

LOCALS

A familiar face
is checking out

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Stylish Tacobar
opens this month

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HOME & GARDEN

Making art
with flowers

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THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ APRIL 2010



Jazz giants in the jazz district

April is jazz appreciation month, and there's something special to appreciate this month at the Fillmore Heritage Center. "Jazz Giants: the Photography of Herman Leonard" is a collection of some of the finest jazz photographs ever taken by one of America's greatest living photographers. The exhibition includes photographs of Duke Ellington (above) and Ella Fitzgerald (right, with Ellington and Benny Goodman looking on).

It opens April 5 at 1320 Fillmore.

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Polo's Promises

Ralph Lauren's vows
to become involved in the
neighborhood go unfulfilled

By BARBARA KATE REPA

ALMOST EXACTLY two years ago, when Polo Ralph Lauren became the first business to encounter San Francisco's new ordinance limiting chain stores in the neighborhood, the company's leaders promised that their Fillmore store, if approved, would become engaged in the neighborhood and support local causes.

They even put it in writing.

"We feel the proposed shop, which will carry both men's and women's fashion, will be a perfect fit with this neighborhood," wrote Wayne T. Meichner, president of Polo Ralph Lauren retail stores. "Our team has compiled a list of actions to demonstrate to you how we can best use our skills and resources to partner with the local community."

Among them:

- "We will seek to adopt a local high school" by spring 2009 to teach students about careers in fashion and retail.

- "Ralph Lauren commits to hosting a minimum of two annual in-shop events to raise funds for reputable and nonprofit organizations."

- "Ralph Lauren would like to contribute to the cohesive feeling on Fillmore Street through increased communication. To do this, we propose using a local community board, which can be used by retailers and residents alike."

- "Up to three times per calendar year . . . Ralph Lauren is willing to make visible within its shop reminders for events that are sponsored by the Fillmore Merchants Association."

- "To continue our commitment to diversity in our team members, we would be willing to consider working with a nonprofit or government-supported employment agency in an effort to identify potential employees to work at our shop."

Two years later, it appears these promises have not been fulfilled.

Paul Wermer, a director of the Pacific Heights Residents Association, led the group's opposition to the store before his group was persuaded—in large part by Meichner's letter—to withdraw its objections. Wermer says the one civic-minded act he's aware of since the store opened was a fundraiser for some of the area's private schools.

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FURTHERMORE



The Presidio Branch Library — a novel's inspiration — is now being renovated.

Unpublished Books Find a Library

The Presidio Branch Library on Sacramento Street, now undergoing renovation, became legendary in literary circles after author Richard Brautigan used it as the setting for his imaginary library of unpublished manuscripts in the novel, *The Abortion* ("Library of Unpublished Manuscripts," February 2009).

In Brautigan's novel, published in 1970, the library was always open for authors to personally deposit their manuscripts. Through the years, quite a few writers took the story literally and submitted manuscripts or asked if the library really existed.

The Presidio library maintained a small display about Brautigan's novel, but never actually accepted manuscripts. But in 1990 one of the author's fans opened the Brauti-

gan Library in Burlington, Vermont, and accepted several hundred manuscripts. That arrangement ended in 2005 when negotiations were announced to bring the manuscripts to the Presidio Branch Library. But it never happened.

Now the manuscripts have found a new home. The Brautigan Library will become a permanent collection in the Clark County Historical Museum in Vancouver, Washington. Brautigan was a Washington native. More information about the Brautigan Library is available at www.brautigan.net.

Local aficionados, including library volunteer Marcia Popper, continue to push for an expanded display about the Brautigan connection when the renovated Presidio Branch Library reopens in late 2011.

Colorism and Chocolate Chip Cookies

TO THE EDITORS:

Thank you for your coverage of Bumzy's Chocolate Chip Cookies in your February issue. Feature stories such as this are invaluable for small businesses, which have limited resources to inform the community about their products and services.

If it is at all possible to change the headline on the electronic version, we would appreciate it. Otherwise, we hope you would consider this for your future coverage of Bumzy's and other businesses in the Jazz Preservation District.

The *New Fillmore* is such an important resource for the neighborhood. We appreciate your coverage of the businesses that receive little attention from mainstream media.

I know that this was not your intent. Community members did not ask me to raise this concern with you. I offered to bring this issue to your attention because my experience has been that members of

the media wish to know the perception of readers of color. For almost six years before joining Urban Solutions' staff, I worked with a national journalism organization that examined such issues as an alliance member of Unity Journalists of Color.

If it is at all possible to change the headline on the electronic version, we would appreciate it. Otherwise, we hope you would consider this for your future coverage of Bumzy's and other businesses in the Jazz Preservation District.

The *New Fillmore* is such an important resource for the neighborhood. We appreciate your coverage of the businesses that receive little attention from mainstream media.

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



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STREET TALK

\$10 million upgrade for Lafayette Park

The Friends of Lafayette Park have friends in high places — and a \$10 million kitty to renovate the park, thanks to a cut of park bonds approved by the voters in 2008. Now they just need to figure out how to spend it. On April 22, the first of several public outreach meetings will be held to discuss the renovation. The meeting will be held at Stuart Hall High School, at 1715 Octavia Street, at 7 p.m.

A NEW BOCONCEPT: Fillmore is getting a new furniture store in the space formerly occupied by the Aveda salon at 1928 Fillmore. At its March 25 meeting, the Planning Commission approved a permit for BoConcept, a modern Scandinavian furniture and home accessories store. BoConcept has 22 stores in the U.S. and 246 worldwide — mostly in Europe — which required its owners to seek approval under the city's ordinance regulating chain stores.



A KID IN A CANDY STORE: There she is, the Queen of Fillamento, with a pearl-encrusted bunny and a store full of candy. Iris Fuller (above) is back — not quite in the neighborhood, where she ran the much-beloved Fillamento emporium for two decades, but not far away. She's lending her retailing magic to a friend who owns Sweet Dish, a candy store at 2144 Chestnut Street in the Marina.

COMING & GOING: Despite the rumors, Restoration Hardware won't lease Fillamento's former home at 2185 Fillmore, empty since Shabby Chic declared bankruptcy last year. Instead, the ailing owner has taken the space off the market and will let it sit empty. . . . After six long years, the family feud has ended and remodeling has begun on the empty storefront at 2028 Fillmore, formerly the Departures vintage shop. Upstairs will be a residence, and tenants are lining up for the downstairs, but no lease has been signed yet. . . . O & Co., the olive oil store at 2208 Fillmore, is closing. . . . And say goodbye to Fit-Lite, the mini health club at 2434 California Street.

LOCALS

He's Checking Out of the Checkout Line

Allen Brandstein is retiring after two decades of serving up wry wisdom with a smile

AFTER MORE than two decades of offering up good cheer and wry observations while ringing up groceries and restocking the shelves, Allen Brandstein has retired from Mollie Stone's. His last day was March 31.

Stoking his decision to leave were two life passages: a bout with colon cancer last year and his first Social Security check, which he received a few weeks ago after turning 62.

"Those things give you an immediate dose of perspective that life is finite," he says.

Brandstein's retirement comes only a few months after James Moore left the store's express line. Both had become like members of the family to many in the neighborhood.

Contemplating his impending retirement, Brandstein penned a few well-considered lines: "It has been my privilege to be a part of the fabric of this neighborhood for over 21 years. As I enter this new chapter in my life, I take with me good friendships and many wonderful memories."

It's classic understatement from a friendly neighbor who has been a constant presence for so long.

He started at the store in 1988 working on the night crew — a world little known to most shoppers when trucks line up in the parking lot and staffers help unload the goods and stock the store.

Less than a year later he was transferred to the day shift. "They thought that would be a better fit for me," he says.

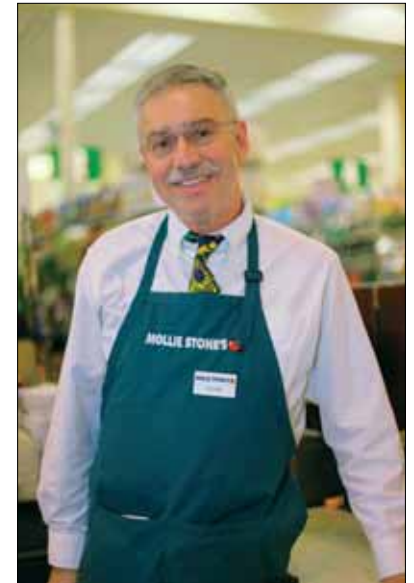
The first stop in Brandstein's retirement will be Panama, where he intends to take a true vacation for most of a month, staying at three different eco-lodges.

"I've decided the perspective on the next months in my life will be better from the white sandy beaches than from my own living room couch," he says. "I'm also taking some time to concentrate on something that's become increasingly important to me: cultivating my friendships."

Still, Brandstein says he will miss Mollie Stone's.

"What I'll miss is the give and take of working in a busy upscale neighborhood place," he says. "And this job has been a big part of my life. I've had Thanksgiving dinners and Passover seders with customers who've become friends. I've even gotten a couple of dates out of it."

And he's beloved by many of his co-workers, including manager David Parrisher — although the two got off to an uncertain start when Parrisher was hired



"I've had Thanksgiving dinners and Passover seders with customers who've become friends. I've even gotten a couple of dates out of it."

PHOTOGRAPH BY KATHI O'LEARY

14 years ago to manage what was then the Grand Central Market.

"One of the first things Allen said to me was, 'You will never make it here,'" Parrisher recalls. "I smiled and said, 'You should go ahead and quit now because you'll never make it under my iron fist management style.' We stared at each other for a few moments — and then burst into laughter. And we quickly became good friends."

While Brandstein leaves his post without regrets, he's somewhat hesitant about leaving a place with so many memories.

"Six months down the line, if they call me and say, 'Could you come in for a couple days a week?' Well, that would be hard to resist," he said the week before his retirement.

It turns out that might happen.

"I love the guy. He's like a brother to me," Parrisher says. "I won't let him completely retire. I'm retaining him as a part-time retired employee who can fill in for us on occasion. That way, we can still enjoy Allen's big smile and quick wit for years to come."

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CRIME WATCH

**Felony Warrant
Van Ness Avenue and Ellis Street
February 26, 1:59 p.m.**

Officers received a report that a man was banging on doors. When they arrived, the individual was still hammering his fists on doors. He told the officers he was looking for a friend. The police checked the man's identification and discovered a felony warrant from Daly City for his arrest. The officers inquired at several residences nearby, but no one knew the man. He was placed under arrest.

**Drugs
Sutter and Laguna Streets
March 1, 8:35 a.m.**

An officer working traffic enforcement pulled a car over for failing to stop for a stop sign. Approaching the car, the officer smelled a strong odor of marijuana and asked the driver if drugs were in the car. The man said he had five pounds of marijuana he was delivering to a dispensary. His license was suspended, so he was taken into custody. He was cited for the driving violation and the marijuana was confiscated.

**Robbery
Eddy and Buchanan Streets
March 3, 5:28 p.m.**

An 11-year-old girl was riding the bus with her grandmother and a group of children; they were on their way to see a show. A woman sitting behind the child snatched a \$20 bill she had in her possession. The child told her grandmother, who insisted the woman return the money. The driver ordered them all off the bus. Three officers who were driving by observed the heated argument and stopped to assist. They arrested the woman for robbery.

**Possession of Stolen Property
Franklin Street and Peter Yorke Way
March 11, 5 p.m.**

An officer was riding his police bike to the site of a reported auto break-in when he spotted a suspicious person coming from the area, fumbling with something beneath his jacket. The officer detained the individual. Several blocks away, the officer saw the car that had recently been broken into. When he searched the bag the individual was holding, he found a car GPS, several ink jet cartridges and receipts for the cartridges. The name on the receipt matched the name of the car's registered owner. The owner identified the GPS and cartridges as his own and said he had left them inside the car. Nobody witnessed the break-in, so the suspect was charged with felony possession of stolen property, along with a parole violation. If his fingerprints match those taken at the scene, he will also be charged with auto burglary.

**Felony Assault
Washington and Franklin Streets
March 12, 12:20 a.m.**

A woman went to her boyfriend's apartment to retrieve her boots. She told officers that as she entered the apartment, he pulled out a knife and threatened to kill her. She managed to escape and called the police. While officers were talking to the woman, the boyfriend opened his apartment door. She identified him to the officers. He denied having used a knife and insisted there had not been a fight. The officers found the knife exactly where the woman said he had put it. They believed the state of the apartment suggested that a fight had taken place. The man was arrested and charged with felony assault.

**Robbery, Possession of Stolen Property
Geary Boulevard and Webster Street
March 16, 11 a.m.**

A man entered the Safeway store and filled his pockets with a variety of items — including a toothbrush, shaving cream,

body wash and milk. Then he walked past the registers and left the store. Store security had been observing him as he put the items in his pockets. One guard followed him outside, told him he was under citizen's arrest and asked him to come back in the store. The man punched the security guard and ran.

Two hours later, this same individual returned to the store. Once again he filled his pockets and walked out without paying. The security guard caught up to him. Again, the man pushed the guard and fled. This time, two officers in a nearby squad car spotted an individual who matched the suspected shoplifter's description. The man saw the officers and started running. The officers gave chase on foot. As the suspect ran, store items flew out of his pockets. Eventually the two officers caught the man. Because he had twice assaulted a store guard, he was charged with robbery as well as possession of stolen property.

**Felony Burglary
Fillmore and Bush Streets
March 19, 1:20 p.m.**

An officer responded to a call to investigate an incident of shoplifting at Walgreens. Upon arrival, she learned that an employee had detained an individual. The store employee told the officer the suspect had entered the drugstore with an empty shopping bag. The man then went to the candy aisle and filled his bag with treats, then ran toward the front door of the store. Several employees stopped him at the door, where he dropped the bag. The officer's computer check revealed the suspect had two outstanding felony theft warrants for his arrest. He was booked for the outstanding warrants in addition to the new burglary charge.

**Outstanding Warrant
Eddy and Franklin Streets
March 20, 3:15 a.m.**

Officers on patrol observed an individual crossing the street outside the crosswalk and detained him for the violation. A computer check revealed the suspect had an outstanding warrant for an attempted burglary. The man was arrested and booked.

**Felony Drug Violation
Van Ness Avenue and Geary Boulevard
March 23, 2:02 a.m.**

An officer working plainclothes was assigned to prostitution abatement in the area. He was driving when he noticed a young woman walking alone, randomly waving at cars. A short time later he observed the same woman getting into a car parked in a red zone. A computer check revealed that the woman had an extensive arrest record, and as a consequence had a search condition. In a container within her purse, he found Ecstasy, along with numerous small plastic bags containing methamphetamine. She was arrested for possession of drugs.

**Robbery
Geary Boulevard and Fillmore Street
March 23, 11:22 p.m.**

A man who was parking his scooter noticed two men watching him. Before he could get off of his scooter, they approached him. One of them punched him and forcefully removed his knapsack from his shoulder. Numerous officers responded to the scene. The man with the scooter and several witnesses all set out after the suspects. Then the officers joined the foot chase. Two officers caught the suspect, who still was holding the knapsack. The man who had been struck caught up with the group and identified the suspect as the man who had just robbed him. The suspect was arrested. The man who had been robbed received only minor injuries; his knapsack and its contents were returned to him.

FOOD & WINE

**Tacobar
Shaping Up
as a Jewel**

Organic, whimsical
Mexican spot opening
soon on a key corner

By CHRIS BARNETT

LOCALS HAVE been clamoring for better and more authentic Mexican food on Fillmore Street even before La Posada said adios a few years ago and the fast food chain La Salsa shuttered its shop at the end of last year.

They may soon get their wish. Tacobar, slated to open this month at the corner of California and Fillmore, seems destined to be far more than a typical taqueria. Owner and top toque Jack Schwartz, 40, has fashioned a mini-Mexican restaurant with organic food considerably above the ordinary and a whimsical design that promises to be lively and fun. Just check out the handpainted mural on the ceiling of *el bano*, the unisex bathroom.

The Tacobar menu has the predictable categories: quesadillas, tacos, burritos, salads, soups, sides and desserts. But Schwartz promises that the ingredients will be fresh, flavorful, imaginative and pesticide-free.



Tacobar will open this month at the corner of Fillmore and California.

And the prices are surprisingly reasonable. Schwartz lives in the neighborhood, which has helped to elevate his aspirations.

"I'm trying to do simple but good quality food at reasonable prices because we want to be part of the neighborhood," he says. "We believe the more you give, the more you get back."

Born in Mexico City to a Romanian

dad and a Colombian mom, Schwartz has packed plenty of surprises into the 900-square-foot spot on a key corner at the heart of the neighborhood. In recent years it was home to La Salsa. But for decades it was the Rolling Pin donut shop, open all day and all night, and before that the Donut Hole.

An advance look at the menu is promising. A diner might start with the jicama en-

salada with grapefruit, dry roasted peanuts, diced avocado and cilantro for \$4.50; then a Veracruz pescado taco — with grilled line-caught mahi mahi, cabbage slaw and Baja lime sauce, \$4.50; topped off with a potent tequila ice cream homemade by San Franciscan Neveria Abel, \$3.50.

In addition to Mexican beers and sodas, Tacobar will serve a citrus red wine sangria, plus fresh lime margaritas and fresh lime pomegranate margaritas made by Soju, a South Korean company.

Fillmore is festooned these days with outdoor seating and Tacobar will go *al fresco* as well on sunny days. It will also offer takeout.

Schwartz, a 1998 graduate of the California Culinary Academy, later cooked at Maya in San Francisco and was sous chef and consultant for 1550 Hyde Cafe and Wine Bar. He knows design is a critical component, even in a tiny taco emporium. So he hired Lauren Gernemia and Rusty Wadatz, partners in Geremia Design in San Francisco, and gave them relatively free rein. The firm also designed Fraiche, the yogurt store at 1910 Fillmore.

The designers squeezed extra space out of the small spot, installing a communal table, a long bar for solo seating, several tables with chairs and an energizing color scheme. The plain wooden stools are a vibrant Mexican pink, bright yellow and lime green. The tiled walls are straight from Mexico. An accordion-like panoramic decal of endless cornfields cover the windows, but diners inside can look out. And a collection of cacti are scattered around the room.

Schwartz says he expects to open by April 12, if not before.



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Local Couple Bring Coffee to the Masses

By ANNE PAPROCKI

TUCKED in an unassuming office on Fillmore behind the Bettey Johnson and Hlaska shops, longtime Pacific Heights residents Elise Papazian and Scott Pritikin hope to expand the horizons of coffee connoisseurs everywhere with their recently launched online service GoCoffeeGo.

"Nobody should be drinking the same cup of coffee every day," says Papazian. "It's just boring. Would you eat the same food day in and out?"

The website includes a selection of coffee beans from 18 different roasters, including Zoka, Ritual, Cuvee, Atomic, Equator Coffees & Teas and Johnson Brothers. Papazian and Pritikin — who admit to testing up to 10 different coffees a day — have vetted each offering.

Visitors to the site can read descriptions of coffees and roasters, search for beans by categories as varied as "single origin," "shade grown," "organic" and "decaffeinated" and bone up on coffee history, roasting and brewing.

Married in 1991, Papazian and Pritikin have worked together as writers and in real estate. But as the idea for GoCoffeeGo began incubating, the couple traipsed around the country, visiting roasters in



"Nobody should be drinking the same cup of coffee every day."

— ELISE PAPAZIAN, with co-owner Scott Pritikin, of GoCoffeeGo.com

locales as expected as San Francisco and Seattle and as far-flung as Leeds, Alabama and Spicewood, Texas. They met with the head roaster for each coffee they considered and picked those that met their personal standards for both taste and quality.

"San Francisco residents live in a food mecca, but they still might not have heard of the amazing coffee coming out of some of these towns," says Papazian.

Though both Papazian and Pritikin — who grew up skateboarding through Pacific Heights — love the shops of Fillmore Street, they decided a website, rather than a brick and mortar store, would allow

coffee to be shipped directly from roasters to customers as soon as it's roasted.

"Would you drink a champagne that's gone flat?" asks Pritikin. "We want customers to experience freshly roasted beans."

GoCoffeeGo's online operation could have been based anywhere, but Papazian and Pritikin wanted their office to be located in the neighborhood.

"Fillmore Street is not a snotty street," says Papazian. "There's a real community and personal experience here that we want to bring to GoCoffeeGo." Pritikin and Papazian bring some Fillmore flavor by personally responding to customer email and

are happy to suggest coffees and talk shop.

They've infused the site with their bubbly energy, evident in its colorful logo, lively soundtrack and recommendations from cartoon character Professor Peaberry. Like a quirky but knowledgeable shopkeeper, he enthusiastically describes the offerings. For example: "Pawani by Novo is one of those very special coffees that lingers in my mind. This coffee is so memorable, elegant and unexpected. I last drank it with a beautiful heiress."

Papazian and Pritikin, who frequent Peet's and Royal Ground for coffee on Fillmore, acknowledge that GoCoffeeGo is not a substitute for the neighborhood coffee shop culture.

"We don't want to be competitive with Peet's," says Papazian. "Coffee shops have really become places for the community to congregate. Our function is different."

Still, Papazian and Pritikin hope that GoCoffeeGo will help foster a new online community of coffee fans who connect with each other and a wide variety of beans. Customers of GoCoffeeGo can also become members, which allows them to rate the various coffees, receive personalized recommendations and use an auto-ship function.

"Auto-ship is basically the Netflix of coffee," says Papazian. Customers can set up a queue of coffees by dragging and dropping their choices from the menu, and then arrange to have the next coffee shipped automatically every week, two weeks or month. They can even put the service on hold when they're traveling.

"People should play the field and take a risk," Papazian says. "You should never settle for just one coffee."



"The Mayflower Market," painted by Kimberley Jones, whose artistic career got a boost after the owners invited her to display her work in their windows.

Life at the Corner Market

At the Mayflower Market, they've got a friendly attitude and great sandwiches. Just ask Nancy Pelosi.

By SYED ALI

TWO BLACK Suburbans abruptly pull up and stop at the corner of Fillmore and Jackson, ignoring the red-curbed parking zone. Seconds later, four men sporting black suits, aviator sunglasses and white earpieces emerge and scan the area, then open the door for a woman clad in a stylish business suit and escort her into the Mayflower Market. She heads to the deli counter, where she politely orders a turkey sandwich on a Dutch Crunch roll. She waits patiently for her order, then pays the cashier and is quickly escorted back to the vans, which speed away.

It was House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, back home in the neighborhood and seeking fortification just days before she engineered passage of health care reform.

In some spots, employees would be rushing to find a camera to capture the moment or pen and paper to get an autograph. But for the guys at the Mayflower Market, it was just another regular customer getting lunch.

Located at 2498 Fillmore Street, the neighborhood market has been serving the community since the 1920s. Three brothers, Angelo, Lefty and Peter Prongos, who emigrated from Greece in 1972, have owned and operated the market for the last 13 years. The small corner market holds some gourmet surprises among the snacks, drinks and other expected items.



Brothers Lefty, Angelo and Peter Prongos own and operate the market.

But it's best known for delivering customer service that goes above and beyond.

"The staff is friendly and someone almost always greets me by name as soon as I walk in, which is always nice and comforting," says Angela Riley, who recently moved into the neighborhood. "Sometimes they know what I plan to order at the deli counter before I even open my mouth."

Another draw is the sandwiches — made to order and piled high with Boar's Head meats and other fresh ingredients.

"We have a very good deli and our sandwiches are very,

very good and well known in the area," says Angelo Prongos. "I have customers who've moved out of the area and still stop by."

It's the classic neighborhood spot where everybody knows your name.

"I recognize most of our customers," Prongos says, "and the ones who are visiting from far away usually say, 'Man, I was in town and had to have one of your sandwiches.' We carry the freshest meats, the freshest breads and the freshest ingredients — and it really makes a difference."

In addition to the classic deli offerings such as BLTs and tuna melts, the Mayflower Market also serves up some unique creations — including a Cordon Bleu sandwich, roasted garlic on turkey and a Texican Melt with roast beef, cheese, barbecue sauce and bacon. Comedian Robin Williams and former mayor Joseph Alioto have been among the market's sandwich fans. So are students from the private schools on Broadway.

Unlike most other corner markets with standard decor and shelving, the Mayflower Market owners lived up the store a while back and lined the windows with original artwork.

"We thought, 'Let's spice it up with something unique,'" says Angelo. "It worked out because a lot of people stop by just to look at the murals."

The inspiration came a decade ago. Kimberley Jones, a customer with an Ivy League architecture degree who painted as a hobby, had moved to California in 1997,

TO PAGE 8 ►

Chouquet's
RESTAURANT

Chouquets, at 2500 Washington Street at Fillmore, welcomes two new specials to its offerings.

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"Alta Plaza Park," by Kimberley Jones, has been exhibited in the windows of the Mayflower Market.

At the Mayflower Market, They Know the Art of Being Neighborly

► FROM PAGE 7

drawn by the natural setting and beautiful views.

"I would haul my paintings everywhere with me, walk around the area with these giant canvases and then sit down and paint," says Jones. Some of her work is extremely local, including paintings of Alta Plaza Park and the Mayflower Market itself.

"I knew the brothers from buying their great sandwiches," says Jones. "The three brothers are warm people and they extend their family warmth to the folks they employ and to the community." Jones says Lefty Prongos came up with the vision of

filling the store's windows with her paintings — scenes from inside the market focusing on the fruits and vegetables displayed there. She credits showing at the Mayflower Market as her turning point in the art world. Through the years she has sold many of her paintings to people who've seen them at the market.

Although she's since moved out of the neighborhood, Jones stops by for a Mayflower sandwich every Tuesday, when she teaches art to about 70 seniors at the Calvary Presbyterian Church just across the street. She also creates art with patients at El Camino Hospital in Mountain View

and teaches art to seniors in a variety of other settings. Jones still shows some work in the Mayflower's windows, but the brothers also invite other artists to participate in their grocery gallery.

Even though another neighborhood market, Gino's Grocery, sits directly across from the Mayflower Market, Angelo Prongos is quick to point out that there is no rivalry between the two.

"We don't really step on each other's feet, since we sell a lot of different things from one another," he says. "We coexist nicely and both make a living. It's a nice,

friendly competition."

Longtime Fillmore resident Danielle Gordon says locals depend on both spots.

"Unlike most other corner markets that are nearby one another and sell the exact same thing, the Mayflower Market and Gino's seem to complement one another," she says. "I can go to Gino's and get drinks and beverages, then walk across the street to the Mayflower and get food and snacks."

The neighborly feel is what attracted the Prongos to Fillmore Street. "The area's nice, the people are nice and you have no problems," says Angelo. "It's a clientele we enjoy catering to."



A window display in progress at Ralph Lauren's store on Fillmore Street.

Ralph Lauren's Promises Remain to Be Fulfilled

► FROM PAGE ONE

Thomas Benjamin Chamberlain, assistant manager of Ralph Lauren on Fillmore, says the store recently hosted "a lovely event" with California Pacific Medical Center, but could give no details, nor would he confirm the local school drive. "I am actually not allowed to give any additional information," he says. "I would have to redirect you to our corporate liaison."

Ironically, Meichner's letter emphasized Ralph Lauren's "original commitments to the community," which specifically included "giving the manager of the shop the authority to deal directly with neighborhood concerns or requests."

Nor has Ralph Lauren become "an active and participating member of the Fillmore Merchants Association," another of Meichner's commitments.

Soon after he wrote his April 4, 2008, letter to the residents association and merchants association, Meichner was elevated to president and CEO of the entire Polo retail group. No one from Ralph Lauren's corporate hierarchy provided information about the company's local activities by press time.

Werner says the company's apparent failure to fulfill its promises points up one of the weaknesses of the city's planning process: a lack of enforcement.

"The number one problem I see is that the conditional use laws are substantially toothless," he says. "Enforcement depends on the local community paying attention and being engaged," says Werner. "Unfortunately, communities that have lots of problems are the ones that tend to be engaged. People get active when their ox is getting gored. And let's face it, on upper Fillmore, the ox is pretty safe."

Werner also finds an irony in the

changes that chain stores — known to city planners as formula retail — can bring to a neighborhood.

"The reason Ralph Lauren wanted to come to Fillmore Street was because it didn't look like a mall," he says. "We had a good laugh, because that just made our case about formula retail," he says. "But I don't think the landlords heard that message."

Werner blames landlords for making empty spaces on Fillmore hard to fill.

"I'm very worried that the only ones that will be able to get the property are the chains that have the money it takes," he says. "Landlords are aggressively reaching

out to these guys rather than trying to get creative in renting their properties. Instead, they follow a simple business model: I charge as much as I can. Ultimately, they're not building a community that will be successful in the long term — and ultimately, the businesses won't be successful either."

But Pam Mendelsohn, a commercial real estate broker with Johnson Hoke who has handled a number of local listings, says the blame is misplaced.

"Landlords have been incredibly fair — particularly on Fillmore Street," she says. "Currently there are just some landlords

on the street who aren't in as big a hurry to have the spaces filled as the retailers are. Fillmore is pretty stable — and most landlords here are in for the long haul, not the short term."

Mendelsohn adds: "The whole thing about chains running up rents — there's no truth to that. Chains pay less."

She maintains the chain store ordinance has had the opposite of its intended effect. "It has scared off some retailers," she says. "Unless someone has the money and time to go through the process, it can be offputting. It takes a major corporation. So I wonder whether we didn't shoot ourselves in the foot" with the chain store rules.

"We need a balance between small businesses and recognizable names," she says.

Despite the city's attempt to limit formula retail, many residents and retailers say they prefer chain stores to empty storefronts — as long as they are "the right kind of chain store."

Werner says the problem is in the definition.

"We lack a robust assessment about what is good and what is not good about formula retail," he says. "Formula retail stores that participate in the neighborhood and support the community and get involved — by bringing clients to the area who will also shop at other stores, by joining the local merchants association, by helping keep the streets organized and by supporting activities like the small merchant used to do — they may be an asset to the neighborhood," he says. "But the sort of chain operations with the main focus of bringing in as much revenue as possible, not contributing to the community, hiring people at minimum wage — they're problems."

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From the street, the Edwardian home on Broderick Street mostly maintains its traditional look. Inside it is more contemporary, with warm textures and materials opening onto a waterfall and garden. The penthouse is a thoroughly modern series of geometric planes.

PHOTOGRAPHS © TIM GRIFFITH



Balancing Past & Present in Cow Hollow

IN THE MORE traditional neighborhoods of San Francisco, residents who want a contemporary home often experience an aesthetic dilemma: Empty lots are rare, and when the property is already occupied by a Victorian or Edwardian house, it can be difficult to change the existing facade.

While respect for history and the preservation of some older buildings is critical to our understanding of the present moment, more extreme strands of preservation can lead to the urban equivalent of trapping a fly in amber. The long view is more complex, understanding history as a process that is always in motion and constantly undergoing transformation.

An architectural resolution of the tensions between past and present was an essential element of a recent project in Cow Hollow, near the Presidio, designed by Ogrydziak/Prillinger Architects. The owners of the 3,500-square-foot home — a developer and a lawyer with two children — wanted to create a modern home from a nondescript 1910 Edwardian house that had been confused by a series of remodels. In addition to renovating the interior, they saw an opportunity to capture views of the Presidio, the Golden Gate and Alcatraz by transfiguring the roofline and adding a penthouse.



Eschewing the long and risky planning process that an extreme remodeling of the facade would entail, the owners encouraged a split between the facade and the rest of the house. Yet the ultimate design strategy was not as simple as maintaining a traditional look at the street level that masked a contemporary interior. In fact, the owners were attracted to some aspects of the more traditional spaces within the house. They hoped to maintain some of the home's sense of enclosure and visual texture while reinterpreting it through a contemporary lens.

The home that resulted appears well behaved from the street. Except for the faceted entry and the crisp tear at the roof that opens to the views, it maintains its traditional look. The facade below the roofline was restored to its original Edwardian austerity and painted gray to abstract its restrained ornament. The roof was reconfigured to accommodate a penthouse with panoramic views and clad in zinc-coated copper to match the gray facade. As a result, the exterior fits into the fabric of the block, which is mostly composed of houses from the same period.

Inside, the home has a dual character. Although the house underwent a full renovation, many of the existing living spaces — warm and textured with detail — were maintained and reinterpreted to contrast with an angled, abstract modern zone at the core of the house that extends from the entry up the stairway to the white folded planes of the penthouse.

Several of the more traditional spaces in the house are studded with modern interpretations of ornament and rendered with rich materials. In addition to all of the floors and cabinetry, every door and door jamb in the home was clad with tongue-in-groove walnut planking to enhance the sense that the house is a monolith of solid wood. Some spaces are wrapped with stone, steel, tile, glass, mirror and upholstered panels, resulting in a dense layering of finishes and ornament that spills out of the house into the rear garden.

The heart of the transformation occurs in the three-story staircase. The light and energy of this space distorts the walls of the entry vestibule and emerges at the top floor with a twisting force that tears open the roof, revealing the whiteness of the new geometry against the monochromatic gray of the exterior. In the penthouse, the solidness of the original house evaporates and the walls and roof open to panoramic views of the city and the bay. The rich and heavy materials of the lower floors give way to white modern surfaces, and the entire space is bathed in light.

Ultimately this house tells a story about the interplay of history and the current moment, soon to be history too.

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3020 Laguna St	1	1	2	915	3/3/10	950,000	940,000
215 Moulton St	3	3.5	1	2300	2/26/10	1,535,000	1,540,000
51 Pixley St	4	3.5	2	2130	3/12/10	1,495,000	1,610,000
3022 Washington St	3	4.5	1	2177/10	3,900,000	3,362,500	
2290 Green St	4	3.5	2		3/4/10	4,325,000	4,255,000
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2040 Franklin St #504	1	1	1	1370	2/26/10	599,000	580,000
2410 Pacific Ave #5	1	1	1	870	2/19/10	639,000	639,000
2728 Gough St #1	2	1	1	837	3/4/10	699,000	710,000
2461 Post St	5	3	2	1921	3/12/10	799,000	777,000
1835 Franklin St #1103	2	2	1	1400	2/26/10	825,000	795,000
2111 Franklin St #5	2	2	1	1565	2/17/10	797,000	799,000
1950 Gough St #101	2	1	1	1200	3/5/10	875,000	875,000
1998 Broadway #407	2	2	1	1080	2/18/10	899,000	895,000
2864 Sacramento St	3	2	1	1768	2/24/10	1,100,000	1,100,000
214 Arguello Blvd	3	2.5	1	2000	2/26/10	1,200,000	1,137,500
2145 Franklin St #5	3	2	1	1810	2/17/10	1,198,000	1,160,000
2266-A Jackson St	3	2	1	1809	3/11/10	1,395,000	1,395,000
2251 Broderick St	3	2.5	1	2036	2/19/10	1,549,000	1,525,000
2525 Sacramento St	4	3	2	2275	2/26/10	1,650,000	1,670,000
1940 Broadway #8	3	4.5	2		2/16/10	3,995,000	3,995,000

Spring market is trending upward

AS EXPECTED, there was a noticeable increase in closings during the last month. That upward trend will continue as we move into the more active spring market.

Some places of interest that closed during the past 30 days include 2290 Green, a completely remodeled 4-bedroom Victorian with an open floor plan and a 1-bedroom in-law unit that sold for more than \$4.2 million. The home previously changed hands in a private sale in July 2008 for \$1.775 million, so the new owners obviously did a substantial amount of work before putting it back on the market. It has been more than 10 years since a home in the neighborhood sold for less than \$400,000; that record remains intact, since 2608 Sutter sold a bit above its asking price at \$405,000. And the townhouse at 215 Moulton mentioned last month has now officially closed. This condo had sold two other times in the last 2 1/2 years: first for \$1.8 million in November 2007, then for \$1.725 million in November 2008, and now for \$1.54 million in February — 10 percent below its last sale price. The property is a good example of where prices were near the height of the market, then just after the Wall Street meltdown, and now.



NEW LISTINGS: In the past two weeks, there were six new listings in the \$3 million to \$7 million range. One is 3878 Jackson, a remodeled 5-bedroom, 3-bath Presidio Heights home with more than 4,700 square feet. Priced at \$3.875 million, it should see immediate attention. On the

higher end, 100 Spruce (above) just came on the market at \$6.395 million. This 7-bedroom, 4.5-bath corner home sits on a bit of a slope, but is only a block from the Presidio and has a very pleasant terraced garden. At the lower end of the listings, the studio condo at 2211 California #403 looks like a very good find for the committed urbanite. This top floor unit, priced at \$399,000, does not have a garage, but it is bright, with southern exposure — and it's only a half-block walk to Fillmore Street.

— Data and commentary provided by JOHN FITZGERALD, 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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In last year's "Bouquets to Art" exhibition, local designer Kaori Imaizumi accented Albert Bierstadt's *California Spring* with springtime flowers.

Making Fire With Flowers

A local floral designer takes on an unusual challenge

FLORAL DESIGNER KAORI Imaizumi is preparing for a museum exhibition this month, as she has every spring since she opened her flower shop in the neighborhood in 2006.

She's participating once again in "Bouquets to Art," the annual extravaganza in which floral arrangements interpret and comment upon works of art in the DeYoung Museum in Golden Gate Park.

For the previous three years, Imaizumi has worked with paintings and sculpture — including, in 2009, an abundant arrangement of springtime flowers juxtaposed with Albert Bierstadt's 1875 painting, *California Spring*. But this year she has taken on something more unusual: the massive mantelpiece by Herter Brothers created for the 50-room Thurlow Lodge in Menlo Park.

"It's huge," she says. "But I wanted to make something different." And at this show, since she's not trying to please a customer, she says, "I can make what I want to make. I can show my style."

She is still pondering how to interpret a wall-size oak and marble mantelpiece.

"It's a fireplace," she says. "I'm thinking maybe to make a fire."

Imaizumi says the exhibition presents special practical challenges.

"It's hard to maintain the freshness," she says. "It's unexpectedly hot. Flowers die so fast



"It's a fireplace," says Kaori Imaizumi. "I'm thinking maybe to make a fire."

— much faster than usual." She visits every day to add water and fresh flowers.

Imaizumi grew up in Japan and for many years was a flight attendant on international routes for Japan Air Lines. When her husband's business took them to New York in 1997, she had time to learn to arrange flowers, which she had loved since she was a child. In 2000 they moved to San Francisco. She continued her studies, eventually earning her certification.

"My design is contemporary East-meets-West — not all European, not all Asian," she says.

When she decided to open a shop, she wanted something near the neighborhood school her son attends.

She found a small space with affordable rent on Sutter Street, near Steiner, and opened Blooming Floral Design in 2006. She has since moved a few doors down the block to 2120 Sutter.

"It's a very local business," she says, with 80 percent of her customers coming from the neighborhood, many from the apartment buildings she sees out her window.

"If I were on Fillmore, I would have already left," she says, given the higher rents. "A lot of flower shops have closed in the last year."

Instead, she's preparing for her annual museum exhibition. "Bouquets to Art" runs from April 20 to 24 at the DeYoung Museum in Golden Gate Park. For tickets and more information, visit www.bouquetstoart.org.

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By MADELINE CAMISA

A FAIR-HAIRED young man, tenderly holding his baby girl in his arms, stops in front of a statue of the Virgin Mary, who is clothed in a white robe girded by a blue sash, eyes gazing upward, a crown of gold stars encircling her head. The six-foot statue is set in a gray cave-like structure in the back of the St. Dominic's Catholic Church parking lot, with three lanes of cars buzzing by on Pine Street.

An elderly man in a beige cap ushers his white-haired female companion in front of the statue. As they walk away she asks, "Did you say a prayer?" He answers in a low voice, "Of course."

A young woman sits quietly on the stone bench in front of the statue, her bicycle close by and her eyes on the statue in contemplation.

A regular pilgrim, with a white lace doily pinned to her hair, lifts her cane to adjust a blue plastic rosary on the statue and light a white glass candle as part of her weekly Saturday ritual.

Other frequent visitors, like the police who patrol the church in the early hours of the morning, often make a personal visit to the shrine, the Dominican fathers say.

But many come during the day, such as Benjamin, a stocky, dark-haired man with deep brown radiant eyes, wearing a Raiders cap and black running shorts; and Jordan, a young, thin man who kneels to pray in front of the statue and often brings flowers; and Kudusan, dressed in her native white sari, who stops by for a quick visit to touch the painted gold rose



Tending Our Lady's Garden

A volunteer gardener creates an oasis in the parking lot behind St. Dominic's Church

on the foot of the statue; and Rosalinda, well-dressed in a wide-brimmed hat, who fingers her rosary beads while standing silently in front of the grotto.

Some devoted parishioners come nearly every day. Agnes Dunn, a diminutive woman wearing a small black hat and tinted glasses, and Trudy Nebeling, a tall, medium-built, fair-haired woman, always greet the volunteer gardener with a smile in the early mornings.

And some less religious pilgrims from as far away as Canada stop by to admire the oasis of colorful plants and flowers, or to catch a hummingbird flapping on the

English lavender stalks.

Some visitors from the neighborhood refer to this statue as Our Lady of the Parking Lot, but an inscribed stone declares it Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto.

The historic grotto was part of St. Rose Academy, a high school for Catholic girls operated by the Dominican nuns. By 1911, the school had been relocated from Golden Gate Avenue — where early records show a graduating class of only four girls — to 2475 Pine Street, now part of the St. Dominic's parking lot. At one time separated from the church grounds

by a cyclone fence, this area was part of the school courtyard. It was scheduled for demolition along with the multi-storied school building after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. But the grotto was saved from the wrecking ball by the quick urgings of Father Martin de Porres Walsh, then pastor of St. Dominic's, who asked the workers to leave the statue and grotto untouched. Quite possibly the demolition team may have been hesitant to tear down the statue and appealed to a higher authority for a final verdict, as Father Thomas Hayes, former director of the church's St. Jude Shrine, has suggested.

The grotto at St. Dominic's is a postage stamp-sized replica of the famous shrine in Lourdes, France — complete, it is said, with a spring running underneath the asphalt. According to Catholic belief, Mary appeared to a young teenage girl in a French Pyrenees cave in 1858, the first of 18 visions.

The spring waters around the French grotto have been credited with healing properties. Although 7,000 cures have been claimed, only 66 miracles have been recognized by the church. Replicas of the Lourdes grotto exist throughout the United States and around the world.

The St. Dominic's grotto had been the site of small parish processions, but it fell into neglect for many years. Through the efforts of several church volunteers, especially Pat Berberich and Carol Glenn, it was steadily maintained, with the addition of flowers and an installation of river stones and a raised brick walkway.

In 2002, I assumed prime responsibility for the upkeep of the shrine and the



surrounding garden. In 2006, I became one of five volunteer section leaders under the newly adopted parish community garden model and set about on a major overhaul of the grotto.

In the process of creating this sacred

space, the symbolic rock garden setting has been preserved. The ivy was cut back to expose old red brick, and its natural rustic beauty was enhanced by colorful plants.

It sits in a grove of cherry trees, which



bloom in April, with a birdbath suggesting the healing waters at Lourdes.

Even with the clamor of cars speeding by on Pine Street, this tiny oasis is a temporary stop from the fast lane, a

continuing testament to spiritual urgings to connect with a higher purpose.

Madeline Camisa is a retired high school English teacher and a writer. She gave up the pen for the trowel and has never looked back.

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Weekday Masses: 6:30 & 8:00 am & 5:30 pm

Morning Prayer: 7:15 am (weekdays); 8:00 am (Saturday)

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Mondays & Wednesdays: 8:30 am & 6:00 pm • First Fridays: 9:00 pm

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),

9:00 pm (Taizé music by candlelight)



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HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, March 28

5:30 pm (Saturday Vigil Mass); 7:30 am (Quiet Mass);

9:30 am (Family Mass); 11:30 am (Solemn Mass);

1:30 pm (St. Jude Pilgrim Mass in Spanish);

5:30 pm (Contemporary Choir);

9:00 pm (Taizé music by candlelight)

Seder Meal, Monday, March 29, 7:00 pm

A meal commemorating the Lord's Last Supper.

Tickets at the parish office.

Sacrament of Reconciliation, Wednesday, March 31

12:00 noon – 1:00 pm & 7:00 – 9:00 pm

THE SACRED TRIDUUM

Holy Thursday, April 1

7:30 am – Tenebrae – followed by breakfast

7:30 pm – Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday, April 2

7:30 am – Tenebrae – followed by breakfast

12:15 – 12:45 pm – Stations of the Cross

1:00 – 3:00 pm – Seven Last Words

3:00 – 4:00 pm – Confessions

7:30 pm – Passion of the Lord

Holy Saturday, April 3

8:00 am – Tenebrae – followed by breakfast

5:30 – 6:30 pm – Confessions

8:00 pm – Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday, April 4

7:30 am (Mass with Easter Hymns);

9:30 am (Family Mass); 11:30 am (Solemn Mass);

1:30 pm (St. Jude Pilgrim Mass in Spanish);

5:30 pm (Contemporary Choir);

9:00 pm (Taizé music by candlelight)

No confessions this day



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