FASHION

Capturing the look of resale

FOOD & WINE

Out the Door arrives SPQR upgrades; Fraiche opens

PAGES 10 & 11



SAN FRANCISCO ■ OCTOBER 2009



The view from here

Photograph and text by MONTE TRAVIS

We live in a pretty cool place, eh? This photograph was taken from East Beach at Crissy Field, about 7:45 p.m. on August 27. The sky was courtesy of the remnants of tropical storm Ignacio. I've been many places, but in terms of the harmonious marriage of awesome natural beauty with equally awesome manmade beauty, it's

hard to think of anything anywhere that beats that bridge over that harbor entrance — an almost magical combination of geography, human inspiration and dumb luck. As many times as I've looked at it, walked on it and photographed it, it always has something new

Brooks Brothers Runs Up Against Chain Store Law

By Donna Domino

T WOULD BE only the second stand-alone Black Fleece store in the country, but planning de-partment officials have determined that the Brooks Brothers brand must comply with the city's ordinance limiting chain stores and seek a condifront at 2223 Fillmore.

Lawrence Badiner. "This is not crystal clear, but I considered a chain store. think it is subject to the formula retail ordinance."



Shipments are going undelivered at 2223 Fillmore.

After Black Fleece applied in mid-August for a tional use permit before it can renovate the store-building permit, city planner David Lindsay said, an anonymous caller complained that the business, "It was a line call," said zoning administrator as a part of the Brooks Brothers empire, should be

'Taste of Fillmore' **Debuts October 3**

NEW neighborhood event featuring food and wine tastings, cooking demonstrations and a fashion show by local businesses comes to Fillmore Street on Saturday, October 3.

The block party will take place from noon to 5 p.m. on Fillmore between Pine and California Streets. That block will be closed to traffic that day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Taste of Fillmore — originally envisioned as a celebration of neighborhood restaurants — has been expanded to include local businesses of all types. The event is free and open to the public. There is a \$20 fee to participate in the food and wine tastings. Live jazz will be provided

to participate in the Foot and mit tastings. Each gazz win to provided by members of the Contemporary Jazz Orchestra.

A schedule of events and a list of participants appears on page 7.
For more information, visit www.FillmoreStreetSF.com.

If it is embraced by the neighborhood, leaders of the Fillmore Merchants Association say the event will become an annual affair.

Greeting cards

Invitations

2404 California Street @ Fillmore (415) 567-5888 · Fax (415) 567-0432

A Wild Family Adventure Begins September 8

there's a mystery there... SENDAK ON SENDAK

YOUTH 18 AND UNDER ARE FREE

■ THIS MONTH



A festival of flowers at St. Marv's

For the third year, flowers will overflow the modern angularity of the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, which sits on top of Cathedral Hill at Geary and Gough. The event includes displays and demonstrations by floral artists from Ireland and England working alongside locals from the Bay Area. It's free and open to the public all day October 2, 3 and 4. For more information, visit www.cathedralflowers.org or call 567-2020



It's October, so it's open studios

Seizing opportunity during the city's annual monthlong artistic open house, an eclectic group of eight artists has banded togethe to form the California Street Studios at 2829

California Street, near Divisadero. Their coonerative exhibition will be onen from 11 to 6 daily from October 6 to 31. It includes sculpture, quilts and restored found photographs, as well as drawings and paintings. Among the eight artists is Caren Lorber, who uses everyday materials to create three-dimensional parodies about women. (Above, her "Wild Spender.") For more information, call 673-3080.

THE NEWFILLMORE

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The neighborhood connection

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

Archive of recent issues: www.NewFillmore.com Comments and letters about neighborhood issues are welcome there, too

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Brooks Brothers Brand's Fillmore Store Hits a Roadblock

The Fillmore store was to offer Brooks Brothers' Black Fleece line of men's and women's clothes created by fashion-forward designer Thom Brown. Now the plans are on hold while the company prepares for a hearing before the Planning Commission.

Some neighborhood activists say Brooks Brothers was trying to have it both ways.

"I find it very, very amusing," said Paul Wermer, a director of the Pacific Heights Residents Association, "that as the discussion of formula retail came up, they pasted white paper covering the Brooks Brothers logo in the windows."

Wermer said his organization does not oppose all chains, noting that it ended up supporting Ralph Lauren's store on Fillmore after the company made efforts to win local support by pledging to be involved in the community. "We can be persuaded," he said.

HAIN STORES drive up rents, Wermer said, forcing out owners of small stores who provide local residents with daily necessities such as shoe repair, dry cleaning and household items. Small business owners also tend to stick around longer because they're invested in the community, Wermer said. The city ordinance regulating companies that have 11

or more stores was approved by voters in 2006 after neigh-borhood shopping districts saw a proliferation of chain stores. Fillmore, in particular, became home to an increasing number coffee shops, spas and cosmetics shops.

"How many bloody face cream stores do we need?" asked Gree Scott, president of the residents association.

He pointed to Fillmore Hardware, a longtime neighborhood fixture, as a convenient and inexpensive source of everyday basics and an alternative to big box stores.

"They have a vast array of stuff that's reasonably priced," Scott said. "You can buy one screw; you don't have to go to Home Depot and buy a package of 10."

David Tudor, a commercial real estate broker who lives in the neighborhood, offered to help Black Fleece with the permit process, as he has with other companies mov-



Brooks Brothers logos in its windows at 2223 Fillmore

ing in other neighborhoods, but they declined. Tudor said companies sometimes incur greater costs and see their ans delayed for months.

"It's their own fault," Tudor said, "They're used to waltzing into a town and having everyone stand on the

sidelines and applaud."

Brooks Brothers did hire permit expediter John Mc-Dowell, who said he was assured by the real estate agent, the landlord and planning department staffers that there would be no problems because Black Fleece had only

"From our point of view it was just a second store," he said, noting that the design and merchandise is different from other Brooks Brothers stores.

McDowell says company representatives are now planning to fly out from New York to meet with neighbors. Brooks Brothers executives did not return calls, but chief real estate officer Kathy Self issued a statement call-

ing the Fillmore store "our second in America." "We selected Fillmore Street because of its charm and its neighborhood atmosphere," the statement said. "We are looking forward to joining this vibrant community.'

ILLMORE MERCHANTS offered mixed views about Black Fleece.

"At this:

"At this point, with so many vacancies, I think anything is good," said Bessie Lee, manager of Cielo, a high-end women's boutique that would be next door to Black Fleece. "They sell upper-end retail, which is good for me, so I don't have a problem with having them."

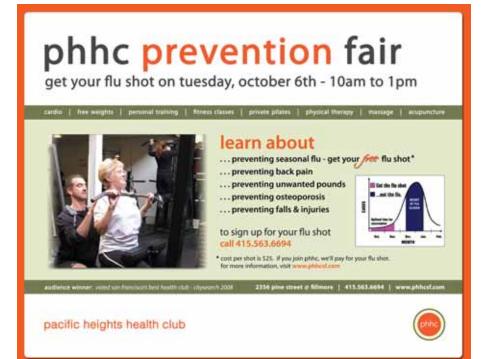
But Miyo Ota, owner of Mio, which has sold women's clothing and accessories on Fillmore for more than two decades, echoed concerns that chains drive up rents.

"When big box retailers move into thriving neighborhoods," she said, "they push up the base rent for smaller businesses, eventually squeezing out the very businesses that had helped make them bustling neighborhoods in the first place.

Browser Books owner Stephen Damon said he is "totally against" Black Fleece. He said chain stores drive up rents while adding nothing to the neighborhood.

"The kind of business they bring is not good for my business," he said. "Someone who goes to the Polo store is not the kind of person who goes to an independent bookstore. They probably use Amazon."

He adds: "I think a city like San Francisco really depends on neighborhoods that have their own distinctive character. When you allow these chains into neighborhoods, pretty soon Fillmore Street looks very similar to Union Street, which looks similar to Chestnut Street.



2 NEW FILLMORE October 2009 October 2009 NEW FILLMORE 3

On November 3, 2009 your vote will help shape San Francisco's Financial Future





Proposition A will make poorled reforms to the City's hudgel process, requiring sound financial planning and multi-year budgeting. Join the Mayor, the Board, the City Controller, as well as business and civic organizations in supporting meaningful budget reform.



YES on C

Since 1996 the Recreation and Park Department made millions of dollars from naming rights for Candlestick. Your YES vote on "C" will again allow the city to receive funds from a stadium name agreement, restoring recreation programs and



YES on D

Mid-Market has been blighted for more than a generation Proposition D would use revenue generated by re-construct-ing historic signs and marquees between 5th and 7th Streets, to encourage theater and arts groups to locate on Market. fund youth art programs and create a safe pedestrian area. Holn revitalize Market Street, unto VES on "D"



If you like the new bus stops and news racks, vote NO ON E. Don't cut money that flows to MHNI and sidewalk improvements. Proposition E stops the city from expanding our news rack and bus shelter programs and may prevent a planned bike sharing program.



Make your voice heard, VOTE!

Your City Your Vote Your Voice

November 3, 2009 Municipal Election



This November, San Francisco voters will elect the City Attorney and Treasurer, as well as vote on 5 local ballot measures.

The last day to register to vote is October 19, 2009.

Visit sfelections.org for useful election resources, includina:

A voter registration form A vote-by-mail application Candidate statements Ballot measure summaries





CRIME WATCH

Attempted Robbery Washington and Octavia Streets August 27

An officer received a call about a robbery attempt. A woman told the officer she had been listening to her iPhone while walking down the street. A man approached her and asked for the phone. The woman believed the suspect had a weapon in his hand and ran away from him. The man, still unidentified, was described as a black male from 30 to 35 years old, about 5 feet 10 inches tall, with an unshaven face and weighing approximately 200 pounds. He was last seen wearing a black beanie, a white tee shirt and baggy pants. The woman was not injured

California and Franklin Streets August 27

Officers received a report of a theft from the Whole Foods Market. They met with the store's loss prevention officer, who had detained a woman for petty theft. He reported that the woman placed several food items in her bag and walked out of the store without paying. During the officers' investigation. they discovered that she had a prior arrest for theft on her record and two outstanding traffic warrants in San Mateo County. The woman was booked at county jail.

Robbery Van Ness Avenue and Eddy Street August 28

Officers arrived at the scene of a pos sible robbery and found a man who had a bump on his eye. He said he had been waiting at the bus stop when he was approached by two men. One asked him for a cigarette. When he refused the request, a second suspect punched him while the first man went through his pockets. The officers got a description of the suspects, located them and took them into custody. The two men were booked at county iail.

Broadway and Franklin Street August 30

A citizen called 911, stating that he had witnessed two women approaching another woman from behind. The two suspects punched the woman in the face, took her iPhone and ran away. The witness then began following the women in his car, called the police and pointed out the suspects. Both suspects were transported to Northern Station and later booked at the Youth Guidance Center.

Fillmore and Pine Streets September 17

Officers received a 911 call from a cloth-

clothing from the store and was following the suspect down the street. The witness directed the officers, who observed a woman walking down the sidewalk, her arms laden with items of clothing. Officers took the woman into custody. The 911 caller made a citizen's arrest and the suspect, who was already on probation for petty theft, was booked at county jail.

Vandalism California and Gough Streets September 18

Officers received a 911 call concerning three individuals who were vandalizing building. At the scene, they found three suspects who matched the dispatcher's description. The person who called 911 had seen one man spray paint on two buildings and a street sion. He made a citizen's arres of this suspect, who was booked at county jail. The two remaining suspects were released at the scene

Attempted Theft Sutter and Gough Streets September 18

Two officers on patrol received a call regarding a theft in progress. They quickly located a suspect matching the witness's description who was crouched beside a locked bicycle and attempting to cut the cable that secured it A search of the suspect revealed that he was carrying narcotics paraphernalia and a knife. He was booked

Physical Altercation Fillmore and Pine Streets September 18

Officers on patrol were dispatched to the site of a verbal fight that had escalated to blows. Those involved stated that a heated argument had broken out when one party threw an ice cream cone at the other. The subject who had been struck wanted to make a citizen's arrest Another individual was cited and released at the scene. No injuries were reported.

Narcotics Eddy Street and Van Ness Avenue September 21

Officers observing four individuals sitting in a car in the parking lot of Burger King noted one person lighting something as though he intended to smoke it. The officer did a check on the vehicle's license plate and learned that the car had been stolen While one officer made contact with the driver additional units arrived to assist. Further investigation revealed there were outstanding arrest warrants for three of the suspects. Officers found narcotics inside the vehicle. Three of the suspects were booked at county jail: the fourth was re-



■ STREET TALK

Pine to Bush: center of action

The pace has quickened on the block of Fillmore between Pine and

Bush. Since Labor Day, two of the city's hottest dining spots — SPQR and Slanted Door — launched or relaunched on the block.

Across the street, a fresh concept in artisanal yogurt is now open and getting a significant boost from Huf, a temporary store selling sneakers that popped up next door in the former Aveda salon, drawing long lines of yogurt samplers.

PAGING RURY PETITE: Work is under way to transform the empty LTH Market, at 1919 Fillmore, into a new furniture store and interior design shop called Ruby Living Design.

"We straddle the line between furniture, retail and interior design, says owner James Littrell. After looking at other neighborhoods "I thought this was the most favorable demographic for what we're trying to do."
This will be the third Ruby. In

addition to a large showroom on Townsend, near the design center, is a Mill Valley boutique similar to what's planned on Fillmore. If things go well, Littrell hopes to open more "Ruby Petites."

COMING & GOING: After 10 years at 2029 Fillmore. My Boudoir has moved its lacy bras and undypants down to a smaller shop at 2298 Union. Several potential successors are said to be interested. . . . The home sweet longtime home of Fillamento at 2185 Fillmore sits empty, more shabby than chic, awaiting someone special - with \$25,000 a month rent, basement included

RETAIL REPORT

Sex Change for Luxe Leather Goods Shop

Now Hlaska's focusing on gear and clothing for men — and opening two new stores

tailers are ratcheting back on their stock and business plans, Hlaska, the luxury leather goods shop with its flagship on Fillmore, is retooling its product line and planning to ex-

Hlaska will be adding two new stores in high-end locations next month - one in San Jose's Santana Row and another in Palo Alto's Stanford Shopping Center.

At the same time. Hlaska will be changing its focus - eliminating products for women, but expanding its offerings for men to include clothing from jeans to iackets, with hoodies and dress shirts in between — in addition to the bags, wallets, cufflinks, watches and ties that are already part of its

The change in focus fills a void in the neighborhood, according to Hlaska founder Anthony Mazzei. "When you look at Fillmore

Street, you see a lot of women's bags and clothing," he says. "But we realized there were also guys walking up and down the street -

and we want to give them a place to shop, The store at 2033 Fillmore debuted a

year ago after an extensive renovation of the space long occupied by the Victorian House resale shop. There are plans for more



"Dear Women," announced Hlaska's windows, "We're designing strictly for the guys now. No hard feelings."

remodeling - a new facade, plus the addition of dressing rooms — but not until the two new shops are up and running.

As Hlaska's new business plan proceeds Mazzei says he is undaunted by the dampened economic climate

"We opened last year when the economy was already bad," he says. "And because we were born in the recession, it doesn't scare us."

Mazzei sees opportunity in the closing of other shops at Santana Row and Stanford. "It reminds me of a forest fire," he says, "which clears out a lot of brands that maybe didn't need to be there - and allows others to get a fresh start in the market."

Mazzei and partner Chad Hurlev. a co-founder of YouTube, began planning Hlaska's goods and concept six years ago - while Mazzei was mostly selling online and to a few boutiques and before YouTube became ubiquitous.

"At the time we were just two startups," Mazzei says. "But we agreed to rope back around with one another."

To meet the new product demands, Hlaska has added reinforcements to its design team. All the clothing will be made in the U.S. and the fabrics secured from domestic sources. That required scouting out cotton mills in Georgia, Florida and South Carolina.

We said, 'Let's find American factories and work with mills we like that are making something interesting," Mazzei says. "We like to think of clothing and how it's being used and made, not just the function of dressing people."

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the building



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with over 500 sq. ft. of patio/

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storage & laundry. Steps from

Upper Fillmore restaurants and

Ample closet space, parking,

outdoor space. Corner end

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REAL ESTATE

FIRST PERSON

October 17, 20 Years Ago, at 5:04 p.m.

Remembering the earthquake, and the way it brought us together

By Robert Kerwin

HEN IT HIT, I was on long distance.
My house began swaying and creaking, as if a gargantuan pair of arms had taken hold and were shaking it to pieces.

"I'll call you right back," I said, and hung up. The television was dead. And the radio.

The television was dead. And the radi When the shaking relented, I tried to redial. Now the telephone was dead, too. I was alone.

Outside, on Pine Street, neighbors were wandering zombies. I'd never seen so many people in the street at one time, all dazed, wide-eyed, out of it.

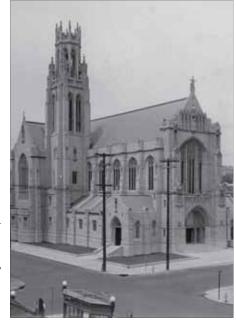
I found my car, parked on Buchanan. Thankful it was still there and undamaged, I settled into the driver's seat — and immediately took two big-time aftershocks, which rocked the car like a boat.

On the street you could stop and talk to anybody. It was as if everybody were a brother or sister you'd known for life. It had nothing to do with whether you had wealth or position, what you did for a living, the place you lived, your sex, size, age or color. None of it mattered.

Back home, feeling fortunate the house was still standing, I sat at the kitchen table, drank wine and watched the sun go down. When the light faded, I lit a candle. All at once everything became old-fashioned in the kitchen, as if the room and the house had rolled back in time.

When it got dark, I grabbed my lantern
— one of those large dry-cell flashlights
you carry by a handle — and went out for
a walk.

It was the darkest of dark out there. A few steps from the front door, I saw a couple come along carrying baseball bats as well as lanterns. I went back inside and got my bat, too.



Before and after

the earthquake

While the Marina sustained the brunt of the damage in the city from the 1989 earthquake, St. Dominics Church suffered the most serious fallout in the immediate neighborhood. When the Gothic stone church was built — to replace an earlier church building severely damaged by the 1906 quake — its 125-foot square bell tower was topped with a rounded candle that stretched another 25 feet (left). The candle was badly damaged in 1989 and soon removed. A few years later, flying buttresses were added (above) to strengthen the walls of the sanctuary and their many stained glass windows.

The street was a wilderness. Here and there you came upon small groups of people gathered on front stoops, lanterns in a circle, everyone speaking in low tones. You could ease right into those gatherings even though you knew nobody there. Lay aside your bat, sit down, join in. No introductions needed. All down the darkness on Webster you'd see these oases, like campfires.

Sacred Heart convent schools had a play yard in the rear where we'd gone on many July Fourths to watch the waterfront fireworks. I wormed along a narrow gangway off Broadway, then stood on the asphalt court and looked through the fence down onto the hapless Marina, dark and fiery. The same fires television viewers were watching throughout the world I had live, right here. Tiny sirens blew, far off, emergency lights glinting.

On the radios everyone seemed to be playing there were endless reports about ruptured gas lines. As I watched, it felt as if at any moment the entire Marina would explode and flame out. Forever.

That's the kind of night it was.
Seeing the Marina burn brought on
deep melancholy. Things had been exciting
earlier in the evening. But now I was
wishing it had never happened.

I took a different route home, along Fillmore. Some businesses had their own generators, and occasionally you'd pass a sickly lit storefront, with a quorum out front talking gravely.

Harry's had candles all along the bar and on the piano. It looked nothing like the singles bar it usually was, but more like an old-time family pub. Inside Harry's, people were sitting and having drinks. Uniformed waitresses seemed to be on duty, a vested barman firmly in place. At the entrance, chairs were stacked and crisscrossed, and two men stood guard. Harry's was closed to the public, but open to anybody who knew anybody.

Just inside the window a waitress I knew smiled and came out to the shield of chairs to say hello. I was in. It was like family there that night. You

It was like family there that right. You knew everybody right away whether or not you'd ever seen them before. All of them were talking excitedly about where they were when it hit, what they'd been doing and how everything had come out.

There was no electricity. Drinks were on the house.

Harry didn't dance on the bar, for which he was notorious, but he did play piano, a moving "Liebestraum" in the candlelight. Later I sat at the piano a while, resurrecting standards.

It was a great night. Everybody relaxed, relieved, happy to be alive. When it came to an end, I took up my lantern and my baseball bat, stepped out into the darkness and headed for home.

taste of FILLMORE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3



CHEF DEMOS

12:15-1:00 I300 on Fillmore

Florio

3:15-3:30 Pizzeria Delfina

Dino's Pizza

La Mediterranee

Hosted by Nick Smith

of View from the Bay

NOON TO 5 P.M. between PINE & CALIFORNIA

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Musicians from the Contemporary Jazz Orchestra

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- 12:30 LIMU
- 1:00 Repeat Performance
- 1:30 Junior League
- 2:00 Calvin Tran
- 2:30 Crossroads
- 3:30 Betsey Johnson
- 4:00 Nomadic Outfitters
- 4:30 Toujours

Flowers provided by Blooming Floral Designs

TASTES

3:45-4:30 Dosa

The Wine Jar · Dosa · O & Co. · Yoshi's · The Elite Café
La Mediterranee · La Boulange · Osaka · 1300 on Fillmore
Woodhouse Fish Co. · Jurlique · Neja Cosmetics

THE EVENT IS FREE

To participate in food and wine tastings, a wristband is available for \$20

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Sponsored by the Fillmore Merchants Association

St. Dominic's Catholic Church



MASSES

SUNDAY
5:30 pm (Saturday Vigil)
7:30, 9:30 & 11:30 am
1:30, 5:30 & 9:00 pm
WEEKDAYS
6:30 & 8:00 am & 5:30 pm

SATURDAY 7:40 am Rosary, 8:00 am Mass

PRAYERS & SACRAMENTS
The church is open for prayer all day and into the early evening.

Liturgy of the Hours (Daily) Morning Prayer 7:15 am/Sat 8:00 am Evening Prayer 5:00 pm Reconciliation Sat 5:00 pm,

Reconciliation Sat 5:00 pm, Sun 7:00, 9:00 & 11:00 am, 5:00 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacramer Mon & Wed 8:30 am & 6 pm Tue & Fri 8:30 pm

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FASHION



Spending Less, But Still Looking Like a Million

Fillmore's resale shops are right for the times

By Teresa Rodriguez Williamson PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM WILLIAMSON

YOU'RE like most people, you're feeling the economic pinch and don't have the means to drop big bucks on a lot of new clothes right now. But that doesn't mean forgoing fashion this season. It just requires knowing where to look - and how to put your look together.

"Thrift stores and consignment shops are great places to find excellent key pieces from a previous season," says personal stylist Karen Tamblyn, an admitted shopaholic with an eye for style, creativity and resourcefulness. "Vintage elements are always a hit, and you can easily find them in the secondhand shops on Fillmore Street," she says. "You don't need to spend a fortune to look like a million bucks."

Tamblyn recently scouted the neighborhood to create a number of different looks - all from the consignment and resale shops that line Fillmore Street.

Five fashion faux pas to avoid

Karen Tamblyn offers these tips to help the fashion-conscious find the right fit and flair in Fillmore's resale shops.

- Don't buy a size too big or too small. Buy what fits your body. Don't wear it if it doesn't feel right. Confidence is the most attractive accessory
- Don't overspend. Fashion doesn't have to be expensive.
- Dress your age.
 Don't wear the wrong shoes. They make or break an outfit.



1. Cocktail hour

Repeat Performance

This simple yet elegant look easily floats from the symphony to a society cocktail party. The chic silk dress is reminiscent of big name designers, but with a price tag more shoppers can afford. "Draping the necklace across the dress adds a touch of glam with a little twist," Tamblyn says. She completed the winter white ensemble with simple gold accents.

2. Weekend getaway

Seconds to Go

"Every woman needs a timeless classic look that will always appear stylish, but not super daring," says Tamblyn, who fashioned two ensembles to go from Sunday brunch to a day at the races. She chose a classic polka dot, a print that flatters most women's body types, and added a brightly colored scarf to define the waist and make the look fresh. She also belted the classic strapless A-line dress, and topped it with a pastel bolero. "Adding a pop of color turns a classic look into a playful ensemble with attitude," she says. Dress (polka dot)

Scarf	8
Bracelets	24
Shoes	18
TOTAL	\$ 210
Dress (black and white)	45
Sweater	14
Belt	22
Shoes	20
TOTAL	\$ 101





3. Urban chic

Crossroads Trading Company 1901 Fillmore

"Here is the look for the young and fabulous ready to conquer the world — funky, fun and yet sexy," says Tamblyn, who added cuff bracelets on both wrists and a messenger bag to spice up the urban look. "And the messenger bag is one of the must-have pieces of the season.'

Jean skirt	1
Shirt	2
Bracelets	3'
Ring	1.
Shoes	3
Bag	5.
TOTAL	\$ 17

4. Ready for business

Goodwill Industries

Nestled in the new boutique in the back of the store, Tamblyn found an amazing orange blouse reminiscent of Hermes. She paired it with a two-piece black suit and cinched it with a camel belt, which she says took the suit into a "more

10	Blouse	16.9
26	Jacket	7.4
37	Skirt	10.9
12	Belt	1.4
38	Shoes	10.9
55	TOTAL	\$ 47.9
\$ 178		

5. City sophistication

Next-to-New Shop 2226 Fillmore

Tamblyn says what makes this outfit so wonderful is the metallic theme that runs through the dress, shoes and ring. "Everything shimmers and moves with the light," she says, proclaiming this dress - with its "Sex and the City" feel without being overly sexy — perfect for a fun night on the town with the girls.

Ring 115 Purse Shoes TOTAL





PQR REOPENED September 30 after a 16-day makeover with a new kitchen, a new dining room — now featuring two long banquettes - and a highly regarded new executive chef. Matthew Accarrino. Accarrino comes from Craft Los Angeles; earlier he was in New York at CraftSteak and Per Se. At SPOR, he replaces Nate Appleman, who took his James Beard rising star award and abruptly moved to New York in July.

SPQR has been known for its small plates and earthy Roman cuisine Accarrino's approach is an update, he says: "The goal is to lighten and refine the great neighborhood restaurant that SPQR already was."

The new menu is "only a tiny bit different," says co-owner Shelley Lindgren. "There's a snack section with fun bite-size nibbles to enjoy with a glass of vino or start the dinner. Then there will be an antipasti section, which includes salads and local incredients with his twist And he makes wonderful housemade pastas. One of my favorites is his ravioli with ricotta and lamb's quarters and a carbonara topped with an egg, another unique spin to the dish."

Another big bonus, Lindgren says, is that the already-impressive wine list will be expanded by about a third. And there's a huge bonus for locals: SPQR will now accept reservations, although some tables will still be set aside for walk-ins.

Accarrino is eager to get cooking. "I'm thrilled to be at the helm of such a popular and loved restaurant," he says. "I can't wait to cook for the neighborhood and beyond."

SPQR and its Marina sibling, A16, got a new member of the family last month when a second A16 opened in Tokyo Some of its owners and investors celebrated with an Italian feast in the desert at the Burning Man festival, on the theory that you can always go to Tokyo, but Burning Man comes but once a year.

Patama Roj gave birth twice on

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At just-opened Fraiche, fresh or frozen yogurt comes with a wide variety of toppings.

Filmmaker Michael Moore stops by the Elite

When in-your-face filmmaker Michael Moore walks in the door with his crew, the usual response is fear. But when he wheeled up to Fillmore's Elite Cafe on a recent Thursday evening and alighted from a black SUV with dark-tinted windows, diners at the sidewalk tables stood and applauded.

Moore had just come from the Clay Theater up the street, where he hosted a private screening of his new documentary, "Capitalism: A Love Story." The master of the ambush interview arrived at the Elite without his camera rolling. And it wasn't a surprise drop-in. Someone called ahead and made a reservation

"We took an 8:30 reservation for a party of four for Michael Moore," says Elite General Manager Jeff Nadler, who was on duty that night. "They arrived on time — Moore, another guy, two women and two serious-looking body guards. They asked for a quiet place and I put them in the last booth in the back."

Despite his blue-collar persona. Moore didn't have a shot and beer. "He ordered a Kahlua and double cream on the rocks," said Fabian Oregon, the Elite's personable bartender, who often works the plank solo at night. Server Abby McI aughlin said Moore and his party were "really nice and

quiet." They ordered extensively, she said. Moore was dressed for the occasion in his trademark baseball cap, black T-shirt and Jeans. "He was a gentleman," McLaughlin says. "He took his cap off during dinner." When Moore and his party left, she says, "He shook my hand and said

And the tip? McLaughlin fell silent. Clearly she doesn't serve and tell.

On the same day Roj gave birth to her first child, a boy, she and her staff also opened FRAICHE, an organic yogurt shop, at

The shop is a beachhead in the city for Fraiche. Roj and business partner Jessica Gilmartin already run their flagship location in downtown Palo Alto and a satellite shop at Stanford University.

Fraiche was ready to open the first week of Sentember But a city health inspector fold the owners they didn't get their paperwork in on time and that a permit couldn't come before November. No one was saying what transpired to change that, but froyo fans can give a nod of thanks

Fraiche features fresh and frozen

yogurt in regular, soy and chocolate, with low-fat and no-fat variations. Toppings include all manner of fresh fruits and berries, granola, nuts and shaved chocolate. Oatmeal and Blue Bottle coffee also are

Fraiche opens early and stays open late - from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. weekdays, and until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

Back home in the neighborhood from the political slugfest in Washington, D.C., House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her son — along with her Secret Service contingent — dropped in unannounced for dinner at FLORIO on September 18.

Restaurant

Wine Bar

Catering

From her table in the back of the dining room, she was the soul of

graciousness as well-wishers repeatedly interrupted her dinner. Neither the public nor the politicians drove her to drink: She stuck strictly with San Pellegrino.

The buzz has been building for the long-awaited launch of OUT THE DOOR, Charles Phan's local version of the Slanted Door, at 2232 Bush Street. After a series of soft opening dinners for friends, family and neighbors, the official opening was set for October 1.

Hints of the menu began arriving via Twitter from chef de cuisine Grace Nguyen, who moves over to Bush Street from the mothership at the Ferry

Nguyen tweets regularly, and used the service successfully to find a regular supplier of duck eggs for her duck egg quiche, part of the classic Vietnames om phan menu offered at lunch.

Succeeding the Michelin-starred Quince at Octavia and Bush will be a new restaurant called BAKER AND BANKER.

Named for co-owners Lori Baker and Jeffrey Banker, the new spot may be open by November (Quince reopens October 1 in a Jackson Square space designed by Olle Lundberg, who also designed OTD.)

Baker and Banker are San Francisco restaurant veterans who both have long nedigrees. Baker is known for her pastries and breads - she plans to add a fullservice bakery adjacent to the restaurant in the near future - and Banker for his versatility, which he calls "new American, reflecting America as a melting not."

Here's how it was described in a September 22 Craigslist posting for a sous

"Baker and Banker will be a welcoming neighborhood restaurant serving distinctive but approachable food made with care and based on produce and meats from local producers with whom they have long-standing relationships. All breads and pastries will be made in-

All's well with the world again. The glass and chrome cases at PATISSERIE DELANGHE are once again filled with freshly made blueberry scones, almond and chocolate croissants fruit tarts and other sweet treats.

Four weeks of summer holiday ended September 15 when Dominique Delanghe and his crew returned Of his time off spent, naturally in his native France - he said, "One could get used to it.

Michael Chihak welcomes your tips. Email him at chihak michael@vahoo.com. Read his updated food and restaurant blog at www.que-aprovecho.blogspot.com.





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FOOD & WINE

The Wait Is Over: Out the Door Opens on Bush Street

or more than three years, locals have been eagerly eyeing the construction site on Bush near Fillmore. On September 30, they got what they'd been wanting: Out the Door, the long-awaited neighborhood incarnation of chef Charles Phan's Slanted Door, opened its doors at 2232 Bush Street.

When Phan, internationally acclaimed for his modern Vietnamese food, came across the vacant industrial building a few years ago, he imagined a dream coming true: He would create an intimate space with a perfect kitchen, great neighborhood ambiance and easy access - and live with his family above the shop.

"I fell in love with the building," he says. "I really like big, tall restaurants and modern industrial design. And this neigh-borhood is perfect." He envisioned keeping the simple facade of the former dried flower outlet while injecting his signature ultramodern style into the interior

He's done just that. Phan says Out the Door — or OTD Bush Street, as staffers call it - will be more like his original Slanted Door in the Mission: a neighborhood restaurant for locals, although it's sure to draw crowds of curious foodies from far and wide.

The menu will offer lunch and dinner. from \$5 side dishes to \$22 entrees. And in a twist, Phan for the first time will serve breakfast - egg dishes, plus traditional Vietnamese breakfast offerings including beef noodle soup, coconut buns and sticky rice with mung bean and coconut

"This neighborhood is perfect," says super chef Charles Phan, who brings Slanted Door style and sophistication to the Fillmore.

Phan says he got the idea to offer breakfast after wandering around the neighborhood in the mornings and finding the breakfast fare wanting - "or at least not the kind of breakfast I want," he said.

The lunch menu is a la carte - a shift from the shared meals Phan has made popular in his other restaurants. Modeled after typical Vietnamese street food, plates and bowls of food are served individually and not meant for sharing. Lunch plates will include a grilled pork chop with a side of pickled vegetables, as well as five-spice chicken, roasted mackerel with gingered fish sauce and lemongrass tofu with pickled mustard greens

Dinner will feature favorites from Slanted Door, as well as new items with specialized touches by chef de cuisine Ĝrace Nguyen.

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In another novel twist, OTD Bush will

serve keg wines on tap from local producers. "The whole idea," Phan says, "is to bring really cool and unique wines from small vineyards to the public at a reason-

In addition to creating acclaimed cuisine. Phan pays a lot of attention to ambiance — and has no taste for typical Asian decor. "Some people put giant Buddhas inside their restaurants, or red lanterns and bamboo painting on walls," he says. "Buddha belongs in a temple, not in somebody's restaurant.

The spare and sophisticated look of the new restaurant results from a continuing collaboration with architect Olle Lundhero, who also designed Slanted Door in the Ferry Building and Phan's other restaurants. The new locale features banquettes of steel, a lampshade fashioned from a buov cut in half with oyster shells still attached

granite boulder, a smaller-scale version o the one in Slanted Door — "a nod to the mothership," Lundberg says. There is bar seating and a communal table in addition to the tables - room for 60 diners in all.

"I thought of a Kung Fu-like motif," Phan says. "There will be chopsticks and soy sauce on the table and that's it," he says. "When I was growing up, the simple restaurants were rustic and beautiful, with ceramic clay pots that were burned, with a patina to them. I don't like things that are always immaculate and perfect because for me, life should be rich and full of nooks and crannies."

Phan, who worked at all levels of the business from busboy and dishwasher on his way to becoming a celebrity chef, famously shares a good working relationship with his employees. He credits his suc-cess to his "team" — the staff of extended family and other loyalists, many of whom have been with him since the beginning At OTD Bush, Phan and Nguyen will be joined by pastry chef Chucky Dugo and general manager Cynthia Fung.

"I cook what I like and try not to be biased," he says. "I just put it out there and if it works I put it on the menu. And if it doesn't, I take it off the menu."

He promises innovation.

"The problem with Out the Door is that I have to repeat past dishes because that's what's expected," he says. "I'm the Vietnamese guy, so I have to give them the old favorites. But we want to do new things here. I'm contemplating a 75-25 split -







By THOMAS REVNOLDS

THEN THE first Monday in October arrives and the United States Supreme Court takes the bench after its summer recess, all eyes will be on the newest justice. Sonia Sotomayor,

But Lisa Middione, co-owner with chef Carlo Middione of Vivande on Fillmore Street, will be thinking instead of two justices from the past: her great-grandfather, Justice John Marshall Harlan, who served from 1877 to 1911; and her uncle. her mother's brother, Justice John Marshall Harlan II who served from 1955 to 1971

"We were very close to Uncle John." she says of the younger Harlan, having grown up near him in New York. "The family just adored him - and he had a great sense of humor"

The family's commitment to law and public service was established early on. Expecting greatness, the first John Marshall Harlan's father had named him after Chief Justice John Marshall, who in the early days of the republic was primarily responsible for establishing the court's authority.

The Harlan family hailed from Kentucky. They owned slaves but when the Civil War came, John Marshall Harlan fought to maintain the Union. Despite his misgivings during the Reconstruction era, he would go on to become one of the nation's most important voices for equal

"The image of leadership was very important to the family when I was growing up," Lisa Middione says. Her great-grandfather continued to exert a powerful influence on the family, which gathered in the summers at Murray Bay, a family compound he had established on the St. Lawrence River across the border in Canada

'The president picked me up and carried me piggyback.

"That was a special place we used to go in the summer," she says. The extended Harlan family summered near their friends the Tafts, including William Howard Taft, who would go on to become president and later chief justice.

"One of my first memories is of a birthday party at the Tafts'," Middione says. "I was maybe three years old and I got lost. The president picked me up and carried me piggyback to my family."

Growing up in New York near Uncle John Marshall Harlan II and his family, she remembers him doing "many amaz-ing things." He was a Rhodes Scholar who studied law at Oxford and returned

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A Family Legacy

Vivande's Lisa Middione grew up in the shadow of two U.S. Supreme Court justices

to become a patrician partner at a promi- appointed when he was only 44, becomnent Manhattan law firm. While he was heading a team of lawyers defending the DuPont family in a major antitrust case in Chicago, Lisa Middione came to town on business, and Harlan's wife insisted she stay in their suite at the Drake Hotel.

"Mr. Pierre DuPont also stayed in the suite," Middione says, "I recall him as a very dignified, courtly old gentleman, and he had a French accent. We all had dinner together every night, along with key lawvers working on the case. The conversation was fascinating."

"Eisenhower had just been elected," she remembers. "Every evening the telephone wires were burning back and forth with the Republican Party chiefs in Washington about who was being appointed to this and

In 1954, Harlan II was nominated to the Supreme Court, where Harlan I had served with such distinction, and sworn in wearing his grandfather's gold pocket watch. He joined the court just months after his grandfather's once-lonely dissenting position that racial segregation was unconstituthe court's unanimous ruling in Brown v.

"I remember taking my grandmother to Washington for the induction," Middione says. "She thought he was too young," at 55, even though his grandfather had been

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ing one of the youngest justices in the history of the court. "It was an extraordinary experience," Middione says.

Harlan II served through the Warren Court's legal revolution of the 1950s and 60s. A more conservative judge than his grandfather, he was often in dissent. He also struggled with declining eyesight and in his final years on the court became almost completely blind.

That made the pornography cases that came to the court in the 60s particularly challenging - and ripe for his roguish sense of humor. In the court's basement was a screening room where the justices watched films alleged to be pornographic. Harlan purposely sat beside prudish col-leagues and insisted on hearing a blow-byblow description. "Oh, extraordinary!" he

'It was a lot to live up to. It was inspiring."

Middione doesn't doubt the story, but never heard it at family gatherings. "We tional had become the law of the land with didn't talk about anything to do with the court," she says. "He couldn't talk about it."

Of her remarkable family heritage, she says: "It was a lot to live up to. It wasn't overwhelming. It was inspiring.

In fact, she followed another family tradition, music, and studied piano at Julliard,

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encouraged by her mother, an accomplished musician who studied piano in Paris. After Middione came to California, she became an impresario, sometimes presenting 350 events per year, including Marion Anderson and Marlene Dietrich, and helping to create the Stern Grove Music Festival

He married into her heritage, and 'Carlo was equal to it.

"Carlo loves music," she says of her partner in life and business. "We got together because of my involvement in music. Somebody brought him to Stern Grove. The story is that he saw me and announced 'That's the woman I'm going to marry.''

He did, in 1968. At the suggestion of her aunt Janet Harlan, the sister of her mother and Harlan II Lisa and Carlo came to Nevada to be married. "The courthouse was closed in Carson City," she says. "So we were married at the Delta Saloon in Nevada City We had two choices either there or the Bucket of Blood." Aunt Janet was their witness. "Then we went to Janet's house and called Uncle John at the Supreme Court and told him. He had met Carlo and liked him "She adds: "Carlo was equal to it."

Together they later went to Washington to visit Harlan at the court.

"Uncle John gave me a great compliment," Middione says. "He said I would have made a great lawyer." At one time she contemplated a career in judicial administration, convinced she could help the courts operate better, but never pursued it.

Her family's history came to the fore a few years ago when Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, while doing research in the Library of Congress, came across a manuscript written by Middione's great-grandmother, Malvina Shanklin Harlan, wife of the first Justice Harlan. Ginsburg urged that it be published, and it was, in 2002, by Random House.

The publication of Some Memories of a Long Life was celebrated with a reception at the Supreme Court attended by members of the Harlan family, along with Justices Ginsburg and Sandra Day O'Connor Middione's cousin performed a concert.

"It was very exciting," she says. "I had ended up with my great-grandfather's Civil War brass stirrups, which my Aunt Laura Harlan had mounted into bookends and used in her charming Murray Bay cottage, which my mother inherited from her When Carlo and I went back to the court for the memoirs publication, I demounted the stirrups and gave them to the court archives, where I felt they best belonged.

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The Tale of the Taney Inkstand

HEMORIE

A LONG LIFE

1844-1911

By Malvina Shanklin Harlan

CERTAIN historic inkerend played an unexpected, dramatic and inspiring part in one of the most important of my husband's numerous dissenting opinions.

One day during (I think) his second or third year in

Washington, in the shal of the Supreme Court, he spied 2 and unique inkstand. The quaint little inkstand had about it such an air of mystery and history that my hushand asked the marshal for its story. He learned that it had belonged to Chief Justice Roger Taney

and that it was the one constantly used by him in his judicial work. Those innocent wells had furnished the ink with which he penned the famous Dred Scott decision, which, more than any single event during the agitation over the slavery question in the antebellum days, had served to crystallize the antislavery feelings in the northern states.

My husband's interest in Taney's inkstand was so marked that the marshal asked him if he would like to have it. My husband answering most eagerly in the affirmative the marshal at once wrapped up the historic little inkstand and gave it to my husband, who put it in his coat pocket and brought it home as a great treasure.

A few months afterwards, the court decided the famous Civil Rights case, involving the constitutionality of the Act of 1873 which was introduced by Charles Sumner for the purpose of assuring civil rights to the Negroes throughout the Union.

As all lawyers know, the court declared the Sumper Act unconstitutional my husband alone dissenting.

His dissent (which many lawyers consider to have been one of his greatest opinions) cost him several months of absorbing labor his interest and anxiety often disturbing his sleep. Many times he would get up in the middle of the night in order to jot down some thought or paragraph he feared might elude him in the morning. It was a trying time for

him. In point of years, he was much the youngest man on the bench, and standing alone as he did in regard to a decision the whole country was anxiously awaiting, he felt that, on a question of such far-reaching importance, he must speak not only forcibly but wisely

In the preparation of his dissent-

ing opinion, he had reached a stage when his thoughts refused to flow easily He seemed to be in a quagmire of logic, precedent and law. Sunday morning came, and as the plan that had occurred to me in my wakeful hours of the night before had to be put into action during his absence from the house. I told him that I would not go to church with him that day. Nothing ever kept

him from church

As soon as he had left the house. I found the long-hidden Taney inkstand, gave it a good cleaning and polishing, and filled it with ink. Then, taking all the other inkwells from his study table, I put that historic and inspiring inkstand di rectly before his pad of paper; and, as I looked at it, Taney's inkstand seemed to say to me, "I will help him."

The memory of the historic part that Taney's inkstand had played in the Dred Scott decision, in temporarily tightening the shackles of slavery upon the Negro race in the antebellum days, seemed that morning to act like magic in clarifying my husband's thoughts in regard to the law that had been intended by Sumner to protect the recently emancipated slaves in the enjoyment of equal civil rights. His pen fairly flew on that day and, with the running start he then got he soon finished his dissent.

It was, I think, a bit of poetic justice that the small inkstand in which Tanev's pen had dipped when he wrote that famous (or rather infamous) sentence in which he said that "a black man had no rights which a white man was bound to respect," should have furnished the ink for a decision in which the black man's claim to equal civil rights was as powerfully and even passionately asserted as it was in my husband's dissenting opinion in the famous Civil Rights case.

- Excerpted from Some Memories of a Long Life © 2001-2002.

"If I had but two loaves of bread. I'd sell one and buy hyacinths to feed my soul



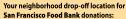
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1501 Greenwich #202	2	2	2	932	9/10	799,000	790,000
1800 Washington St #916	2	2	1		8/17	849,000	831,500
2978 Pine St	3	2	1	1500	9/4	995,000	1,000,000
3101 Clay St #3	2	2	1	1118	9/4	1,149,000	1,100,000
2050 Divisadero St #2	3	2.5	2	1691	9/8	1,225,000	1,150,000
1925 Pacific Ave #2	3	2	1	1616	8/26	1,250,000	1,215,000
1701 Broadway #6	3	2	2	1821	9/15	1,379,000	1,379,000
1933 California St	3	3.5	2	2300	9/11	1,649,000	1,525,000
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The long-neglected. Willis Polk-designed Bourn Mansion at 2550 Webster Street and its 14 bedrooms are listed for \$2.9 million. Restoring it may cost

High end of the market is heating up

There are several signs the San Francisco housing market is improving. The current month's supply of inventory is 3.1 months for the neighborhood, down from 5.8 months in July. If this trend continues, we would be moving from a buyer's market into a more balanced market during the fall.

There is also evidence the high end of the market is heating up, with 3098 Pacific — a 4-bedroom, 5-bath home listed at \$3.65 million — and 2430 Broadway — a 5-bedroom, 6-bath home listed at 55 million — both going into contract within days of being listed. Some notable recent sales include 3712 Jackson, a beautifully refinished home on the Presidio Wall, and the co-op at 2100 Pacific #9, which boasts unobstructed bridge-to-bridge views.

NEW LISTINGS: Two recent listings are noteworthy; both are historic San Francisco mansions. The first, at 2550 Webster, is a 14-bedroom, 4.5-bath home designed by Willis Polk that is known as the Bourn Mansion. It was built in 1896 by William Bourn, who was the president of what is now PG&E, and rumored to be one of the richest men in the world at the time. In recent years, the home has fallen into extreme disrepair. It's listed at \$2.9 million. Let's hope someone will

step forward to restore this clinker-brick masterplece to its former grandeur.

The other listing is located at 1772 Vallejo. Known as the Burr Mansion, the 5bedroom, 4.5-bath home is listed at \$7.9 million. It was built in 1875 by Captain Ephraim Burr, a former mayor of San Francisco, as a wedding gift for his son. The meticulously restored home sits on an oversized lot with a guesthouse in back. To some it may seem out of place, with apartment buildings sitting on either side, but it does stand out as a wonderful piece of San Francisco

- Data and commentary provided by JOHN EITZGERALD, a partner in the Byzantium Brokerage and an agent at Pacific Union. Contact him at jfitzgerald@pacunion.com or call 345-3034.

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By Saralee

TALTER was the first to leave — a kitten from my brood of 11 with a pencil-thin mustache that gave him an uncanny resemblance to the late newsman Walter Cronkite. Defying warnings that naming the kittens would get them too attached, the friends who took me in named every one of them anyway — and they called that one Walter, never mind that Walter was a girl, as any mother could plainly tell.

While I'm not one of those parents always bragging about their kids. I must say that mine turned out to be so adorable that every one of them quickly found a loving home with a neighborhood connection.

I do miss the little ones sometimes. After all, I've been a mother most of my life, with three litters in two years - 28 kittens in all. But just between us, it's nice to be away from that constant demand to provide breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks in between. I've been eating a lot on my own now - my figure is filling in nicely, thank you, and my coat has taken on a nice sheen, if I do say so myself.

The two other cats who live here - kids from my first litter - seem to be softening on the idea of having me around. They've stopped hissing and swatting at me. And just yesterday, they finally let me get near their favorite toy: a mouse on a spring. I took a few swipes, but frankly, I don't see the attraction. I'd prefer the real

Anyway. I've been too busy for toys, because it turns out I've become something of a celebrity - complete with fan mail. And several of my kids have written to tell me about their new homes.

My fashionably black-furred boy and girl were adopted by a local fashionista who chose them because they matched her all-black wardrobe. They write most often - or at least email, the way kids do these days. They've seemed happy from the day they moved away. dear mom

sorry we didn't write you sooner but we've been getting used to our new digs and our new mom who just let us into the big room where the computer is so we will try to tell you all that has happened you should see our new bed and we learned to scratch on a special scratching place and we have a UPDATE



A Celebrity Cat

Saralee's kittens all find new homes

private litter box and we're learning to jump really far and we listen to african music and our new mom spent all day with us playing and grooming us with a soft brush but not licking us nicely like you did and she's naming us yohji after a japanese fashion designer and coco for a parisian designer who invented the little black dress and wore lots of pearls and our new mom kisses us all the time so we hope you do not worry about us

My story in last month's New Fillmore caused some raised tails when local readers learned that Pets Unlimited wouldn't take in my kids and me. But the folks there did write and make a generous offer: Dear Saralee

We are so very happy that all your children found such loving homes! We're sure all your children have made their new homes much happier places. We wanted to let you know that Pets Unlimited would love to offer all of your kittens and their new families our adoption gift bags filled with kitten food samples, helpful hints on welcoming your kids into new their families and other fun things.

Wishing you, your kittens and their new families all the

- Pets Unlimited Shelter and Adoption Center

One of my little ones - a delicate girl so pretty they called her the princess - went to live in a home just a couple of blocks away with three bouncy red-haired kids. I hear she's now called Princess Tinsel. But you know what they say: If you love something, you have to let it go free. No matter its name. I just have to trust my kittens will make their own ways in the world, as my girl Walter seems to be doing, according to this recent

I love my new home. My family, a 13-year-old girl and her mom, are very nice to me. They also have a cat that is six years old. At first the cat, Peanut, didn't like me and hissed at me. I think he got jealous of how cute I was. But now we are friends and we play together a lot.

Love, your daughter,

Another missive came by post - not from my kids, Brady and Jack, but from their adoptive fathers, who

Brady and Jack have brought more joy to our lives than you might know. Thank you for giving them a great beginning and for giving us the pleasure of their company. We love those two little guys so much.

And they enclosed a generous check with a curious P.S. that read: Here's a little something from us to help with Saralee's operation.

The dads recommended that I see that charming Dr. Mike Moran at Presidio Way Veterinarian, near Laurel Village. During my first visit, he told me I had a very expressive tail. Now he promises he's going to "fix" me

I'm not sure what that means. But I have an appointment to see him again this Thursday - and I'm hoping I run into that handsome tabby in the waiting room



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