

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

*No Polo ponies
in Pacific Heights*

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JAZZ

*Have you been
to Yoshi's yet?*

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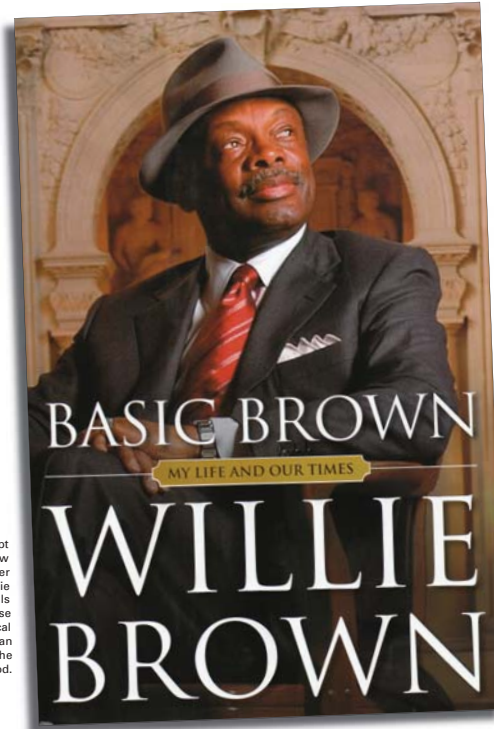
BODY & SOUL

*Unity's minister
calls it a day, y'all*

PAGE 8

New **FILLMORE**

SAN FRANCISCO ■ MARCH 2008



In an excerpt
from his new
book, former
mayor Willie
Brown details
how his rise
to political
power began
here in the
neighborhood.

Coming of Age in the Fillmore

By WILLIE BROWN

IT'S TRUE. I didn't just come from poor circumstances, I came from something worse: segregated rural Texas in the Depression. But I rose in the world to sleep in the Lincoln Bedroom of the White House and to host the Queen of England in Sacramento and I intend to get back to the Lincoln Bedroom (I'd like to bring a date) by helping the Democrats regain the White House.

When I first arrived in San Francisco in 1951 as a teenager

TO PAGE 12 ►



Heidi Sabelhaus: Plenty to smile about.

THE HEIDI CHRONICLES

With Three Stores on
Fillmore, She's the
Queen of Retail

By BARBARA KATE REPA

IN A CITY not shy about renaming its streets, Fillmore Street may soon stand in jeopardy of being redubbed HeidiSays Way.

In just over six years, Heidi Sabelhaus, who exudes a mix of serenity and style, has built a mini-empire covering the fashion gamut — from sophisticated day-to-evening collections to casual wear to shoes.

Her offerings fill three shops, all located on Fillmore. The newest store, HeidiSays Casual, sprung up last month at 2416 Fillmore in the space vacated just a few weeks earlier by the Yountville children's clothing store.

The new store took one surprised shopper by delight last weekend: "I can't believe you guys have a third shop — like I don't find enough at the other two," she lamented.

Another woman busted in with a signature pink-striped HeidiSays shopping bag dangling from her arm stuffed with two pairs of shoes. "I'm doing my Heidi loop," she explained.

Sabelhaus says her original idea was to establish a retail website selling women's clothing, HeidiSays.com, which she started in Seattle in 2000 at the height of the dot-com boom.

"The site was going well," she says, "but I always wanted to have a brick and mortar store."

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YOSHIS
SAN FRANCISCO

| | |
|--|--|
| THUR/FRI/24 - SUN/MAR/25 ARTURO SANDOVAL'S MAMBO MANIA BIG BAND | MON/MAR/27 RICHARD JULIAN |
| MON/MAR/2 SLAMMIN' THE ALL BODY BAND & AUTORICKSHAW | TUE/MAR/15 - WED/MAR/16 KENNY GARRETT QUARTET |
| TUE/MAR/4 HOLLY COLE | THUR/MAR/28 - SUN/MAR/29 NORMAN BROWN |
| WED/MAR/14 - SAT/MAR/15 DR. JOHN | MON/MAR/24 BOBBIE WEBB |
| MON/MAR/19 - WED/MAR/22 CELEBRATING NEW SILVERNE CD GONZALO RUBALCABA | TUE/MAR/23 SUGAR PIE DESANTO |
| THUR/MAR/12 TITO Y SU SON DE CUBA | WED/MAR/24 MAD AND EDDIE DURAN QUARTET |
| FRI/MAR/14 - SUN/MAR/15 PAUL BROWN'S GUITAR NIGHT Featuring Kenny Rankin & Marc Antoine | THUR/MAR/27 - SUN/MAR/29 CRESCENT CITY BOOGALOO Featuring Dr. Louis Smith, Christine Scott, Donald Barrios, Peter Beronzo & Jeff "Star" Wells |
| MON/MAR/21 TOSHIO AKIYOSHI TRIO | |

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LETTERS

Don't Blame the Fillmore

TO THE EDITORS:
I would like to respond to Rev. Arnold Townsend, who stated the reason the blue glass on the Fillmore-Geary bridge is vandalized is because of the "rowdy patrons who attend concerts at the Fillmore Auditorium" ["Blue Bridge to Remain and Be Repaired Again," February 2008].

I have worked at the Fillmore for nearly 12 years, most of it at the front door during the shows with a clear view of the bridge. I have never seen any patron, rowdy or not, do any damage to the glass. And I am there well past when our patrons leave the area. Unless he actually saw someone leaving our venue and vandalizing it, I think he's using our venue as an excuse.

I remember when the glass was installed. I was very excited to see it go in since my mom works for the Redevelopment Agency and told me about restoration of the jazz influence in the Fillmore District. Unfortunately, there is always someone who has no respect for the neighborhood, but that doesn't mean it's our customers only, as he implies, if them at all.

A lot of businesses and storefronts are vandalized or tagged in this neighborhood, including the Fillmore Auditorium. We always try to do our best to keep our corner clean and try to look out for our fellow neighbors, since we all have to work or live here. I think that goes for our patrons as well, who come from all over the Bay Area to have a good time and spend their money in the Fillmore District.

LAYLA MOODY-SMITH

TO THE EDITORS:
Please know how very much we appreciate the excellent coverage of our volunteer activities at Alta Plaza Park in your February issue. An added bonus appeared in the letters, with Jennifer Campbell's mention that she participated in an Alta Plaza Park "clean and green" day, thanks to your publication.

While we faced adverse weather and Super Bowl competition in

February, I made a point of showing the article to prospects and garnered 16 new volunteer sign-ups, so our March 2 workday should yield the best turnout yet. Volunteer building strategies include plans for family-oriented events in the park this summer, so there will be some great photo opportunities!

Thanks again for your generous support of this worthwhile effort and for keeping the community so well informed of vital issues that impact and enrich our neighborhood.

ANITA JEAN DENZ

TO THE EDITORS:
I had the [February 2008] paper for my stop this morning and read it throughout the course of the day. Gee, it was really good.

Naturally I took to Nicola Lane's painting and byline ["The Can-Do Still Does"] but the rest of it too showed me how a monthly can be a vital news organ.

Everything I read informed me of one activity or another within the community, subtle or not, of which I was unaware or only had scant information about.

BRASSPOUNDER

TO THE EDITORS:
We are not happy with your *New Fillmore* that we just picked up and read today. On page 7 of the February 2008 issue you have a picture of a nude lady—I guess it's supposed to be an artistic picture. It says here, "The Simple Secrets of Lasting Love," and it has four different points and the fifth one says, "Don't Skip the Sex."

This is pure hippie trash and we don't need it in the neighborhood. We don't need sex before marriage, we don't need prostitution, we don't need gay sex. We don't need trash, period.

Love does not have anything to do with sex before marriage, or exploitation of other people, or pornography, or anything like that. Love is simple and old-fashioned. No more sexual trash, okay?

NO NAME GIVEN

THE NEW FILLMORE

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YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER

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

Archive of recent issues: www.NewFillmore.com

Your comments and letters about the neighborhood are welcome there, too.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



Drew School, a private school housed in a modern building at California and Broderick Streets, plans to build again.

Victorian Gives Way for School's Expansion

Drew School leaders plan a new green building and increased enrollment

BY DON LANGLEY

AS IT CELEBRATES its centennial, Drew School at California and Broderick Streets is moving forward with plans to demolish its three-unit Victorian and replace it with a new multi-use space to be used for school assemblies and a performing arts program.

School leaders expect the final obstacles to their ambitious expansion plan to be resolved when an environmental impact report is ready for circulation and public comment in mid-April.

The new building, which will probably also include three classrooms and faculty work space, will be on a lot where a three-unit Victorian building now stands at 1831-35 Broderick Street. An agreement with the tenants has been reached that will require them to move out in the spring.

Head of School Samuel Cuddeback III declined to characterize the school's payments to help the tenants relocate as a "buy-out." He would say only that the tenants and the school have agreed not to disclose the specifics of the terms under which they are moving out.

An analysis in July 2006 determined that the Victorian met none of the criteria



Tenants in the three flats at 1831-35 Broderick will move out in the spring.

to be considered for historical registration. At the city's request the school did further survey work, and in April 2007 school and city officials came to the same conclusion.

Instead of going for a negative declaration of the building's worth or an exemption from the requirement that an environmental impact report be prepared, Drew

School leaders decided to complete the report and use it to support their plans for a new building. Part of the process requires that alternatives be considered. With no notable historical problem and no objecting tenants in the building, school leaders expect the conclusion will be that there are no other ways to achieve their objectives.

Combined with a new 20-year contract for use of the gymnasium at nearby Booker T. Washington Community Center, the new facility positions Drew for continued growth.

Drew is also asking the city to raise its maximum enrollment from 250 to 280 students.

The school's board has also voted to fund extra measures that will make the expansion a green building qualified for LEED (leadership in energy efficient design) gold designation as a way of helping the environment, as a teaching aid—and as a way of getting priority treatment through the city's labyrinthine approval process.

During the last six months, Cuddeback said, school representatives have knocked on 700 to 900 doors to brief neighbors and seek their support, and actually talked with about 200 of them.

TO PAGE 14

Ralph Lauren Rejected

Planning Commission invokes chain store law

BY DON LANGLEY

RALPH LAUREN's plans to open a store at 2040 Fillmore Street—the former home of Smith & Hawken—have been rejected by the San Francisco Planning Commission by a 6-1 vote.

The store needed a conditional use permit under the city's new "formula retail" ordinance, expanded in 2006 to limit the further proliferation of chain stores. Planning staff had recommended approval, but members of the commission were more chain stores on the street.

A parade of witnesses testified that the arrival of a major national retailer with deep corporate pockets would lead to higher rents, squeezing out the street's uniqueness and its neighborhood-serving businesses such as dry cleaners, shoe repair shops, corner groceries and Fillmore's array of thrift shops and distinctive boutiques.

Jackson Street resident Alice Piccus told the commission she has often gotten support from local merchants for fundraisers, but none from chain stores, whose staffers had to check with bosses elsewhere.

"Corporate headquarters doesn't care what happens in San Francisco," Piccus said. "They care about the bottom line."

Architect John Hulka, the director of store development for Polo Ralph Lauren, came from New York to tell the commission his company would build a tasteful store along the lines of its stores in East Hampton, Greenwich Village and Nantucket.

Hulka said each of Polo's stores has a different look appropriate to its locale. But he seemed to hurt his cause when he testified that he prefers to shop in small stores on Bleeker Street in New York, provoking laughter from the audience.

Asked by commissioner Michael Antonini why Ralph Lauren wants to be on Fillmore Street, Hulka responded, "We like the quality of shop you get there." He added, "Our customers want smaller stores in smaller locations."

Hulka said Ralph Lauren signed a 10-year sublease with Smith & Hawken. "If we don't come in, you'll get another less attractive store," he cautioned.

After the hearing Hulka said his company might appeal the decision. In a statement released later, he said "no concrete decisions have been made."

Antonini, who cast the only vote in favor of Ralph Lauren, noted it would replace another chain store and agreed with Polo's architect that the alternatives might be less desirable.

But other commissioners agreed with those who testified that more chain stores would not be good for the neighborhood.

"We call it neighborhood commercial for a reason," said commissioner Hisashi Sugaya. "I won't be held hostage by the fact they signed a lease without a permit."

Fillmore Street already has about 30 formula retail stores among about 100 establishments, but they were operating before the voters established stricter limits on chain stores by approving Prop G in November 2006.

March 2008 NEW FILLMORE 3



Waterworks on Washington

A new water main is snaking its way across Pacific Heights, bringing occasional unexpected water spouts to the neighborhood, including this gusher on the 2400 block of Washington Street. The project to replace pipes from 60 to 100 years old will continue for the next two years, with one block being completed each month. While work is going on in one block equipment will be kept in the next block, eliminating parking in two blocks at a time. No disruption to neighborhood water pressure or service is anticipated during the \$14.5 million project.

CRIME WATCH

Stolen Property Geary Boulevard and Fillmore Street December 31, 11:10 p.m.

Officers assigned to the Bill Graham Theater for a New Year's Eve party were asked to assist on a medical call. The subject had no identification with him, so he gave the officers permission to get his identification from his vehicle, which was double-parked.

A computer check of the vehicle revealed that there was an outstanding warrant for the subject. During a search of the vehicle, officers found credit cards that did not belong to the suspect and a mailbox key.

Because the credit cards could be used to open accounts in the suspect's name and mailbox keys are commonly used to break into private mailboxes to steal mail, officers suspected the man was involved in identity theft. He was arrested and booked at Northern Station.

ATM Robbery With a Gun Pine Street and Van Ness Avenue January 1, 11:50 p.m.

Officers responded to a report of a robbery at an ATM. A man reported that the suspect had robbed him at gunpoint as he was withdrawing money. The suspect then fled in a car. The man who had been robbed gave officers a thorough description of the vehicle, so police units throughout San Francisco were searching for the suspect.

Shortly afterward, another robbery occurred in the area of Ocean and Mission, followed by a third robbery at Mission and First. The person who had been robbed at that location gave officers an identical vehicle description.

The car fitting the description was fi-

These incidents occurred in the Northern District
from January 13 through February 13.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Burglaries (commercial and residential) | 45 |
| Strong arm robberies | 15 |
| Armed robberies | 2 |
| Homicides | 0 |
| Assaults with deadly weapons | 10 |
| Arrests | 169 |
| Auto break-ins | 92 |
| Prostitution-related arrests | 41 |

SOURCE: Northern Station, San Francisco Police Department

nally located in the vicinity of Eddy and Gough Streets. The officers stopped the vehicle and detained its occupants. Evidence from the thefts was recovered from inside the vehicle. All the occupants were placed under arrest.

Aggravated Assault Eddy and Webster Streets January 27, 2:30 p.m.

Officers received a call from a woman who claimed that she was being followed by a taxi driver who was attempting to run her off the road. Officers located the taxi and detained the driver. They interviewed both parties.

The underlying altercation had started in the Marina District. The taxi driver had left her vehicle and started pounding on the window of the driver's car. The woman, fearing for her safety, drove off, but the taxi driver pursued her across town. Offi-

cers placed the taxi driver under arrest and booked her at Northern Station.

Attempted Theft From a Locked Vehicle Bush and Gough Streets January 28, 6:45 p.m.

Officers were given a description of two suspects who had just been involved in an auto break-in. A witness reported that one suspect had hurled an unknown object at the window of a car, as though attempting to break the glass. The two men had loitered about the vehicle for five minutes, and then suddenly walked away.

When the officers were three blocks from the scene, they saw two men who matched the descriptions the witness had given. The officers ordered the two suspects to halt. One man complied; the other ignored the order.

Officers followed this man, and eventually detained him. The officers found

a duffel bag in the car; they believed this was what the two suspects had intended to take. The witness identified the men and they were placed under arrest.

Live Artillery Shell Located Greenwich and Broderick Streets February 22, 3:15 p.m.

Officers responded to a call from a citizen who had found an explosive artillery shell in her garage. The woman had been cleaning her garage when she located the live shell. The officers immediately isolated the area and contacted the explosive ordnance disposal team, which responded and seized the artillery.

Recovered Vehicle, Possession of Stolen Property Eddy and Steiner Streets February 23, 8:20 a.m.

Officers on patrol spotted a vehicle that failed to stop at a stop sign. When they ran a check on the license plate, they found the car had been earlier reported as stolen, with its key in the ignition. The officers stopped the car and took the driver into custody. The officers also seized the keys. The suspect was booked at Northern Station.

Drug Arrest Van Ness Avenue and California Street February 23, 2:45 a.m.

Officers on patrol observed a traffic violation. The driver was stopped and a computer check revealed he had several warrants. The driver admitted to the police that he had marijuana in the car. The officers found marijuana plants in the rear of the car. The driver was placed under arrest and booked at Northern Station.

BENEFITS

This Showcase Is Petite – and Oh So Parisian

SPRINGTIME brings the Decorator Showcase back to the neighborhood — this year at 2820 Scott Street — and it's slated to debut on April 26.

Design hounds don't have to wait.

There's a small-scale send-up this month at the Schools of the Sacred Heart on Broadway: the Designer Showcase in Miniature. It's a dollhouse with each of its rooms, staircases and hallways decorated by one of the city's top interior designers — just like the real Decorator Showcase, except on a considerably smaller scale.

The dollhouse is a Parisian apartment building built by Victoria Landsdown and decorated by 13 local designers. It includes six apartments, an artist's atelier, a champagne bar and a boutique — "an exquisitely fabricated and decorated dollhouse," says volunteer Jolie Bastable, who is helping plan and promote this year's event, "all filled with exquisite furniture reflecting the artistic flair of the designer."

Working on such a small scale requires ingenuity. Designers may use materials of many kinds, including all manner of fabric and paper. Some designers create one-of-a-kind furnishings that are hand carved, hand painted or upholstered.



This dollhouse of a Parisian apartment building will be auctioned as part of the fundraiser benefiting Schools of the Sacred Heart.

"But things are not always as they seem," Bastable says. "Look closely and you may discover that a lampshade is actually a toothpaste lid, or that a champagne bucket was once a flower pot."

The dollhouse will be on display during school hours at the Flood Mansion at 2222 Broadway until it is

auctioned at a gala event on March 8.

Since 1994, the miniature showcase has been a part of the schools' annual Celebrate Spring fundraiser, which takes place this year on March 7 and 8. More information is available about the dollhouse and the celebration at www.celebratespring.org or by calling 345-5825.

Mozart on Fillmore This Month

MOZART IS COMING to Fillmore Street this month.

In "The Life of Mozart Through His Music and His Letters," to be presented March 16, violinist Elizabeth Prior-Runnicks has woven together highlights of Mozart's music with excerpts from his lively correspondence.

The program will feature music by the Broderick Ensemble, which includes musicians from the San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Ballet orchestras.

Mozart himself will visit, in the person of actor Nathaniel Stookey, who will appear in full period costume.

Jazz deejay David Latulippe will narrate and also perform in the ensemble's flute quartet. The ensemble includes a number of other notable Bay Area musicians, including pianist Avi Downes and soprano soloist Ronit Widmann-Levy.

The concert in words and music will be presented on Sunday, March 16, at 2 p.m. at Calvary Presbyterian Church at Fillmore and Jackson. The suggested donation at the door is \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors. Proceeds benefit the AIDS Memorial Grove in Golden Gate Park.

This is one of several concerts to be held at Calvary this month. On March 2, the San Francisco Academy Orchestra performs. On March 8 and 9, the San Francisco Bach Choir performs.

For more information, call 346-3832 or visit www.calvarypresbyterian.org.



Worship at your neighborhood church this Easter.

Christ Episcopal Church
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8:00 pm

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CELEBRATE HOLY WEEK WITH
CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THURSDAY, MARCH 20
(MAUNDY THURSDAY)
Service of Tenebrae and Communion
7pm in the Sanctuary

FRIDAY, MARCH 21
(GOOD FRIDAY)
Haydn's "7 Last Words of Christ"
accompanied by the
SF Conservatory String Quartet
12noon - 3pm in the Chapel
(come and go at will)

Good Friday Concert:
Chancel Choir, soloists and orchestra
perform *Rossini's* and *Scarlatti's*
"Stabat Mater"
8pm in the Sanctuary (free will offering)

SUNDAY, MARCH 23
(EASTER SUNDAY)
Sunrise Communion Service:
7am on the Rooftop
(enter through education building)

Traditional Easter Worship:
8:45 and 11am, Sanctuary

* Free parking available
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Sunday Masses:
Saturday evening: 5:30 pm (Vigil), 7:30 am (Quiet), 9:30 am (Family), 11:30 am (Solemn),
1:30 pm (St. Jude Pilgrim Mass in Spanish), 5:30 pm (Contemporary music),
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Soup & Speaker Series

Friday, Feb. 29, March 7 & 14, 6:30 p.m., Parish Hall
St. Dominic's Social Justice Council invites you to share
vegetarian soup and presentations on global topics

Godspell Mass, Sunday, March 2, 5:30 p.m.

Pastor's Lecture: "Did Jesus Have to Die?"
Thursday, March 6, 7:30 p.m., Parish Hall

**Contemporary Musical Meditations on the
Stations of the Cross,** Friday, March 14, 7:30 p.m.

Lenten Retreat, Saturday, March 15, 9:30 a.m.

Holy Week

Palm Sunday, March 16
5:30 p.m. Saturday (Vigil Mass); 7:30 a.m. (Quiet Mass);
9:30 a.m. (Family Mass); 11:30 a.m. (Solemn Mass);
1:30 p.m. (St. Jude Pilgrim Mass in Spanish);
5:30 p.m. (Contemporary music); 9:00 p.m. (Taizé music by candlelight)

Seder Meal, Monday, March 17, 7:00 p.m.

Confessions, Wednesday, March 19, 12:15 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Holy Thursday, March 20

7:30 a.m. – Tenebrae – followed by breakfast
7:30 p.m. – Mass of the Lord's Supper followed by Adoration
of the Blessed Sacrament and Night Prayer

Good Friday, March 21

7:30 a.m. – Tenebrae – followed by breakfast
12:15 – 12:45 p.m. – Stations of the Cross
1:00 – 3:00 p.m. – Preaching of Jesus' Seven Last Words
3:00 – 4:00 p.m. – Confessions
7:30 p.m. – Celebration of the Lord's Passion and Death

Holy Saturday, March 22

8:00 a.m. – Tenebrae – followed by breakfast
5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Confessions
Easter Vigil - 8:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday, March 23

7:30 a.m. (Mass with Easter Hymns); 9:30 a.m. (Family Mass);
11:30 a.m. (Solemn); 1:30 p.m. (St. Jude Pilgrim Mass in Spanish);
5:30 p.m. (Contemporary music); 9:00 p.m. (Taizé music by candlelight)
No confessions this day

The Cuban Connection

Two notable natives, plus Dr. John, at Yoshi's this month

By ANTHONY TORRES

WHEN I first heard last summer that Yoshi's would be coming to the Fillmore Jazz District, I figured I would practically be living there, hanging out, digging the scene and loving the music.

Now that the club has opened, I had my first chance to go in and see a show on Valentine's Night—the night the great Stanley Clarke showed up as a surprise guest to play bass with pianist George Duke. I intended to go back to see Pat Metheny's trio later in February, but tickets for all the shows were sold out.

Here's a heads-up for March so you can start making plans to enjoy this great new venue.

People are going to like what they like. And jazz heads will know who they think can throw down and who can burn up the charts. But here are some players, known



Dr. John brings his voodoo jazz from New Orleans to Yoshi's March 5 to 8.

and lesser known, who merit your attention.

One can only assume that **ARTURO SANDOVAL'S MAMBO MANIA BIG BAND**, appearing February 26 through March 2, is going to be thunderous. Arturo Sandoval himself is a one-man force of nature. His searing riffs and technical wizardry on the trumpet can only be described as amazing feats of human achievement.

With a big band, he's going to blow people's hair back.

Sandoval was born in Cuba and started playing music at age 12 in his village band. He learned music theory and percussion and fell in love with the trumpet. In 1964, he began serious classical trumpet studies at the Cuban National School of Arts, and by 16 he was playing in Cuba's all-star national band. By then he was totally immersed in jazz, with Dizzy Gillespie his idol.



Cuban musical wizard Gonzalo Rubalcaba appears with his band March 10 to 12.

The story goes that when Dizzy, a longtime proponent of Afro-Cuban music, went to Cuba in 1977, Sandoval went to the boat to find him. Because of the U.S. embargo, Cuba had been isolated from American musicians for nearly 20 years. So when Dizzy wanted to hear the

real music of the black neighborhoods—where musicians play guaguanco, a popular street rumba—Sandoval showed Dizzy around. Only later did he get up on stage and reveal himself to be a musician.

Another Cuban musical wizard, the

gifted but relatively unknown pianist **GONZALO RUBALCABA**, is coming to Yoshi's March 10 through 12. Rubalcaba is considered by some to be perhaps the greatest improvisational pianist in the history of jazz. That is a huge statement when you think of people like Art Tatum and McCoy Tyner, who accompanied John Coltrane as a 16-year-old piano prodigy.

When I saw Rubalcaba solo last year, he was operating in a space somewhere between Tyner and Chopin, with a heavy discordance born of growing up in an Afro-Cuban barrio in Havana permeated with the rhythms of rumba and the bata.

Rubalcaba incorporates a variety of sources from his studies of folk and classical music traditions. This no doubt accounts for his musical vocabulary combining luscious melodies and incredibly intricate polyrhythms. He is a scorcher. I remember thinking, "Wow, I wonder what he would sound like with a band?" We'll have a chance to find out when he comes to the neighborhood this month.

For something a little different and more accessibly hip, you might want to check out **DR. JOHN**, aka "The Night Tripper," March 5 through 8. Born in New Orleans, his music combines rhythm and blues, voodoo religious ceremonies and jazz. He is perhaps best known for his 1973 hit song, "Right Place, Wrong Time," and he definitely will make it worth the trip.

Yoshi's is at 1330 Fillmore at Eddy. Tickets, a full schedule of concerts and further information are available at www.yoshis.com.

A Jazz Fan's Virginal Visit to Yoshi's

IT WAS BORN TOO LATE. I missed San Francisco in the '50s when bohemia was flourishing and there were multitudes of real jazz clubs in the city.

Now Yoshi's has come to the neighborhood, giving me a taste of that bygone era. As my girlfriend Abby and I walked down Fillmore to see our first show—the great guitarist Bill Frisell—I could feel something different on the street. People were out. There was activity, energy, a mood of anticipation. The Jazz District feels alive again.

Jazz purists tend to romanticize the smoke-filled, brick-walled rooms from days gone by, but the truth is that the musicians were often frustrated by those joints. Talkative audiences distracted from the music. Morally and legally questionable transactions sometimes attracted the wrong element. Cramped stages restricted artistic expression.

Yoshi's, however, is a musician's dream—and something even more for jazz fans. There's a spacious lounge brimming with earthy ambiance, thanks to dramatic lighting that highlights a Japanese aesthetic of wood, glass, stone, exotic plants, hanging rice paper lamps and plenty of room to breathe. It's perfect for a pre-show drink and snack.

We had a few Johnnie Walkers and a sampling of sushi. I asked Elsa, our waitress, about the flatscreen television on the wall to our left. Turns out you can catch that evening's show—even without going to the club—in the comfort of the lounge. Elsa said it's up to the artists to decide whether to broadcast the show, but allowed that they almost always give the green light. Leave it to a jazz musician to give it away.

Abby's a chef, so she wanted to see the huge state of the art restaurant adjacent to the lounge. From here a squadron of chefs prepare an expansive menu of choices, ranging from aori ika squid ravioli to Colorado free range lamb chops to an interesting sushi called yuke, with avocado, spicy soy marinated maguro, negi, chives and quail egg soy. I'm no foodie, but it's pretty cross-culturally cool to see someone of the caliber of Bill Frisell play indescribable music after having a dinner of

really tasty food whose names you can't even pronounce.

With 30 minutes to spare before show time, we walked up the freestanding staircase to another lounge upstairs, which has more of a hipster vibe. Modern, ultra-comfy mini-couches and stand-alone chairs are sprinkled around the spacious curved space, which also includes a full wood-decked bar. The upstairs lounge is so plush you might wonder if it's the bar of a jazz joint or the latest South of Market hot spot.

Another flatscreen showed what appeared to be a late era Jazz Messengers concert. I thought, why rent jazz documentaries from Netflix when I can walk a few blocks to Yoshi's? It's more comfortable than my apartment, with better food. Better service, too.

This is one reason I suspect people will view Yoshi's not solely as a jazz venue, but also an all-purpose destination that happens to feature live music. Go on a date, meet up with friends after work, enjoy a three-and-a-half star dinner and catch a show—in person or on the flatscreen.

America's original art form desperately needs this type of setting. Jazz clubs are often perceived as dens reserved only for the connoisseur, the die-hard aficionado who can recite the title, label and release date of every John Coltrane album. It's no wonder the average person feels a bit insecure about entering such hallowed halls.

Yet with its stellar calendar of world-class musicians and a wide variety of eating and drinking and socializing experiences, Yoshi's caters to the jazz junkie while creating a welcoming atmosphere for everyone else.

From our front row seats we watched and listened as Bill Frisell tore through a scintillating nearly two-hour set. I imagine the folks in the balcony got the same thrill, a testament to the club's intimate design and dynamic acoustics. You really have to experience it for yourself—not only the music, but everything about Yoshi's. Those of you who live and hang out north of Bush now have good reason to venture south of Geary.

—JAMES DEKOVEN

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REAL ESTATE

By THOMAS REYNOLDS

EASTER SUNDAY is coming at the end of the month, an earlier than usual arrival of springtime and one of the holiest days on the Christian calendar. For the 12th year, it will also be the biggest day on the calendar of Unity Church, the congregation of positive thinkers housed in a Bush Street Victorian just a few steps from Fillmore.

Easter has become Unity's big production, a day when the church moves from its niche in the neighborhood to the spacious splendor of the Herbst Theater to accommodate the many people who come to church, some of them, but once a year.

"I've been thinking about my theme for Easter," says the church's minister for all of those Easter extravaganzas, Rev. Maureen Bass. "This year it's Life: The Show."

It seems an appropriate theme for the special service, held in a theater, with the larger than life minister — a former actress — holding center stage, surrounded by hundreds of Easter lilies. And it takes on an added resonance this year because it will be the final Easter — and the final Sunday — she will serve as Unity's minister.

MAURENE BASS never expected to become a minister, even though she grew up in the heart of the Bible Belt in Montgomery, Alabama. She was always the belle of the ball, and early on she realized her ambitions to be on the stage. She was an actress and a director of sufficient fame to be appointed by President Jimmy Carter to a six-year term on the National Endowment for the Arts.

She grew up a Baptist, although she notes that there were plenty of things about the Baptists she found objectionable.

"I used to think that if I turned my life over to God, I'd surely turn out to be an accountant," she told her congregation one recent Sunday.

She followed the traditional path and got married and had children — five of them, two of whom were stepchildren, all raised in the same home. She married one of the country's most respected civil rights lawyers, Morris Dees, longtime head of the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery.

Hers was not a life of poverty. She dreamed one night she was driving a green Rolls Royce. A few days later, Dees bought her one — a green one the color of money — even though she'd never told him about the dream.

And then it all fell apart.



ALAN JOHNSON

She decided to leave Alabama and the Baptists and her divorce behind.

"It was the best thing that ever happened to me," she says now.

In 1992 she completed her studies and was ready to begin a new life in the service of the Unity church. She looked westward to California, like so many others seeking a fresh start. There was an opportunity to lead a church in Napa, and she took it.

"San Francisco has always been my promised land," she says. "I thought, 'Napa's close enough.'"

She threw herself into the work. From the beginning, she reached beyond the walls of the church, writing a regular column for the local newspapers called "Soul Food" that led to a book of the same name.

And she became a Californian, albeit one with a strong Southern accent. The locals would laugh at her when she said she was going to town, by which she meant San Francisco.

"I thought my Southern accent would be a hindrance, but it hasn't," she says. "I'm not quite as Southern on the stage as off."

In 1996 came an opportunity to move to town — to San Francisco — and become the minister at the Unity church that had recently moved from its longtime home South of Market to a somewhat dilapidated Victorian near Fillmore Street. As fate would have it, the Unity religion had been founded in Missouri in 1889 by a couple named Charles and Myrtle Fillmore.

It seemed meant to be. Her children visited and thought the building at 2222 Bush Street seemed too run-down to be a church, but she was certain she could fix it up, and she did.

She brought energy and enthusiasm and a certain star quality to the pulpit of the church. She began a morning radio show and wrote a monthly column for this neighborhood newspaper. She began renovating and expanding the building that housed the church — and just at the right moment, when more money was needed, her ex-husband, the rich lawyer from Alabama, passed through town, and she persuaded him to co-sign the loan that would let the project go forward.

"You need to help me," she remembers telling him.

The membership and programs of the church continued to grow, eventually expanding beyond the capacity of its building. An arrangement was made to have Sunday services at the Century Club on Franklin Street, which could accommodate more people.

At a party in 2006 celebrating her 10th anniversary, she was showered with love

RevMo No Mo

Unity's revered Reverend Maureen Bass is leaving the church at the end of the month

She left behind the green Rolls — "and a red Mercedes, and five servants and a 17-room house."

"He had to have somebody younger," she says.

SHE'D BECOME familiar with the principles of the Unity Church and its emphasis on practical Christianity and the power of positive thought. Alabama didn't much cotton

to a church called Unity, with Baptists and Methodists and the Assembly of God mostly holding sway. But she became involved in a Unity church in Birmingham, and in 1987 she helped start a Unity church in Montgomery.

By 1990 her kids were grown and, after a religious experience in which she felt called to become a minister, she moved to Missouri, home of Unity's national headquarters, to go to ministerial school.

I'D HEARD that Rev. Maureen Bass, the much-loved minister of Unity Church — RevMo, to her fans — had decided to call it quits, and no one knew why. So I sat in on a Sunday service on January 27 to see what my casual sleuthing could turn up. I'd attended her services twice before, and found all as I remembered. There's that warmth as you enter that's like coming home, and there's the easy camaraderie among the members.

And there's the pleasant mingling of traditions — a Bodhisattva head greets you from a table; a photograph of Earth from space, suggesting Gaia, dominates one wall.

And then there's Rev. Maureen herself. I was reminded once again that she is very, very good. She's polished, stylish, funny. She tricks you into seeing the familiar from new angles; she cracks open spiritual conundrums like nuts.

People love her. Some even seem addicted — in a good way — to her style of teaching. You come out of there willing to make a fresh leap at everything. If you aren't keen on dogma and favor an approach that sees a single truth at the core of all religions, Rev. Maureen makes just about the best case I think I've heard. And she's been doing it for 12 years. Why would such a popular minister choose to suddenly walk away?

Seeking answers, I hung around for the church

and toasted as a minister who had created a modern church and brought a spiritual awareness to many who otherwise probably wouldn't go to church. She was hailed for her enthusiasm and positive energy. There were calls for 10 more years.

Yet a year later, by the end of 2007, she had told the church's board of trustees she was resigning.

SITTING IN THE late afternoon sunshine on a tasteful tan suede sofa in the church reception room, dressed casually after a day on the golf course, she describes the many ways the church and the community have been a perfect fit for her. And then she asks her own question: "So why am I leaving?"

She gives a number of reasons. She's 70 now — although "I know I don't look 70." She wants more time with her children, all living in Alabama or elsewhere on the East Coast. She hopes to see her grandchildren more often. "After almost 20 years of having to be somewhere every Sunday, I want my freedom," she says.

But it's clear there's more to it than these personal considerations.

"It is with much thought and a sad heart that I submit my resignation," she wrote to the church trustees in a letter dated December 30, 2007. "I believe that in my 11-year tenure I have taken our church as far as I am able to. It has come to my attention throughout this year that there is a certain faction in the church who want it to go in a different direction. I feel that it is best for me to go than for the church to be divided."

DISUNITY at UNITY

meeting that followed the service.

The room was crowded — evidently I wasn't the only one wondering. The meeting progressed in the usual way of board meetings, until Rev. Maureen stood up to give her minister's report.

"The church is under investigation," she said with no preamble. There followed a long silence. Baffled, stunned looks were exchanged.

Evidently, she explained, a group of parishioners, without her knowledge, had written letters to Unity's national organization complaining about her and questioning her "character."

A flurry of questions followed. "What about your character?" "Who wrote those letters?" More than once, Rev. Maureen replied, "I don't know. They won't tell me." She said she herself had heard of the investigation only the week before. And she'd had no



There were smiles all around when Rev. Maureen Bass was feted by her fans and congregants in 2006 on her 10th anniversary.

At the annual membership meeting a few weeks later, she dropped a bombshell by announcing that the church was under investigation by Unity's national leadership. The dissenters had written to Unity headquarters to question both the minister and the ministry.

She dismisses her detractors as "three or four people who wanted to have speakers other than me," and says she resisted efforts to bring more New Age practices into the church — "crystals and chakras and that sort of thing."

"Listen, I'm a little like Hillary Clinton," she says. "People either really like me, or they really don't."

A letter from the trustees provided details of the investigation. It said there were complaints — "the complainers are kept anonymous" — that the trustees had not followed church bylaws in seeking

a loan to be used to repair and paint the building and to buy a new piano — and to retire the earlier loan co-signed by the minister's ex-husband.

"The review of the ministry is separate from the review of the minister," the letter said, "so we can only comment on the ministry."

BACK ON THE STAGE, behind her seen through pulpit and wired for sound on one of her final Sundays, Rev. Maureen — as her congregants call her, unless they shorten it further to RevMo — is talking about her recent trip home to Alabama. Her talks and meditations are filled with folksy stories, recaps of episodes from Seinfeld, tales of her golf outings, exhortations to think positively — and plenty of Southern euphemisms.

"It's not what happens to you, it's how

way to respond, since she didn't know the charges.

The members' looks of incomprehension shifted to anger, then suspicion, as they realized the letter-writers might be among them — even among the six members of the board sitting before them, who also happened to be up for reelection.

One by one, members of the congregation stood up and spoke in a heartfelt way of what Rev. Maureen meant to them; several claimed she was the only reason they came to church. They felt betrayed. Why should a minister who inspired so many be driven out by a few?

One member proposed a letter writing campaign to express support for Rev. Maureen. Speculation abounded. One person suggested the disgruntled parties might have been out-of-towners — from Texas, perhaps — who experienced culture shock when confronted by the freewheeling San Francisco style of the place. Rev. Maureen wondered if it might have been the times she'd given her sermons in open-toed shoes, despite a Unity rule barring them.

But she handled the whole matter with aplomb. "Let them come," she said. "They'll find nothing wrong." Several members asked, Why quit before the investigation? Why not stay and fight? From Rev. Maureen's answers, I got the feeling she believed her time here might have come to a natural close.

— DONNA GILLESPIE

you deal with it," she says in a pithy phrase that has nearly become her mantra.

"Don't should on yourself," she says with just the right intonation to drive home her point.

"You have to think it first," she says, explaining how she got her golf ball over the sandtrap and onto the green.

"Before I leave, I'm gonna teach y'all some Bible," she says on one sunny Sunday. "As we say in the South, I feel duty bound."

"They're gonna miss my stories," she tells a visitor. "Southerners are storytellers. I see stories in everything. They help me deliver a message of hope and how to live life — ideally with a little humor."

"Look, this has been my life for 12 years," she says. "It was tough at first. But I know deep down in my heart it's time to go."

While she's leaving the church, she says she's not leaving the ministry. She'll continue her morning radio show, "Wake Up to Life," which is heard weekday mornings from 6:45 to 7 on KEST 1450 AM. She does it live every morning from home, often in bed. And she's expanding to a Los Angeles station, too. She plans to continue teaching and talking, and her messages are available on iTunes.

Another thing she won't be leaving behind is San Francisco or the neighborhood.

"I prayed all my life to get here," she says. "I'm not about to leave it. I miss the South, but after I'm there about a week, I'm ready to leave. This is home now."

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STREET TALK

Quirky boutiques and sleek cafes

Fillmore Street got great ink in the February issue of *Sky*, the Delta Airlines magazine.

"Fillmore Street, with its quirky boutiques and sleek cafes — not to mention quintessential Victorian architecture — is one of the city's best shopping destinations," the feature says.

It singles out a dozen local shops, including Nest ("seems taken from the streets of Paris") Browser Books ("like stepping into an old friend's house") Heidi Says ("the place to find a new party dress") and "flirty and fun" Benefit Cosmetics.

"Union Square is a mecca for big-name department stores and designer chains, but locals head to Fillmore Street for more original finds," the story says. "Here, girlfriends linger over lunch at sidewalk tables, and well-groomed dogs rest in the shade outside coffee shops."

Sounds like a swell place.

NOW RELAX: The colorful Relax

Now day spa at 2241 Fillmore closed in February and sold off its furnishings. Owner Leslie Villarreal blamed a combination of high rent and parking issues. "The traffic on Fillmore does not warrant the

high rents," she said. "I had way better foot traffic on West Portal." No word yet on a successor.



Third Store's the Charm, Heidi Says

FROM PAGE ONE

She decided to move her virtual retail roots here after visiting and becoming smitten with the street. "I always came to the neighborhood to shop and eat and meet friends," she says. "And I always remembered Fillmore as being a classic street — kind of timeless. The people and some of the businesses and the architecture and elements of style all had a sophisticated feel."

Still, she was tempted at first to set up shop on Union Street, a natural fit for the young and edgy clothing she intended to stock. "But I was on the cusp of turning 30 and beginning to be more sophisticated and classic in my own style," she says. "I thought that ultimately the customers would relate to my products better on Fillmore and in Pacific Heights."

In the spring of 2001, she found a near-perfect local spot: the wide and light-filled space at 2426 Fillmore, former site of Paint Effects, a furniture painting store. "I loved the space, especially the windows; they're so important to me because of displaying merchandise."

Inside — amid racks hung with creations by Diane von Furstenberg, Vera Wang, Catherine Malandrino and Missoni — a sign on the wall in script exhorts shoppers: Indulge.

With the perspective that seven years on the street will bring, Sabelhaus looks back on her own fashion sense and the merchandise she first stocked and notes the evolution in both. "I carried more of the girly-feminine in the beginning," she says. "Now there's more of a range as I've evolved — and the customers have evolved with me. We're more serious in terms of fashion and design. But I really try to have a selection of choices in the store: some very feminine, some clean and sophisticated, some serious and higher-priced and some couture."

Ironically for a company that started online, Sabelhaus shut down the retail website only eight months after opening her first Fillmore shop. The store quickly became crowded with customers and ever more merchandise, prompting her to look for additional space.

"I always dreamed about doing shoes, and had quite a selection at the main store," she says. "But because of the space limitations, we couldn't carry a complete collection — and it was frustrating not to be able to give customers all they needed."

Sabelhaus wasn't tempted to stray far from home to scratch



A mini-empire on Fillmore: HeidiSays Shoes (left), the new HeidiSays Casual (center) and the original HeidiSays (right).

her itch. "I live in the neighborhood, work in the neighborhood — and I wanted to meet the customers' needs right here," she says. So when Express Photo left 2105 Fillmore, HeidiSays Shoes was launched, opening in February of 2007.

On a recent near-spring day, a crowd of customers preened on the stylish sofa in her shoe store, beckoned by a large sale sign in the window. Several of their dogs tangled leashes while they sniffed out the new array of sandals and sunglasses.

"I had my eye on these all season and now they're mine," said one shopper, admiring her new high-heeled acquisitions. "I won't be able to walk in them. But they'll be killer while I'm sitting down."

Sabelhaus says the rapid success of the shoe store only reminded her of a drawback of the first store: It was overcrowded. "That frustrated customers — and me, too," she says. "It was a struggle to provide more designers, but be restricted by the space."

Her solution was another expansion, this time into 2416 Fillmore, just two doors down from the original HeidiSays.

"It made sense to be able to separate and provide more casual clothing," she says. "I realized for me personally, there's a time to be dressed up and a time to be casual." That realization was



brought home with the birth of her daughter, Vivian Grace, nine months ago. "As a new mom, I realize I can't be in a little black Phillip Lim dress with spit-up all over it," she says.

The newest store, HeidiSays Casual, aims to meet the challenge of customers who say they crave stylish casual looks for weekends, rather than sloppy tees and sweatpants. The racks are hung with tops by designers known for their comfort and style, such as Ella Moss and Zoey, along with a line of HeidiSays label sweaters and hoodies made of cashmere milled in Scotland.

The shelves are piled with jeans from various designers that come with an ironclad promise from HeidiSays buyer Liz Hynes: "I can fit anyone," she vows.

In the span of 20 minutes, she recently accomplished that feat for two customers, with a gentle steering: "Keep in mind that denim will stretch about a half size," she says. "But we want you to be comfortable."

Sabelhaus says she got the space for HeidiSays Casual on January 2 and opened February 8. "There are still finishing touches to add," she says. "I'm itching to put up a new awning, for example. Then my plan is to just relax and stop expanding for a while."

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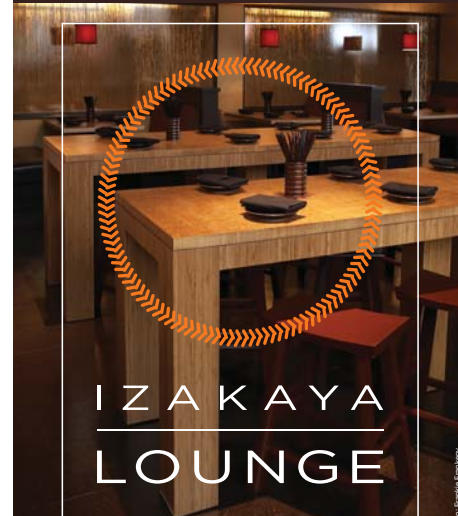
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— Michael Bauer, San Francisco Chronicle (February 17, 2008)



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On his social life

A spicy social life really can add to your panache. In San Francisco, the city's hostesses treat me as a star guest because I add flavor to the evening. I've known and appeared with many women during my 50 years of married life and I have never been ostracized or barred from full participation in the social environment because I was with a variety of women.

On women

I convey to the women who are in relationships with me, "Because we go out, because we date, because we sleep together, that doesn't mean there's supposed to be anything permanent. Do not expect it. Do not demand it."

On Gavin Newsom

My successor as mayor of San Francisco, the talented Gavin Newsom, was caught when a private relationship he had had with a staffer who happened also to be married to one of his top advisors was revealed. He froze. He apologized publicly, especially for hurting his friend, the husband. All well and good, I suppose, but if you're going to apologize for a relationship, apologize to the woman. Frankly, I think he should have leapt at the opportunity to become known as a kind of gallivanting Gavin. I think the public relishes the idea of having someone who's actually alive holding down public office. If you're going to have a reputation, have one for your dashing ways, not for your tears.

On Pelosi and Feinstein

Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Speaker of the House of Representatives, clearly reflects the class of women who can spend. She dresses for different events in the course of the day and always looks sharp. Then there's Dianne Feinstein, who also has the resources for high fashion, but that's not her route. She simply doesn't have the clothes mentality. While she never looks sloppy, she sometimes looks hit or miss, as if she were caught between seasons.

On Herb Caen

At that first lunch with Herb, we talked for hours about politics, San Francisco, journalism, sports, clothes, women — everything. At the conclusion of the meal, he said, "I think we ought to have lunch every week." For the next 35 years, with his death, we did.

On term limits

It's not surprising to me that politicians quickly find another job to run for as soon as they're term-limited out of their current office. Frankly, the holding of elective office — almost any office — is a powerful high. There's nothing like it. It's an addiction. Once you've tasted it, you've got to have it.



WILLIE ON HORSEBACK
Willie Brown campaigns on Fillmore Street in the 60s.

Willie Brown's Rise Began at Jimbo's

FROM PAGE ONE

wanted me to come. But while Itsie was a glamorous guy with fine cars, clothes and women, mother wasn't sure he was the best influence. "Istie doesn't have a job," she pointed out to me, "he doesn't go to church." But he always had plenty of money, and he had standing in the community.

Uncle Itsie, whose formal name was Rembert Collins, had come to San Francisco during the Second World War when good-paying jobs in the military and in shipbuilding were plentiful for black people. Itsie worked in the Bethlehem Steel shipyard, but he really rose in the world by meeting the needs and wants of busy people with cash looking for action and excitement. Starting in 1943 when he became 38 and was beyond draft age, he left the war industries and started running card games. A smart fellow was Itsie. He took what opportunities the world presented to him. He thought I was smart and was a kid who deserved something more than Mineola, Texas, had to offer.

Uncle Itsie's influence

My mother, Minnie Collins, wasn't even sure that she should let me go to San Francisco. Uncle Itsie, her brother,

wanted me to come. But while Itsie was a glamorous guy with fine cars, clothes and women, mother wasn't sure he was the best influence. "Istie doesn't have a job," she pointed out to me, "he doesn't go to church." But he always had plenty of money, and he had standing in the community.

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Minnie wanted me to have opportunities too, but she also wanted me to have some straighter influences. So she offered a compromise: I could

come to San Francisco under Uncle Itsie's sponsorship, but I also had to get a job, join a church and go to school. I had already heard of one school up in the San Francisco area called Stanford University. I didn't know much about it. But I heard it was the best. I told her about that.

SF State takes a chance

So she let me go in Uncle Itsie's care. He certainly knew his way around many worlds, not just the gambling milieu. I was soon on my way to meet one Dr. Duncan Gillies, a professor at San Francisco State College. I told Dr. Gillies about my ambition to study math at Stanford University. He listened attentively and put me through some math problems. He gave me the news: I was indeed very bright and mathematically inclined, but the schooling I had received in Mineola in the segregated schools left me way behind my white peers. I was shocked. Of course, I knew that we black kids were receiving a separate schooling, but I had no idea how deficient and inferior it was.

But Dr. Gillies said that his own school, San Francisco State College, might

be willing to take a chance on me. I had to agree to a 10-week trial as a probationary student. In those 10 weeks, I crammed. I used a dictionary like I never had before. I had to look up everything. All I did was study. But I did well and they accepted me. Eventually I began to do well enough to pay attention to other campus activities, like fraternities and dating. And I encountered political campaigning and clubs, which then as now were a big part of campus life.

Starting as a janitor

I quickly joined Jones Memorial United Methodist Church [at Post and Steiner], a church with a strong civil rights commitment even in the early 1950s. Eventually, I became so active that I would become youth director.

I stayed at Westminster Presbyterian Church [at Webster and Page]. While I was working as the janitor, the church gave me a small room next to its gym. It probably had been designed as a dressing room for a coach. It had just a daybed, a tiny bath with a shower, and that was it, but I took it.

I had so little money, I had to make it stretch out. One day a week, I would buy a loaf of day-old white bread, a can of tuna and a jar of sandwich spread. I'd open the tuna, drain off the water and mix it into the jar of sandwich spread. I'd place that jar of tuna spread and that loaf of bread outside on the windowsill of my room — that was my refrigeration. The whole jar of tuna and sandwich spread would last me for a week. That's really what I survived on.

The power of fashion

I've spent more time in the closet than any other straight man in San Francisco, but that's just to choose my wardrobe. I believe that appearance is power, just like money, ideas and honesty. I have a dozen tuxedos and over a hundred suits. God knows how many pairs of shoes I have. I'm replenishing them constantly and twice a year I clean out my closet and donate the goods to some charity's thrift shop [for many years the Victorian House on Fillmore Street]. It's invariably the busiest day of their year when my duds go on sale. Some of the local posh ought to go down and get some of my stuff.

My Uncle Itsie was the man who introduced me to the power of men's fashion. When I arrived in San Francisco in 1951, he and his wife met my train. I was wearing a pressed cotton short-sleeve shirt and ironed khaki trousers from Sears Roebuck. It was a Texas kid's idea of looking good. My uncle took one look at my apparel and was appalled. He decided I desperately needed a makeover.

So before we even went home, they took me shopping. That night, in my new duds, we went out to a celebrated black San Francisco nightclub, Jimbo's Bop City [on Post near Fillmore]. In my new outfit, I was mistaken for Miles Davis. Man, it must have been dark in that nightclub. But I've been hooked on clothes ever since.

A few years later when the young haberdasher (and now my right friend) Wilkes Bashford opened his men's clothing store, I was among the first three customers. Wilkes recalls, "We kept an eye on this young man who came in on opening day. We knew he wasn't a shoplifter because he had too many questions about the merchandise. He was so inquisitive that we concluded he must have been sent in by the competition. But he's been in almost every Saturday ever since. He still knows more about clothes than most of us in the store."

Even hats are necessary. They complete the look — and given the fact that most men no longer don hats, they make you stand out. I've had a good teacher when it comes to headgear. My fellow Texan and San Franciscan, Mrs. Ruth Garland Dewson [of Mrs. Dewson's Hats on Fillmore], the milliner to high society, stars and pro athletes, put me into (or under) fine Borsalinos she called "The Willie Brown Snap Brim."

That first suit

San Francisco was a relatively progressive city even then, so at most of the cafeterias black people were welcome. But there were some restaurants where you wouldn't try to go in. And there were plenty of places where you wouldn't try to get a job or even shop. You just didn't. Some stores downtown discouraged black shoppers, but some clothing stores were open. The first suit I bought on my own was from Howard's on Market and Fifth, in the heart of the downtown shopping district. Ben Friend and his son Gene owned the shop. They later went on to own other, better stores, but Howard's was hip. I still remember that first suit I bought: a double-breasted blue serge suit that came with a light blue shirt and yellow tie.

Buying clothes at Howard's was quite a change from what I was used to in Mineola. In Mineola, blacks bought from the Sears Roebuck catalog. But it took forever. I'd order a pair of shoes and by the time they arrived, I'd have outgrown them.

So I was glad to get to San Francisco where at least the choice was better. Up in the Fillmore, in the black shopping district, we had stores like Pressler's and Uptown Clothiers. They had clothes with outrageous bright colors that black people wore. Eventually white people began to wear the same colors — but only on

the golf course. Yellows, red, greens and oranges — cut in exotic styles. Great stuff.

On every corner there was a shoe store: a Johnston & Murphy on one, a Stacy Adams on another, a Florensheim on a third and a Thom McAn on a fourth. The poor people went to Thom McAn, so you couldn't, if you were a dude, be seen coming out of Thom McAn. If you shopped in Thom McAn, you made sure you carried your purchases out of the store in a brown paper bag brought along for the occasion. You didn't want anyone seeing you buying in there.

Getting into politics

San Francisco's Western Addition, an old neighborhood of Victorian houses, had become San Francisco's Harlem and was in full flourish when I arrived. Fillmore Street was its 125th Street. It's been justly celebrated as a center of jazz and nightlife, but it was also a community center. That's where the churches, associations and doctors were. As I grew familiar with the town and began to be seen around as a bright young fellow, people in the Western Addition and in politics began to take an interest in me.

Scores of people encouraged me to get into politics and helped me when I did. Two people were crucial, though. One was a black physician named Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett. The other was a political genius, a white fellow named Phillip Burton.

Dr. Goodlett was not only a black physician, he was also an entrepreneur, community leader, newspaper publisher and generally a cantankerous old party. He not only was the leading physician for blacks in San Francisco, he was the leading physician for political radicals, white radicals. He himself was tough as nails, but he was also involved in progressive peace causes all over the world. In part because of him, I became involved in the antiwar movement against Vietnam as early as 1962.

He was very close to Phil Burton, the white politician who became the leading congressman from San Francisco. Goodlett died at least once a week with Burton and his wife, Sala. Today, Speaker Nancy Pelosi holds Burton's seat. She was their political daughter.

My introduction to Phil Burton was via Dr. Goodlett and Phil's younger brother, John, and I met when we both were enrolling in Air Force ROTC at San Francisco State. This was during the Korean conflict, so we were looking, like everyone else, for deferments from the draft. ROTC sounded like a better deal than a lottery ticket that might land me in a combat foxhole. So one day I was standing in line. We were arranged alphabetically. The guy next to me was John Burton.

On becoming speaker

Some patronizing sort said that I had been elected speaker in 1980, after having been defeated in 1974, because I had grown more humble in the meantime. Nonsense. I hadn't grown more humble. I had just grown more nimble.

On running for mayor

Then there was the matter of my lifestyle. Could I live on the mayor's salary of \$137,000? It'd be tough because I would be prohibited from earning an outside income and I had no built-up assets. I had invested only in things like my Porsche and my clothes and my lifestyle. If you couldn't wear it, drive it, or eat it, I didn't have it.

On cars

When I became mayor, I was entitled to a city car and security. I would have preferred a Cadillac, not the civil service issue Lincoln Town Car traditionally offered to mayors. The Caddy, however, would have been an expensive item for the city, even if it's the only wheels truly fit for an American mayor.

On gangs

As a mayor intent on keeping the peace, I had to keep in touch and keep the respect of people who are essentially the warlords of the gangs. I sat down with these people and told them, "You want to do your killings? Do it in Oakland. Do it in Richmond. Do it elsewhere. But don't do killing in San Francisco. It reflects badly on a black mayor."

On his principles

It always disappointed me when critics would say I had no agenda, that I was not a prophetic leader with a vision or a set of guiding principles. My guiding principle was to place myself in a position of power so that I could help people with good ideas see those ideas realized. I was the leader as facilitator, a facilitator who didn't want to cross because then I became a shark.

On being a lawyer

When I started out as a lawyer, no big, white-shoe law firms were hiring black lawyers. So I started out working for the only people who would hire me — people in hotels, like pimps, prostitutes, small-time crooks. I was attacked for having a sleazy clientele. But when I began to acquire corporate clients, I was subtly accused of going above my station: a black lawyer should defend only small-time criminal clients. And then when I achieved that status of being able to attract corporate clients, I was accused of influence peddling.

— Excerpted with permission from BASIC BROWN, by Willie L. Brown, published by Simon & Schuster.

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FAVORITE SPOTS



Browser Books: an old-fashioned treasure

Few book stores of this kind still exist. Bookshelves too high to manage, friendly staff that greet you and your dog when you enter, a tight tangle of aisles, a certain dash of disorganization and plenty of treasures to be found.

I always leave here with something — a new vegan cookbook that's convinced me I should be vegan, a book of short stories by an author I've never heard of, or a book that's convinced me that I should freshen up on my German, even though I don't speak German.

Upon checking out, the cashier always has something to say about my purchases, as if he's read them all. "Oh, I think you'll find Hevitt to be a very clever character," with a knowing smirk.

And let it be known: It seems like the place that would never have what you're specifically looking for, but every time, it never fails to reach into its mess and pull out the exact book I'm looking for.

—LIZ L. ON YELP.COM



Drew School plans to build a new wing that will have a living roof and a living wall — said to be the first of its kind.

Drew School Goes Green in Its Plan to Expand

FROM PAGE 3

Cuddeback says he hopes to demolish the Victorian and start construction during the next school year, with plans to move in 12 to 15 months later.

Among the "green" elements of the addition are a living roof and a living wall. The roof will be covered by a garden of native plants, but will be accessible only to the school. It will reflect heat, improve rain management, create new habitats and

reduce energy consumption.

The living wall — which school officials say is a first in the United States — will include a mix of shrubs, flowers and ground cover on the Broderick Street facade. Both the wall and the roof will be sustained by gray water from the building and captured rainwater. The living wall also solves another problem by making the huge blank surface of the building's new theater more attractive.

The new wing will be connected to the existing campus with a trellis and a wall supporting more greenery. New trees will be planted along Broderick Street.

If the city approves the school's expansion plans, Cuddeback said he expects the growth will not bring more cars to the school or otherwise significantly increase traffic in the neighborhood. Some students use public transportation, and others are dropped off by parents.

NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SALES

| Single Family Homes | BR | BA | PK | Sq ft | Date | Asking \$ | Sale \$ |
|---------------------|----|-----|----|-------|--------|-----------|---------------|
| 2130 Filbert St | 2 | 2.5 | 2 | 1550 | 30-Jan | 1,295,000 | 1,300,000 |
| 1816 Lyon St | 2 | 2 | | | 18-Jan | 1,499,000 | Not Disclosed |
| 3024 Pierce St | 3 | 1 | | 2000 | 28-Jan | 1,545,000 | 1,850,000 |
| 2702 California St | 5 | 5 | 3 | 5926 | 30-Jan | 2,995,000 | 3,350,000 |
| 2400 Green St | 4 | 4.5 | 2 | 3994 | 30-Jan | 3,995,000 | 3,995,000 |
| 2503 Clay St | 5 | 4.5 | 3 | 4605 | 15-Jan | 4,200,000 | Not Disclosed |
| 2724 Lyon St | 4 | 3.5 | 2 | | 15-Feb | 4,495,000 | 4,400,000 |

| Condo/Coop/TIC/Lofts | BR | BA | PK | Sq ft | Date | Asking \$ | Sale \$ |
|-----------------------|----|-----|----|-------|--------|-----------|---------------|
| 2855 Jackson St #103 | 1 | 1 | | 475 | 15-Jan | 195,844 | 195,844 |
| 2051 Scott St #403 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 777 | 15-Jan | 699,000 | 710,000 |
| 1915 Eddy St #B | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1025 | 28-Jan | 719,000 | 735,000 |
| 1901 Eddy St #2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1466 | 15-Feb | 709,000 | 753,000 |
| 2016 Pacific Ave #203 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1588 | 25-Jan | 1,295,000 | 1,375,000 |
| 2865 Washington St | 3 | 2.5 | 1 | 2565 | 31-Jan | 2,398,000 | Not Disclosed |

What negative news?

The negative news about the national economy and the housing market continues. But you'd never know it living in San Francisco and, in particular, in our neighborhood. The economy here continues to be strong, but there is a lack of inventory — especially of single family homes — and that has kept demand up and prices stable.

As a result, properties that have been on the market a while have received renewed interest; such is the case with 2400 Green, 2503 Clay and 2724 Lyon, all of which have been on the market since October and finally closed in the past few weeks. Another example is 2702 California (left), a property I mentioned last month as being attractively priced. The market agreed; it closed nearly 12 percent over the asking price.



Over the past couple of weeks, we've seen a nice bump in condo listings. One noteworthy project, The Greenwich, just started listing units in mid-February. Located at 1501 Greenwich, at Van Ness, the project has 29 units, with nine already in contract — all of the one bedrooms and the two top units in the northwest corner. There are still two bedroom units available starting at \$929,000 and three bedroom units starting

at \$1.65 million. Only two new single family homes have been listed. One of those, 2243 Green, has come up several times over the years, and it needs some work.

— Data and commentary provided by JOHN FITZGERALD, a co-owner of the Byzantium Brokerage and an agent at Pacific Union. Contact him at jfitzgerald@pacunion.com or call 345-3034.



Custom windows, doors and skylights have arrived and are being finished and installed.

RENOVATING AN ATTIC | FIFTH IN A SERIES

At Long Last, Signs of Progress

WEEKS OF EXTRA effort and expense required to re tool a leaky roof have finally given way to more positive developments for the local couple transforming the attic of their Victorian into a living space.

Bringing more light into the space called for adding windows, skylights and a pair of doors that will open onto a rooftop garden.

Because the space is filled with irregular shapes, everything — including two huge triangular windows — had to be custom made. Golden Gate Door and Window has now completed the job, and both clients and architect are pleased.

"They came out beautifully," said architect Bruce Avico.

The windows and doors are all made of solid mahogany to match the woodwork in the rest of the project. Most of the glass has ultraviolet protection. Windows facing the house next door have a new kind of glass to obscure the view but allow in light.

While the mahogany and special glass increased costs, the difference was not significant because everything was custom.

"Making windows and doors is labor intensive; the material is only a part of the equation," says Avico. "We wanted something with distinction — and our efforts paid off."

Young Women & Breast Cancer

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Are you a young woman 45 or under with a diagnosis of breast cancer? Do you have questions about your cancer treatment that may affect your reproductive health, psychological well being, or living beyond the cancer diagnosis?

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