

THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ MAY 2016



It's Children's Day in Japantown

Photograph by
ERIK ANDERSON

The Children's Day Festival returns to the Japantown Peace Plaza on Saturday, May 7, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. To mark the free annual event — which features cultural arts and crafts and martial arts performances — businesses in the area will be flying carp streamers like the ones traditionally flown in Japan for Boys Day on May 5. The streamers are available at Soko Hardware, the nearly century-old family-owned hardware store in Japantown.

See SOKO HARDWARE: IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR | PAGE 7

On Fillmore, Shops Empty But Leased

A dozen storefronts sit vacant, most with tenants in the wings

WITH THE continuing onrush of national and international fashion and cosmetics brands onto upper Fillmore Street, retail space has become so sought after that corporate tenants are willing to pay rent for months while their storefronts sit empty, waiting for city permits to be approved.

A dozen storefronts north of Bush Street are now vacant, although almost all are already leased.

"It looks terrible," said Lynne Newhouse Segal, new president of the Pacific Heights Residents Association, whose group has expressed concerns about the empty stores.

Among the stores in the works:

■ **INTERMIX**, the Gap's newest acquisition, is taking over Brooks Brothers' Black Fleece space at 2223 Fillmore.

■ **45RPM**, a Japanese clothing brand, got the go-ahead April 14 from the Planning Commission to open at 1905 Fillmore.

■ **SPACE NK**, a cosmetics company based in London, presented its plans to open at 2000 Fillmore, former home of Paolo Shoes, to the commission on April 28.

All are considered "formula retail" chain stores and require a conditional use permit to open on Fillmore. It can take many months to get the permit, although none has ever been rejected. Then building permits must be arranged and approved.

"Everything's taking longer," said commercial real estate broker Pam Mendelsohn, who has leased many of the Fillmore storefronts. "There's a lot of things in process. It just takes a lot longer to get permits."

Two of the empty spaces housed businesses owned by Starbucks Coffee. Starbucks still controls the vacant corner at 2201 Fillmore. "Unfortunately, we still have no additional details to share at this time," a Starbucks spokesperson said. The space at 2043 Fillmore that housed Starbucks' La Boulange has reverted to founder Pascal Rigo, who said he is contemplating a pizzeria, a rotisserie or another Boulangerie.

"We should be making a final decision within the next two weeks," Rigo said. "We should be reopen by midsummer if everything goes well."

Among the other businesses with leases on the street are Frye Boots at 2047 Fillmore and Ardis Coffee at 1903 Fillmore. The Mac cosmetics shop at 2011 Fillmore is being remodeled and will reopen. Blue Bottle Coffee is coming to 2455 Fillmore.

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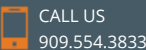
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Carnival 2016

"If You're Going to San Francisco."



Tickets weren't easy to get.
But he got them.
You were going to meet him at the corner of
Fillmore and Geary.
You did.
This beaded blouse, which you would have
worn to the Fillmore Theater to see The Doors
back when, made him smile in an instant.
(You'd have debated between wearing it
with a long blue skirt or faded jeans.)
Fillmore 60s Blouse (Nº. 3618). Original
came from Paris where designers paid
attention to what was happening almost six
thousand miles away. (Those that weren't on
the scene themselves.)
I've had it made in rich viscose georgette.
Sequined and beaded accents add just a
touch of 21st century bling. Embroidered
yoke is 100% cotton cambric while the
rest is slightly sheer without being too
revealing. Adjustable cuffs with buttons.
Side slits allows it to perfectly skim the
tops of pants or a skirt. Imported.
You'll wear, of course, a flower in your hair.
Still has the ability to light someone's fire.
Women's sizes: XXS, XS, S, M, L, XL.
Color: Aqua Pink Print.
Price: \$98.

The Fillmore blouse

J. Peterman, the iconic mail-order catalog and website that boasts
it finds women's and men's clothing and household items to sell
only after "traveling the world to find uncommonly good stuff"
with "factual romance," apparently traveled to our neighborhood
to find some of the uncommon good it seeks. A recent catalog
offered the "Fillmore 60s Blouse" — a nostalgic little number in
aqua pink print georgette.

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Connecting the neighborhood

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



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Coming and going
at Divis and California

The busy intersection of California and Divisadero is getting ever livelier — and tastier. But the tastes keep changing.

Longtime local favorite **FOOD INC.** has closed after more than 20 years and will be replaced by a new wine bar called **SCOPO DIVINO**. . . . Across the street, **TATAKI** has moved its sushi bar a few doors west to a sleek new home. In its old space, the owners have opened **LIMU & SHOYU**, which they're billing as "San Francisco's only sustainable poke bar."

On the corner, **WILD HARE** was taken over last month by the owners of **LIGHTNING TAVERN** on Union Street. The name will remain the same, but there's a new menu, and changes to the look of the place are coming. "It doesn't feel like a frat house anymore," says staffer Stephanie Mancia. "A lot of the regulars have come back."

And more change is coming: **BISTRO SF GRILL**, the burger joint that got its start as a pop-up on Saturday mornings at the Fillmore Farmers Market, will be closing within a couple of months and moving to Castro and 24th. "We're sad to leave," says co-owner Hasim Zecic. "We know our neighbors. When we got here it was just cars, no people. Now it's friendlier and busier."

■ **BACK ON THE 'MO:** Here's an event not to be missed: Saturday, May 14, is National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day, and Sheila and Toni Young will kick off the celebration at 11 a.m. at **BUMZY'S CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES** at 1460 Fillmore. . . . While the city is looking for a buyer for the **FILLMORE HERITAGE CENTER** complex, some parts are available for rent. Book at fillmoreheritage.com.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



The master plan for Alta Plaza Park includes a new central plaza at the top of the grand stairway.

Plan for Alta Plaza Park: ‘Go Lightly’

A MASTER PLAN for Alta Plaza Park was approved by the Recreation and Park Commission on April 21, clearing the way for long-awaited improvements.

The plan would repair crumbling asphalt pathways, replace aging furnishings and replant, with new drought-resistant landscaping, the entrances to the hilltop park created more than a century ago by John McLaren, the visionary who also guided the creation of Golden Gate Park.

"Go lightly," said landscape architect Jeffrey Miller, who developed the plan at the behest of the Friends of Alta Plaza Park, a neighborhood group founded in 2004. "This was the message: Maintain the park as it is. Maintain the beauty and simplicity of this park."

A decade ago, the Friends raised the money to renovate the playground and tennis courts atop the park. Then, to conserve water and stop leakage onto the sidewalks, the city installed a new irrigation system and replanted the terraces on the south side of the park.

"It became apparent there has to be a sequence of things," said Judith Maxwell, who lives near the park. "We learned that when the no-mow grass was put in but the leaks weren't fixed."

Commission president Mark Buell recused himself from the hearing "because I live within about five feet of the park." Buell and his wife Susie Tompkins Buell live in the penthouse of the 2500 Steiner Street tower on the northeast corner of the park.

Others lauded the Friends for their extraordinary public outreach during the last decade while the plan was being developed.

"You set a new standard," said commissioner Meagan Levitan, a real estate agent who is active in the neighborhood.

"It's been a long road for the Friends of Alta Plaza Park," said Phil Ginsburg, director of the Recreation and Park Department. "It is not lost on us how much you care about this piece of open space."

About \$2.5 million has already been allocated to fund the renovation of Alta Plaza, on top of the \$1.2 million raised earlier for playground improvements in 2006. An additional \$1.5 million must still be raised in public and private funding, and backers said that drive will begin soon.

Please join Board of Supervisors President London Breed and the UCSF Department of Dermatology for a
Free Skin Cancer Screening



Saturday, May 14, 2016
8:00 am-4:00 pm

UCSF Department of Dermatology
1701 Divisadero Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94115

FACT:

One American dies of melanoma almost every hour.

FACT:

More than 3.5 million skin cancers in more than 2 million people are diagnosed annually.

FACT:

Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25-29 years old.

FACT:

Exposure to tanning beds increases the risk of melanoma.

FACT:

One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.

Screenings will only be performed to determine the possibility of skin cancer. Medical consultation will not be provided for other skin conditions such as rashes, abrasions, etc. UCSF fully subscribes to the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require accommodation, please contact the Community & Government Relations Office at (415)502-3054 with your suggested accommodation, or email community@cgr.ucsf.edu with questions.

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CRIME WATCH

Aggravated Assault on a Police Officer Broadway and Steiner

March 19, 4:16 p.m.

Officers in a patrol car were struck by a vehicle as they approached an intersection. The officers got out of their car to see that the other car had struck their driver's side door, causing major damage. A woman jumped out of the car that had hit them, and shouted that her ex-husband, who was driving, was going to kill her. The officers detained both the driver and the passenger. During an investigation they learned the two had been married for 20 years and were now divorced. They met first for a couple of drinks, then went to IHOP. During dinner they got into an argument about their relationship. As they were driving home, the argument escalated. The man claimed the woman grabbed the steering wheel, causing it to collide with the police vehicle. The couple was transported to Northern Station for further investigation. Officers learned the man was driving with a suspended license; he was cited and released. They determined the accident had been caused by the woman, and she was transported to county jail.

Traffic Violation

Webster and Lombard

March 20, 1:11 p.m.

An officer was conducting traffic when a white Honda entered the intersection and made a fast left turn, cutting off a pedestrian in the crosswalk. The pedestrian was forced to jump back to avoid being hit. The officer stopped the driver and explained the nature of the violation. The driver argued with the officer, not believing he had violated the law. After several minutes of heated discussion the driver was cited and released.

Outstanding Warrant

Sacramento and Van Ness

March 21, 9:32 a.m.

Officers received a call concerning two men sleeping on the sidewalk. They located the two and ran a computer check; one had an outstanding felony warrant for his arrest. This man jumped up and started to run, but the officers brought him to the ground and put him in handcuffs. He was transported to county jail. The second individual had no warrants and was released at the scene.

Burglary

Van Ness and Pine

March 23, 11:48 p.m.

Officers received a 911 call about an auto burglary. The witness met with the officers and described the suspects as two black men in jeans and hooded sweatshirts. One was pushing a baby carriage. Officers quickly located two men matching the

description standing on the corner of Van Ness and Pine; they were detained without incident. When they found the burglarized vehicle, they saw its rear window had been broken. The 911 caller had caught the entire incident on video, which began with the two men pacing back and forth near the vehicle. One man then picked up a brick and broke the rear window. They walked away for about five minutes, then returned to the car. One climbed inside, searched through it, then crawled back out. The officers seized the video as evidence and both suspects were taken to county jail.

Unlawful Entry, Burglary

Sutter and Fillmore

March 24, 11:48 a.m.

A UPS driver delivered packages to an address on Sutter Street. Immediately afterward, a man and a woman crept in behind him and stole the packages. The driver called 911. He followed the two while he was on the phone with police dispatch, and described the suspects as a man in his 40s wearing a red shirt and dark pants, and a woman in glasses and a trench coat, also in her 40s. The woman was removing the packages from the scene in a cart. When officers arrived, the driver pointed out the suspects. Both were carrying UPS packages with a Sutter Street address. The officers took photos of the packages and delivered them to their rightful owners, then placed the two suspects under arrest.

Malicious Mischief, Graffiti

Geary and Masonic

April 3, 8:33 p.m.

A security guard at Target saw a man spray painting a wall located in the store's parking lot. Officers quickly located a man who matched the person captured on the surveillance video. He told the officers he was on probation in San Mateo County. When they searched him, they found several cans of spray paint and miscellaneous graffiti tools. He was booked at county jail on a charge of felony vandalism.

Robbery With a Knife

Webster and Ellis

April 5, 10:13 p.m.

The Northern Station Street Crimes Unit was on patrol when they observed a large gathering of men and women shouting at each other. A man was walking behind the group while talking on his cell phone; he proceeded to walk straight through them. Four or five people attacked the man, throwing their hands in the air and yelling at him. A fight erupted on the corner involving the cell phone user and three individuals who appeared to be juveniles. The officers believed they had just observed an attempted robbery.

They tried to detain all parties involved,

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**Forgery, Counterfeiting
Van Ness and California
April 8, 1:35 p.m.**

**Delaying and Obstructing a Police Officer,
Narcotics Paraphernalia
California and Broderick
April 6, 4:24 p.m.**

of a mind-altering substance. When the officers arrived, the man became extremely agitated, shouting profanities at them and rushing at them while clenching his fists. He took off more clothes as he tried to goad the officers to fight with him. They noticed that he was sweating profusely. The officers attempted to get control of him but he kept twisting away violently and tensing up his arms so that they were unable to handcuff him. After a long struggle, the officers succeeded. As they were handcuffing him, a glass pipe fell out of this pants pocket. He was cited for obstruction of a police officer and possession of narcotics paraphernalia, then taken to the hospital because of his altered mental state.

Robbery With a Gun
Sutter and Steiner
April 11, 12:14 a.m.

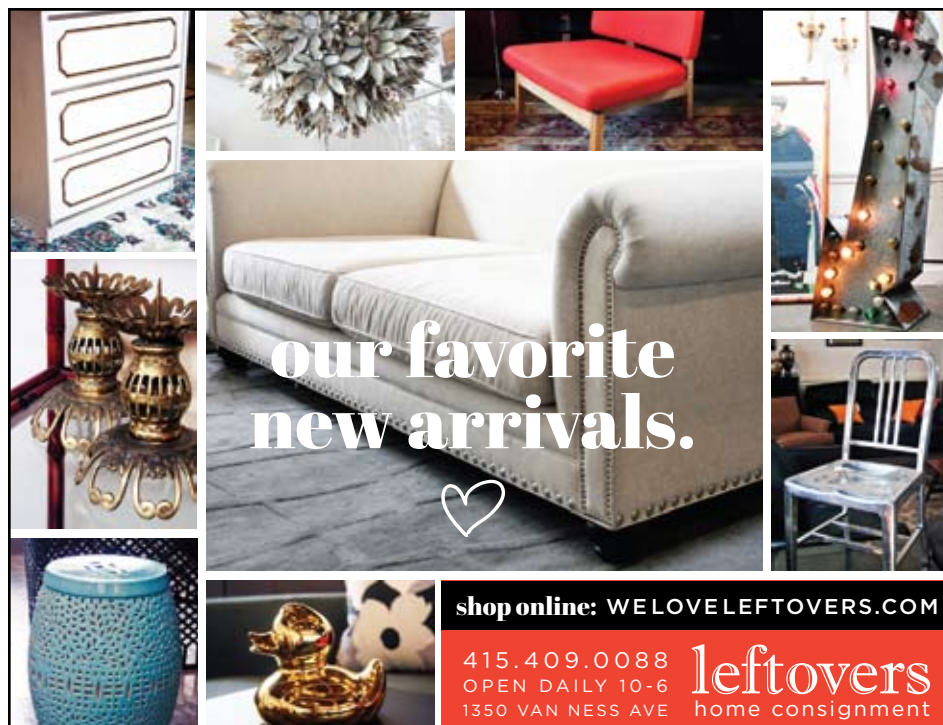
One officer patrolling in the Richmond jotted down the plate number on his hand. Shortly afterward, he spotted a dark vehicle with four occupants traveling eastbound on Geary. He made a quick U-turn and caught up with the vehicle, then saw that its plate matched the partial on his hand. He and his partner followed the vehicle for several blocks; when backup arrived they conducted a felony stop. All four suspects were taken into custody. Officers searched the vehicle and found two handguns, the same believed to have been involved in the robbery. Later these were determined to be very realistic looking air soft guns, nearly indistinguishable from a real firearm.

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A man with a beard, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and grey trousers, is reclining on a white armchair. He is looking out of a large floor-to-ceiling window at a sprawling cityscape under a clear blue sky. A large brown dog is lying on a striped rug on the floor in the foreground. To the left of the man, a telescope is mounted on a silver tripod. The room has a light-colored floor and a white wall.



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This is one spicy neighborhood

When perusing the floor-to-ceiling offerings at Spice Ace at 1821 Steiner Street, don't overlook the one inspired by and named for your own front yard: **PACIFIC HEIGHTS BLEND**. Its complex citrusy Asian flavoring comes from a mélange of the unexpected: lemon, ginger, orange, coriander, garlic, Aji Amarillo, chives and cardamom.

Sales associates at the spice emporium wax rhapsodic about its dual sweet and tangy qualities, its lingering ginger notes and its unique ability to brighten chicken, fish and vegetables. "It's particularly good on broccoli," claims one. "If you weren't a fan of broccoli and you put some Pacific Heights Blend on it, you'd come away loving broccoli."

Another attests the spicy blend was prompted by the flavors of the Pacific Ocean, with a nod to the historical context of the Barbary Coast.

But Spice Ace co-owner Olivia Dillon reveals that the true inspiration for the blend came considerably closer to home. "For many years, my mother (and best friend) and I lived in a penthouse in Pacific Heights with unobstructed views of the bay from almost every room," Dillon recalls. "We had many wonderful dinners with friends and family over the years, enjoying great food as well as the view of the Golden Gate Bridge."

And thus was born and named "Pacific Heights Blend."

And thus was born and named "Pacific Heights Blend."



CanCan Finds Fresh Fans for Its Juices

SHORTLY AFTER Teresa Piro established her organic juice cleanse business, CanCan Cleanse, five years ago, she got a pleasant surprise. Some customers — both dedicated cleansing clients and others interested in healthy eating — clamored for individual servings of the fresh organic juices, nut milks and soups she produced in her South San Francisco facility.

Supplying the demand, Piro began offering "juice packs" — sets of four or six 16-ounce juices, ranging from \$39 to \$58.50, that customers could mix and match to order and pick up at the neighborhood CanCan storefront at 2864 California Street, near Broderick.

While CanCan's distinctive red awning featuring Piro's perky likeness has hung at the tiny spot for the last year and a half, the place was open only a few hours a week for cleansers to pick up their juices.

All that changed in April when Piro opted to open the shop additional hours in the mornings and afternoons and sell her wares on the spot. Now she offers single 16-ounce servings of juices (priced at \$5.50 to \$9.75), almond milks (\$8.75), cold-brewed coffee (\$8.95) and soups (\$9.75).

"It's been a real boon to the business," she says, pausing to sell a jar or two to those in the know and to answer questions from passersby.

Piro herself is on hand most mornings and also hosts Tasting Tuesdays, held weekly from 4 to 6 p.m., which encourages the curious to sample the most popular seasonal juices. She says that being onsite also allows her to meet and counsel committed CanCan Cleanse clients — many of whom she knew only online — who come in to recycle their glass jars or just to chat.



"It's been a real boon to the business."

— TERESA PIRO, owner of CanCan Cleanse

conscious medical workers from nearby also stop in regularly on their lunch breaks.

And the locale has delivered another surprise: a steady stream of students from Drew School, a half block away at Broderick and California. "They come in packs, as kids often do," Piro says, "mostly in the morning on their way to school or during breaks — and they bring a lot of good energy with them."

As if on cue, in walked Sofia Buchler, an 11th grader at Drew who says she is "working on going vegan" and eliminating meat and dairy from her diet after learning about food production in her Evolution, Genetics and Ecology class.

"Animal rights was the kicker for me," Buchler says, though she also is discovering allergies to dairy and gluten. "Veganism is also a good way to manage your diet without restricting it, which is important to a lot of young people — especially girls," she says. "I can eat as much fruit and as many vegetables as I want without hurting animals and the environment. I have no guilt."

Embracing the community spirit, Piro recently committed to hiring a couple of Drew students to help out in the shop over the summer.

Buchler is now one of them.

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"It's the mix that works," says third generation owner Philip Ashizawa (left) of Soko Hardware. His daughter Lauren (right) works part time in the family business in Japantown.



Eunice Ashizawa (right) and her nephew Aaron Katekaru help run Soko Hardware, a fixture in the heart of Japantown since 1925.

It's a Family Affair

Soko Hardware a Japantown mainstay for three generations

By FRAN MORELAND JOHNS

AFTER Masayasu Ashizawa came from Japan to San Francisco nearly a century ago, he opened a hardware store in 1925 in the heart of bustling Japantown and named it Soko — Japanese for “that place.” Soko Hardware’s founder could not have imagined the family business would be thriving in that place today under the management of his grandson Philip, born years after his grandfather died.

Soko Hardware, at 1698 Post Street, thrives not just as a local hardware store, but also as a destination for Bay Area residents and visitors who come for the paper lanterns or the authentic teapots or the delicate china — sometimes even for the hardware.

“I think of going to Soko as a special treat, like going to a museum and finding things I didn’t know existed,” says Mill Valley resident Sue Steele. “I go for so many things, but foremost the flower vases.

TO PAGE 8 ►

“I think of going to Soko as a special treat, like going to a museum and finding things I didn’t know existed.”

— customer SUE STEELE



Concert
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SOKO HARDWARE opened in 1925 at 1683 Post Street in the heart of old Japantown. In the 1960s, the Redevelopment Agency leveled most of the buildings in the neighborhood and the Japan Center complex and Peace Pagoda were built. Soko Hardware moved across the street to 1698 Post Street, where it continues today.

Lanterns, Teapots, Tools — Even Regular Hardware

► FROM PAGE 7

And the frogs used for arranging flowers — I can't find them anywhere else. The scissor collection for Ikebana is wonderful, too."

Nob Hill resident Julia Held goes for the teacups she likes to use and to give as gifts. "But it's terribly hard to make a choice because they are all so lovely," she says.

The store stocks basic hardware, from nuts and bolts to fancy tools. "But there's also a lot of housewares and imports," says third generation owner Philip Ashizawa. "It's the mix that works."

The mix includes appliances, gourmet cookware, paint, plumbing and electrical supplies, toothpick holders, note cards and additional unexpected delights. The store also stocks an impressive collection of Japanese tools for gardening and woodworking, plus seeds for Japanese plants and books about such topics as making shoji screens.

The founder's son, Masao Ashizawa, then a graduate student in math at UC Berkeley, took over Soko Hardware in 1949 after his father died. Only a few years after returning from an internment camp during World War II in Utah, he and his fellow *Nisei* — second generation Japanese Americans — faced a new upheaval. A portion of San Francisco's redevelopment plan for the Western Addition, adopted in 1948, demolished Japantown and blocks of Japanese and African American homes and businesses in the area. By the 1960s, much of the area south of Bush Street between

Divisadero and Gough had been leveled.

But Ashizawa and others were determined to preserve the Japanese character of their neighborhood. He relocated Soko Hardware from its original home at 1683 Post and worked with the city to get Japan Center and the Peace Plaza built in its place on the south side of Post Street. He became founding president of the Nihon-machi Community Development Corp., which functioned from the 1960s through the 1980s to keep Japantown properties in the hands of Japanese Americans. Ashizawa was among the early organizers of the Cherry Blossom Festival, serving as chairman in its fourth year in 1971.

Fusaye Kato, a Post Street resident, was sent to the same Topaz internment camp in Central Utah during World War II and was one of Ashizawa's classmates. She recalls his mother with great fondness, and remembers him as a man of ambition. "I think he was president of the student body," she says.

When Ashizawa died on March 31 at age 90, he was hailed for his commitment to keeping Japantown vital and his love of the community. A memorial service will be held on May 15 at 3 p.m. at the San Francisco Buddhist Church at 1881 Pine Street.

His son Philip Ashizawa came into the business in 1979 after graduating from college, where he majored in biophysics. It was, he says, as good a background as any for running a hardware store.

It's unclear whether yet another gen-

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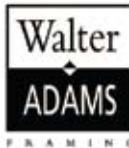
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eration of Ashizawas will take over Soko Hardware. “Our son has gone on to other things after college,” says Philip Ashizawa. “Our daughter helps out part time.”

But for now, the care and customer service that are hallmarks of the unique shop are continuing.

An elderly Japanese woman recently came into the store and approached the counter holding four packets of pumpkin squash seeds.

“Which one?” she asks in heavily accented English.

Ashizawa lay the seed packets out on the counter. They’re all similar, he explains, but this one has a slightly different flesh, this one differs in other ways.

“So I should buy this one?”

“Well, no, it’s kind of late in the season,” he says. “You probably want this one, with a shorter growing season.”

The home gardener smiles, reassured, and leaves with her packet of seeds.

Several young women carrying artists’ portfolios glided through the door and down the stairs, presumably to buy new brushes for their calligraphy, or elegant imported papers. Soko Hardware carries an assortment of Japanese papers and brushes. As they were disappearing downstairs, a tall, burly, bearded man wearing a black T-shirt with Vet*er*an in bold letters on the front approached the counter. He seemed to be a regular customer. Phil Ashizawa’s wife Eunice, who helps run the store, had been working with the customer to find what he sought: a cast iron incense holder. “The kids can’t break this one,” he says to those gathering at the counter. “They’re 7 and 9.”

He also had in hand about \$150 worth of tools. “I don’t buy everything at once,” he says. “I slip it in a little at a time so the wife doesn’t complain.”



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIK ANDERSON



In addition to a wide selection of paper lanterns hanging from the ceiling, Soko Hardware offers tools for gardening and woodworking, including hand planes and knives.



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May 2016 NEW FILLMORE 9

A Mother Who's More Than Helpful

Susan Sarandon perfectly cast in 'The Meddler'

By ANDREA CHASE

MOTHER'S DAY is a time for many things, and one of them should be taking yours to see *The Meddler* at the Sundance Kabuki — either before or after brunch — because a better film about the complicated bond between mother and child has never had a more heartwarming cinematic incarnation. Unconditional love and setting boundaries drive the comedy of *The Meddler*. Written and directed by Loren Scafaria from her own experiences with an adoring mother, the film never takes the obvious route as it follows the adventures of Marnie Minervini (Susan Sarandon) and the people she sweeps into her orbit as she makes a new life for herself in California. Marnie is a giver. She finds joy in bringing happiness to others with the money left her by her beloved husband and the time she has on her hands now that she's moved to Los Angeles from New Jersey to be near her television-writer daughter, Lori (Rose Byrne). So she pays for a dream wedding for one of Lori's friends (Cecily



SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

Susan Sarandon on compulsive generosity

"If you had to find compulsions, that's a good one. I think that's one of her [character's] talents is that she makes friends easily, she talks to people, she always has something to contribute, she thinks. The downside is that she really lacks a sense of what's appropriate, so that gets her in trouble. She doesn't judge people; I mean, that's a big rule. If you're going to start giving, you can't be judging. She just hasn't learned how to receive as much as she has to give. "I'm the oldest of nine and it took me a few tries before I could set boundaries when I was in romantic relationships and not 'mother' because I really loved loving and loved doing little things. And then you forget to ask. I always say there's the curse of the competent woman, where you don't ask enough from someone — your mate, or whomever — to get you a cup of tea or things that could be done because you get in the habit. As a mom, oftentimes it's just faster to do it yourself. Trying even to break your children into clearing the table can be just a nightmare. So you end up doing it all and you're surprised when you can't remember to ask for help."

— For more of ANDREA CHASE's interview with Susan Sarandon (above, with Rose Byrne, in *The Meddler*), go to the "Behind the Scenes" series at prx.org.

Strong), and chauffeurs to his night classes the young man (Jerrod Carmichael) at the Genius Bar who helped her with her iPhone. They are more than grateful to her; they are genuinely charmed by someone who so visibly relishes life.

Her daughter is less than charmed. With a deadline looming, and not yet recovered from a painful breakup with the love of her life (Jason Ritter), Lori finds Marnie's constant voice mails, texts and pop-in visits with salt bagels the stuff of nightmares. For

Marnie, who has devoted her life to her family, not being able to help the one person who matters most to her is a blow, but one that she uses to reinvent herself. Making Marnie a woman who looks forward, not backward, is refreshing — as is the choice to make her tech savvy (or at least open to learning) and a fan of Beyoncé. There are no cheap jokes here exploiting popular culture's stereotypes about women of a certain age. Instead, Scafaria has gifted us with a vibrant woman with a tender heart putting herself out there to leave things better than she found them. If part of it is filling the emotional hole her daughter refuses to fill, it's certainly not the whole story. When she crosses paths with a laid-back ex-cop (J.K. Simmons) who takes a shine to her spirit and good looks, that development defies the usual conventions, too, as does her reaction to Michael McKeon as a would-be suitor who can't catch a break. Sarandon is incandescent. The Oscar winner has the charisma to make Marnie effortlessly irresistible and possessed of the warmth of a woman who can't help but get involved, whether she should or not. Her best moments, though, are the ones with her daughter, who wears her ragged emotions on her sleeve. Even when Lori yells at her mother for stepping over a boundary, you can see the hurt little girl who still needs her mother's hug — and with Sarandon, you see the mother who wants nothing more than to give one, but is also willing to allow her daughter the space she needs. And a salt bagel — which you can find a block south at Wise Sons on Fillmore, just down the street from the Kabuki, where *The Meddler* is playing.

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A new exhibition celebrates succulents

On May 6, the Conservatory of Flowers in Golden Gate Park opens “THE WILD BUNCH: SUCCULENTS, CACTI AND FAT PLANTS,” a new exhibition exploring water-hoarding plants. It will continue through October 16. “Succulents are wildly popular and fascinating,” says a curator. “Every tiny thing about the way these plants look is about survival.” For more information, go to conservatoryofflowers.org.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY VANESSA FAJARDO

Succulents Thriving After Winter Rains

Drought years have made these architectural plants more popular in local gardens

By JOAN HOCKADAY

ON CLAY STREET just above Fillmore, bright orange flowers draw in passers-by — and hummingbirds by the dozens — to drink in the succulent scene at 2472 Clay.

Architectural plants discovered during the drought years have helped to add interest and lively contrast to homes in the neighborhood, according to local landscaper Louis Devereau. He recently walked down the hill from his own work a few doors away to take a look at the succulent garden, and admitted he has come to admire the changing landscapes that became popular after the drought kicked in. His Irish roots tend toward green and lush landscapes, but he acknowledged these more modern plants can thrive with little rain and look smart even after a light mist.

This year’s recent winter rains also brought rampant grass growth and invaded the succulent show, interrupting the architectural flow, but resident Elizabeth Warner worried more about the tall billowing plant specimens themselves.

“I thought the neighbors would complain about the big plants,” she said. The tall grass will disappear, the plants will continue to puff up with the rains, and the garden will enhance the Victorian house, owned by the nearby Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute



DICKIE SPRITZER

Succulents spill out of the front garden at 2472 Clay, attracting admirers and hummingbirds.

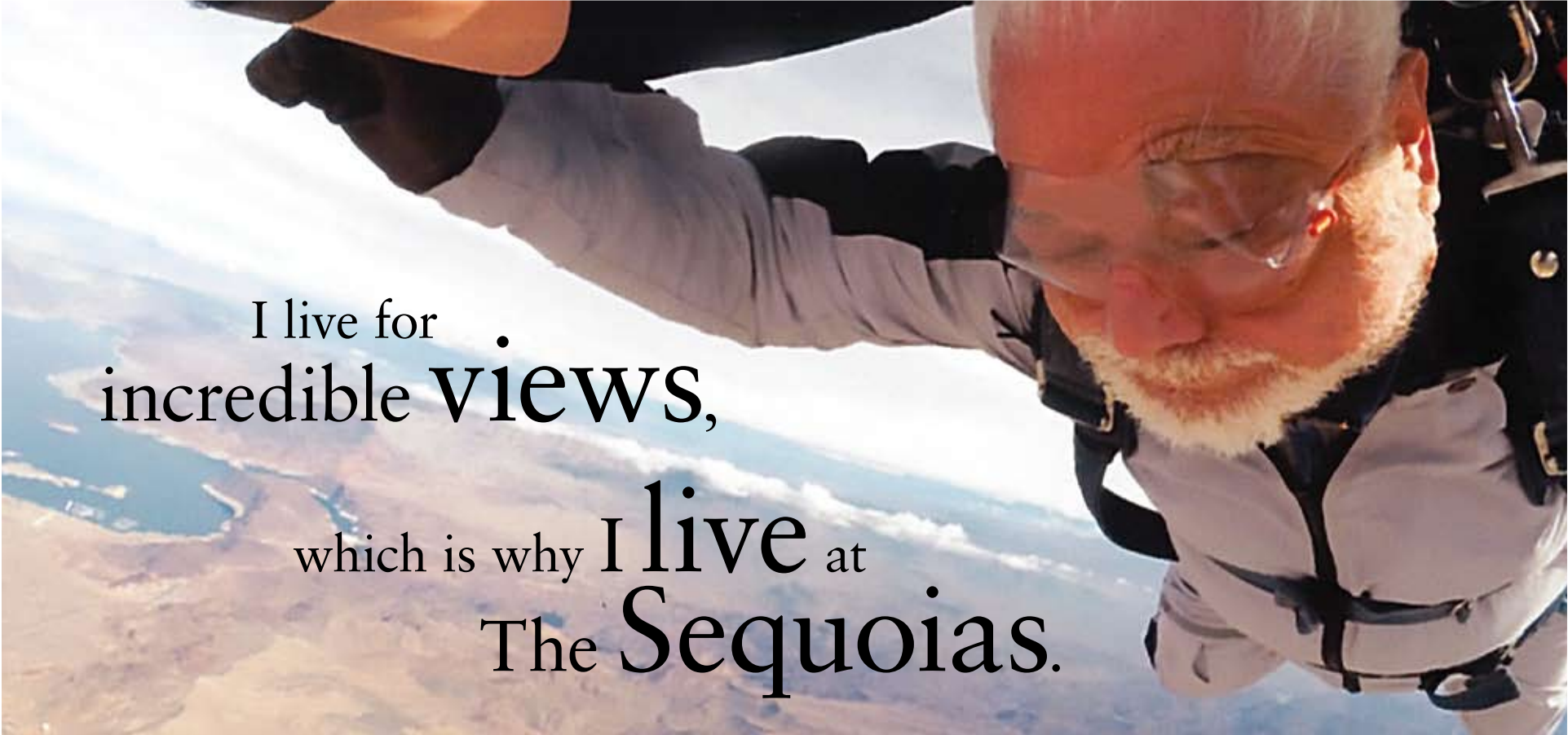
and set back suitably from Clay Street.

Cacti are also figuring in more gardens of water-conscious locals. Most cacti are also succulents, but succulents are not always cacti. Even the San Francisco Cactus and Succulent Society changed its name to add succulents, which are increasingly popular in coastal settings.

“We are in the sweet spot” for succulent success, says society president Daryl Du Charme. Succulents from the Mediter-

anean and South Africa have been added to native California flora to expand the dry plant palette.

The San Francisco Cactus and Succulent Society meets the third Tuesday of every month to exchange plants and information at 7 p.m. in the auditorium in the San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue and Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park. For more information, go to sfsucculent.org.




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A Modern Cathedral Celebrates 45 Years

Agonizing design process launched St. Mary's

By BRIDGET MALEY

THIS MONTH marks the 45th anniversary of the dedication of the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, a recognized masterpiece of religious architecture at 1111 Gough Street. Opening after an agonizing design process, the building was not immediately loved by many of San Francisco's Catholics, who had previously worshiped in two very traditional churches.

Just five years after the discovery of gold in California, San Francisco's Catholic Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception received its first worshipers. The brick edifice, located at the corner of California and Grant Streets, was reduced to a shell in the 1906 earthquake, but was triumphantly rebuilt. Catholics had already outgrown that first cathedral and, amid much pageantry, laid the cornerstone of San Francisco's second Catholic cathedral at the corner of Van Ness Avenue and O'Farrell Street on May 2, 1887.

After four years of construction, the building was dedicated in January 1891. The Gothic Revival red brick church, with its dramatic and steeply laid front stairs and beautiful rose window, served the city's Catholics until the early 1960s. On

the evening of September 7, 1962, a major conflagration consumed it. Archbishop Joseph McGueken was quoted as saying shortly after the fire: "It is my feeling that we should rebuild on the same site ... a modern, contemporary design, but not what most people call modernistic."

By the late 1960s, the archdiocese had selected San Francisco architects John Michael Lee, Paul A. Ryan and Angus McSweeney, working in conjunction with internationally recognized architects and engineers Pier Luigi Nervi and Pietro Bel-luschi, to design a radically new structure. The architect selection, and other project decisions, were controversial.

Gerald Adams, writing in a lengthy *Chronicle* article in October 1970, recalled: "Long before the first bucket of concrete was poured in early 1968, the archbishop was picketed, the site of the cathedral was picketed, the cathedral architects were attacked as relative unknowns; the cathedral design ridiculed as an imitation of something Japanese and the project itself censured as an affront to the poor."

It all started with a need for a larger site. The Van Ness and O'Farrell location was declared too small for a "modern" cathedral. A series of complex and sometimes tense negotiations, land trades, purchases



The bronze thorn-like entry doors of St. Mary's Cathedral and the bronze bas-relief above, designed by Enrico Manfrini, evoke the crucifixion.

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The twisting supports for the dramatic interior create a series of intimate spaces.

and sheer determination on the part of the archdiocese resulted in a site bounded by Gough, Geary, Ellis and Cleary Court. Included in the deal was an agreement that KRON-TV would get the old cathedral site for construction of new offices and studios; it did, but the low-rise building is now slated to be demolished for a new residential tower.

The selection of an architect was equally difficult for the archdiocese. In what could be described as San Francisco's most important religious commission in a generation, many of the most influential architects in California — and throughout the world — were rumored to be interested, including John Carl Warnecke, Gardner Daily, Mario Ciampi, Louis Kahn and Marcel Breuer. Gerald Adams in his *Chronicle* article summarized the process: “When on April 8, 1963, the archdiocesan office announced that the architects would be a joint venture team of Angus McSweeney,

Paul Ryan and John Lee, the reaction was a stunned, ‘Who?’”

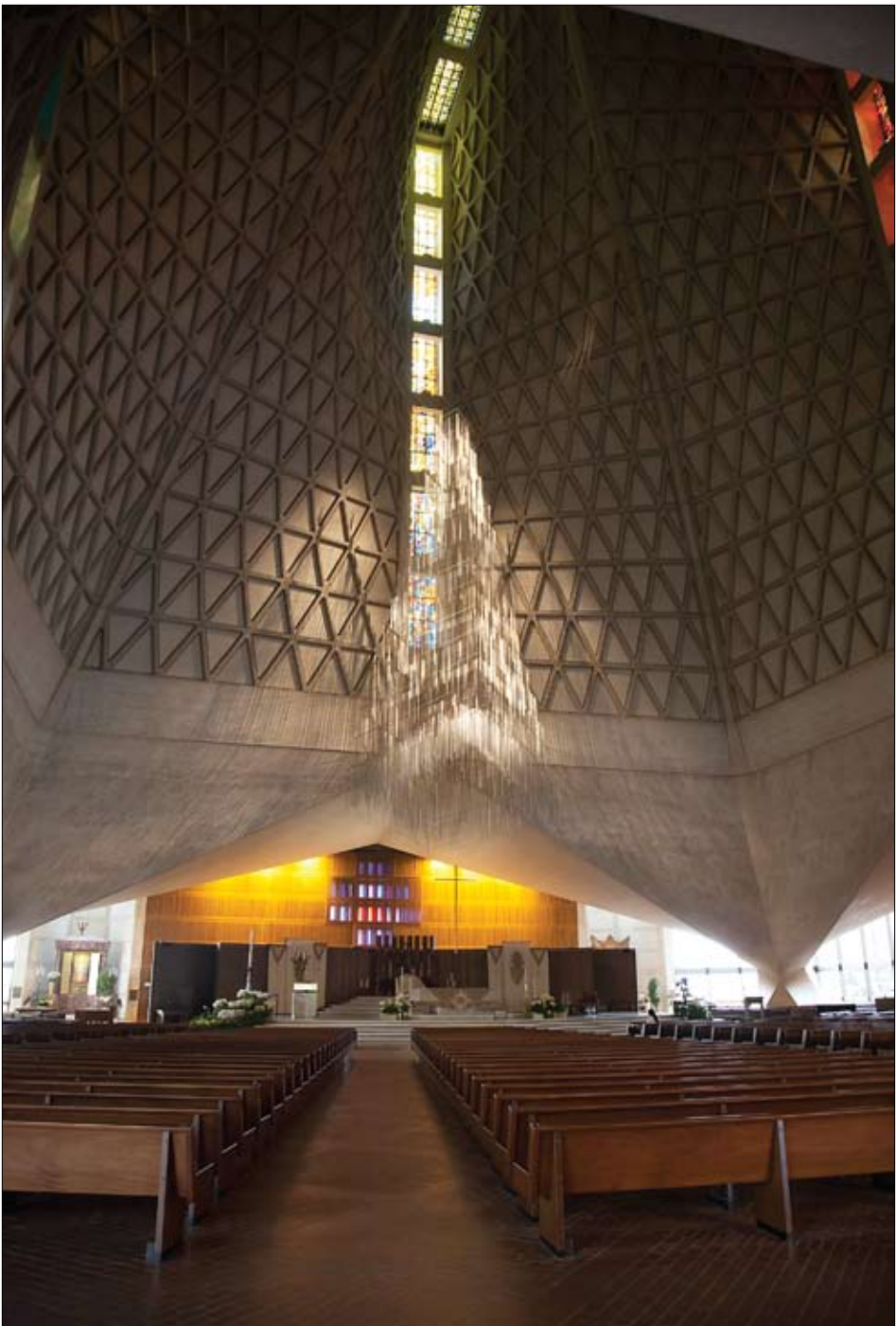
Architectural critic Allen Temko was so incensed that he wrote of McSweeney: “One cannot possibly associate his name with a single significant piece of modern architecture.” The situation was further complicated when the editor of *Worship*, a magazine that promoted liturgical reform and modern design in church architecture, noted of a preliminary design: “It reminds me of the effort of a camel and a donkey to mate.”

A different solution became a priority. Belluschi and Nervi were asked to become part of the team.

■

Four times larger than the building it replaced, and on a new site, the revised design proposed to occupy a key location within the Western Addition being masterminded by the Redevelopment Agency.

TO PAGE 14 ►



A simple cube soars upward to a vertical hyperbolic paraboloid, creating a modern dome.

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Two Traditional Brick Cathedrals, Then a Modern Masterpiece

► FROM PAGE 13

It included not only the church, but also a rectory, the archbishop's residence, an event center, underground parking and a landscaped plaza. The final designs were highly reminiscent of St. Mary's Cathedral in Tokyo, completed earlier in the decade by Kenzo Tange. Indeed, Nervi and Belluschi were accused of plagiarizing Tange's innovative use of concrete shaped into a hyperbolic paraboloid. Nonetheless, the design was a huge improvement over the early renditions and Nervi and Belluschi elevated the skills and creative mixture of the design team.

Belluschi was an Italian-born designer who had studied in Rome and then immigrated to Portland, Oregon, and joined a small architectural practice. He served as dean of the architecture school at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1951 to 1965. His significant works include the Equitable Building in Portland (1948), the Pan Am Building in New York City with Walter Gropius (1963), 555 California in San Francisco as a consultant to Wurster, Benardi and Emmons and Skidmore Owings and Merrill (1969), the University of Virginia School of Architecture (1970) and many churches throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Pier Luigi Nervi was an Italian who became widely known for his innovative use of reinforced concrete and Belluschi suggested him for the St. Mary's project. Nervi believed architecture and engineering were interconnected and that knowledge of materials, nature and construction were essential to designing innovative buildings.



In his work, Nervi made reinforced concrete his material of choice — with key commissions in this idiom including the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (1950), the Fiat Factory in Turin (1955) and the Olympic Stadium in Rome (1960).

Using a structural scheme involving a simple cube soaring upward to a vertical hyperbolic paraboloid, St. Mary's exterior is sheathed in a pale Italian travertine. The lower horizontal cross section of the roof forms a square and the top intersecting paraboloids emulate a cross. The structure is crowned by a 55-foot gold cross. The exquisite exterior bronze thorn-like entry doors and the bronze bas-relief above, designed by Enrico Manfrini, evoke the crucifixion. People of all races and faiths are represented as one family in Manfrini's metal relief abstraction.



The Gothic Revival red brick second St. Mary's Cathedral (left) at Van Ness and O'Farrell burned in 1962 and was replaced by the new modern cathedral in 1971.

The red brick floor in the interior recalls earlier California Mission churches. Throughout the building, clear glass windows afford spectacular views of the surrounding city. A reflection of new liturgical regulations that came out of the Second Vatican Council, the altar is central. Artist Richard Lippold's baldacchino has been described as "angels dropping stars." The pews are arranged so that no congregant sits more than 75 feet from the altar. Behind it, a panel of colored glass accompanies the tall, narrow windows that form the intersections of the hyperbolic paraboloids.

Special events will be held at St. Mary's Cathedral throughout the month, including a 45th anniversary gala on the evening of May 6. For more information, go to stmarycathedralsf.org.



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2588 Pine St	4	3	4	n/a	26	4/6/2016	3,195,000	3,375,000
2336 Divisadero St	3	2	4	2,808	4	3/22/2016	3,350,000	3,600,000
3737 Jackson St	3	3	1	3,010	15	4/8/2016	4,300,000	4,475,000
2540 Vallejo St	3	3	1	2,850	15	3/25/2016	4,200,000	4,600,000
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2096 Pine St	1	1	1	1,239	26	3/21/2016	899,000	960,000
2359 Jackson St #4	1	1	1	660	11	4/12/2016	899,000	975,000
1895 Pacific Ave #406	1	1	1	1,165	1	3/16/2016	995,000	999,650
1945 Washington St #506	2	2	1	975	41	3/25/2016	998,000	1,100,000
2949 Jackson St #A	1	1	1	1,134	20	3/24/2016	998,000	1,180,000
1701 Jackson St #606	2	2	1	1,108	27	4/13/2016	1,196,000	1,280,000
2831 Laguna St	3	2	1	1,465	63	3/16/2016	2,000,000	1,900,000
2047 Vallejo St	2	2	1	1,468	12	4/4/2016	1,725,000	2,035,000
2915 Jackson St	3	2	1	2,036	13	4/15/2016	1,995,000	2,100,000
1828 Pine St	4	3	1	2,384	7	3/29/2016	1,995,000	2,165,000
1882 Green St	3	3	1	1,910	28	3/24/2016	2,800,000	2,855,000
2200 Pacific Ave #11B	1	2	2	n/a	14	4/12/2016	2,125,000	2,900,000
2304 Washington St #200	3	3	1	2,629	12	3/25/2016	2,595,000	3,050,000
1810 Jackson St #4	3	3	1	3,271	95	3/18/2016	3,950,000	3,285,000
3876 Clay St	3	2	2	3,078	81	4/7/2016	4,175,000	4,035,000



Paying a premium for Presidio Heights

Bidding wars remain a fact of life for San Francisco home shoppers. Single-family homes in the city sold for 108 percent of the original listing price in the first quarter of 2016, according to data from the multiple listing service. This trend has been dominant in Presidio Heights, where a shortage of homes for sale is ensuring that sellers in the neighborhood get a premium.

Through April 15, there have been three single-family home sales in Presidio Heights this year, including two on April 8: 3737 Jackson and 200 Laurel (above). The Jackson Street home sold for \$4.5 million — 104 percent of the listing price — while the Laurel Street home fetched nearly \$10.3 million, or 114 percent of the listing price. Even with those big price tags, both homes quickly found buyers: 3737 Jackson in 15 days, 200 Laurel in 10 days. The only other Presidio Heights single-family home sale this year sold in two weeks for 140 percent of its original listing price.

It's worth noting that there were twice as many home sales in Presidio Heights last year from January through mid-April. Even so, given the neighborhood's relatively small size and high desirability, four of those six homes sold for more than the listing price.

— Data and commentary provided by PATRICK BARBER, president of Pacific Union. Contact him at patrick.barber@pacunion.com or call 415-345-3001.



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4	09/15/2018	09/15/2020

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