of course.

Why, then, do billions choose the first?

All we want is to be at peace with ourselves. But we don’t know how.

The road to peace will be obvious when we win freedom from false desire.



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# NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY



## Exactly 100 years ago: June 1906 Fillmore & Sutter, looking north

The earthquake of April 18, 1906, and the resulting fire devastated most of downtown San Francisco and forced businesses to find temporary locations elsewhere. Fillmore Street, largely unaffected by the earthquake and untouched by the fire, quickly became “the new Market Street.” Businesses crowded into existing buildings, sharing whatever quarters they could find, in an attempt to restore a semblance of normality to the city. This photo, taken two months after the earthquake in June 1906, shows Fillmore Street, looking north from Sutter. The San Francisco Chronicle opened its temporary office in a stationery store at 1804 Sutter on April 22, as the last embers of the fire were still smoldering. Real estate agents, jewelers, banks, insurance agents, “typewriters” (typists) and other businesses soon followed, their temporary signs dominating the street. The Relay tobacco and liquor store on the corner undoubtedly experienced increased business, while Dr. Cafferata, the dentist upstairs, apparently believed he could profit by renting out his now valuable location.

— ROBERT OAKS, author of *San Francisco’s Fillmore District* (Arcadia, 2005)

### ■ WALKING TOUR

## The Cows of Cow Hollow

### Dairy ranch houses still stand in Pacific Heights

By CHARLES A. FRACCHIA

Elegant Pacific Heights — and its northern slope, known as Cow Hollow — are not thought of as bucolic pastures. And yet, during the 19th century, Pacific Heights and Cow Hollow (whence the name) contained numerous farming and dairy establishments.

Their history is marked today by 19th century homes that once served as farmhouses. Some are modest classical cottages; another is the substantial home of a “gentleman farmer” — two ends of the spectrum of early-day agrarian ventures in San Francisco.

► Start at 2457 PACIFIC, near Steiner, where the Leale House sits on a high rise of land that was never graded. It takes its name from John Leale, a ferryboat captain who purchased the house in 1883.

It was probably built in the 1850s as a farmhouse for a 25-acre dairy ranch. While it appears small, it has four bedrooms, a library, living room and dining room.

The false-front, Italianate house has the classical elements typical of San Francisco architecture in the 1850s and 1860s, which dominate the remaining farmhouses in the city.

► Walk a block west to Pierce Street, turn right, then two blocks north on Pierce. Stop at 2727 PIERCE. Behind two towering palm trees, in the midst of a well-cultivated garden, stands the Casebolt House.

Henry Casebolt, a Virginia blacksmith, came to San Francisco during the Gold Rush. He prospered as an entrepreneur. Among his ventures was the “balloon car,” a round omnibus pulled by horses.

Building his house in Cow Hollow in 1865-66 was considered an adventurous move to an area far removed from developed San Francisco. It stood alone in sloping fields, vegetable gardens and cow pastures — but not entirely alone, for Casebolt also built a barn and a windmill and created

a lake with a waterfall and an island.

This estate was dominated by the stately, three-story Italianate home with its rusticated exterior, once flecked with black paint to give the effect of stone — yet another example of the dominance of the classical style in San Francisco in the 1850s and 1860s.

It is said that many of the construction materials were obtained from abandoned ships. Massive ship timbers support its four corners and mast-like uprights run from the ground through the attic, reinforced by heavy beams placed diagonally.

► Proceed north on Pierce Street, which was once the country road leading to Washerwoman’s Lagoon, where the clothes of San Franciscans were washed during the Gold Rush.

► Turn left on Union Street. Halfway up the block at 2460 UNION is a house built in 1872, probably for a prosperous farmer.

The house formerly stood on a knoll in the middle of the block, but was moved to face Union Street. In the back is a cottage that served at one time as a kitchen and servants’ quarters. Meals were brought to the main house through

a covered passageway.

► Turn and walk east to 2036-38 UNION, which was yet another dairy ranch house. Built in 1874, and possibly incorporating parts of an even earlier house, it now contains shops and offices. So does the barn in the rear.

This house was built by James W. Cudworth, a prominent dairy rancher and member of the Board of Supervisors.

► Another Cudworth house is on the next block, at 1980 UNION. Actually these are three houses, unified into one about a half century ago. Two were identical wedding presents for his two daughters.

*Charles A. Fracchia, a neighbor, author and professor, is the founder and president emeritus of the San Francisco Museum and Historical Society.*

### Want a guide?

San Francisco Architectural Heritage conducts a two-hour guided walking tour of Cow Hollow on the third Saturday of each month beginning at 1:30 p.m. Cost is \$8, or \$5 for seniors and children 12 and under. Call 415.441.3000 x24 or contact [natasha@sfheritage.org](mailto:natasha@sfheritage.org).

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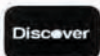
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