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## He Found His Niche

Richard Hilkert moves across the street

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■ FOOD & DRINK

## Time's Up for Tully's

Another gathering place closes its doors

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# THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ NOVEMBER 2014



DANIEL BAHMAN

After a lifetime in restaurants, Nick Nickolas brings a touch of high-class hospitality to the neighborhood. He maintains: "If you're treated well, the food tastes better."

## Uncle Nick's Still Got It

Famed restaurateur helps out at Dino's while pursuing his 'Sexy at 70' project

NICK NICKOLAS got his first restaurant job in Oakland in 1955 at a very fine restaurant called Villa de la Paix. He went on to a six-decade career in which he opened more than 30 restaurants nationwide — most notably his Nick's Fishmarkets in Honolulu, Beverly Hills, Chicago, Miami and other cities. Then he came home to the Bay Area and retired.

Or so he thought.

"So I'm back in the Bay Area," says Nickolas, "and my nephew asks me to come over and take a look at his operation," Dino & Santino's, the neighborhood pizza joint at Fillmore and California owned by longtime local Dino Stavrakakis. "Before I realize it, three years have passed and I'm still coming over."

Uncle Nick, as he's become known to Dino's regulars, has brought a touch of the big-time to the neighborhood, with his flashy clothes, toothy smile and smooth manner.

"Sometimes you can't get enough of this business," he says. "When it becomes a big part of your life it's no longer work, but a way for you to express a love of hospitality."

Family-friendly Dino's is a considerable contrast to the high-flying restaurants Nickolas ran for most of his career.

"My restaurants were mainly white tablecloth with tuxedoed waiters — fancy and expensive," he says. "But price doesn't change hospitality. If you spend \$10 or \$10,000, the hospitality should not change."

Dino was already in the process of remodeling and upgrading his corner spot at the heart of the neighborhood, and his Uncle Nick helped him up his game.

"There's a new menu and new decor," says Nickolas, "but the same good food and the same attitude. Dino and Santino's fits into the Fillmore in a unique

way — and it's one of the few remaining family-run businesses."

He adds: "Food is not what the guests remember, but the way they were treated. A good waiter can save a mediocre meal, but bad hospitality can sink the entire experience altogether. Were you greeted properly? Were you seated in a timely fashion? Were you thanked on the way out? If you were, the food tasted better — period."

Dino is not the only old friend Nickolas has reconnected with since he came back home to the Bay Area. Through Facebook, he also got back in touch with Judy Steinberg, a friend he met for the first time in 1968. Their initial romance turned into a friendship that lasted on and off for 45 years. Now it's back on again, and they are engaged — and working together on a website and a new book they're calling *Sexy at Seventy: It's Never Too Late! (The Judy and Nick Story)*.

"SEXY AT 70" | PAGE 8 ►

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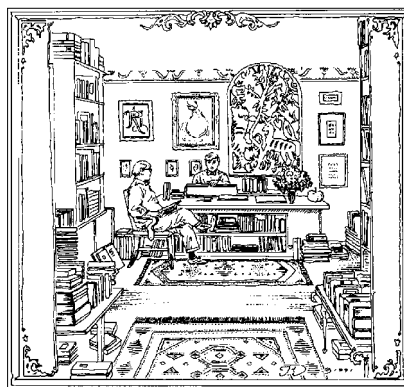
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## FAREWELL



Richard Hilbert's bookplate shows him in his bookshop.

## THE BOOKS OF LIFE

**H** E'D HAD a successful and rewarding career as a bookseller and then settled comfortably into retirement in his book-filled flat on Bush Street across from St. Dominic's Church.

Then disaster struck Richard Hilbert.

He was walking home from a massage early on the afternoon of August 29, 2006, when a rampaging driver ran him over in the crosswalk at Sutter and Steiner. More than a dozen local residents were injured and one died when the deranged driver's spree came to an end. Hilbert had a broken arm, but soon recovered — and found himself more popular than ever, his plight having received wide news coverage.

"I think people had forgotten I was still alive," he said a few weeks later. "Now they're calling and inviting me for lunch."

So his charmed life continued for eight more years, until he died on October 9 at age 86.

Hilbert had continued to live alone in his apartment, surrounded by books and music, and tended to by a caring circle of friends and neighbors — including those across the street at St. Dominic's, where he was a member.

He was delighted when St. Dominic's built a columbarium behind its main altar and secured a niche for himself.

"I only have to move across the street," he would say, having prepared detailed instructions for how he wanted his final rites to unfold.

That will happen on November 14 at 1 p.m. when a memorial service will be held in the Lady Chapel at St. Dominic's.

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## STREET TALK

### Will Juicy News be next to go?

First came word that Tully's Coffee would close at the end of October after being unable to work out a new lease with the new owners of its building on the corner of Fillmore and Jackson.

Soon attention shifted next door: Will Juicy News be next?

"Already foot traffic has dropped off — I'd say by 20 percent," said Mo Salimi, owner of Juicy News, a few days after the coffee shop closed.

Salimi is now in talks with the new landlord about his own lease, which expires at the end of the year — and also about who will take over the now-empty space next door, and how compatible they will be.

**YOSHI'S GETS A NEW NAME:** The change has been in the works since a new ownership group took over Yoshi's jazz club and Japanese



restaurant at 1330 Fillmore Street on July 1. In mid-October the group announced that the club will be known as The Addition after November 1. A new chef and concept for the restaurant are still in the works.

**COMING & GOING:** Jurlique, the body products store at 2136 Fillmore, disappeared overnight in mid-October. No word yet on a successor. . . . And Zinc Details, Fillmore's own emporium of modernist home furnishings, is expanding to its new home at 1633 Fillmore this month. Zinc will keep its existing space at 1905 Fillmore through the holidays.

## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



The exterior of the dental school is being removed and will be replaced with glass.

### High-End Condos in the Works

Former dental school gives way to 77 residential units

AS CONDO PRICES in the neighborhood continue skyward, construction has begun on a major project that will convert the former University of the Pacific dental school at Webster and Sacramento into 77 luxury condominiums.

The official groundbreaking is set for November 5, but work is already well underway. The modernist stone facade is being dismantled and removed and will be replaced by a sleek glass-wall exterior that will offer views across the neighborhood. Two new glass-box penthouses will be built

on top. Landscaped garden townhouses will be built on the empty lot just west of the building formerly used for parking.

"There are generations of Pacific Heights residents who would never live south of California Street," Arden Hearing, managing director of developer Trumark Urban, told the *Business Times*. "For people who have grown up here and want to live in that part of town, there are very few new projects."

Construction is expected to be completed in early 2016.

### Shell Station Makeover Is Moving Slowly

WHEN PLANS were unveiled earlier this year to remake the Shell service station at California and Steiner and add more pumps and a 24-hour Loop food store, neighbors were up in arms. Many decried the prospect of added traffic and "a 7-11 with a salad bar."

According to city planner Sharon Lai, the project is proceeding, but still awaits an environmental report and further review. She said it is unlikely to come before the Planning Commission until next year.

"It has not moved very swiftly," Lai said. "There are still outstanding issues to be resolved."

Much of the opposition to the project was sparked by its elimination of Shell Auto Repair, the garage independently owned and operated by mechanic Doug Fredell. Nearly 200 supporters and customers of the garage have signed a petition opposing the project.

"We're certainly aware there's a lot of neighborhood concern," Lai said, adding that the department's position is not influenced by public opinion. "The commissioners are the appropriate body to consider comments from the public," she said. "That's their job."

A similar Loop convenience store is being built at the Shell station at Lincoln and 19th Avenue by Golden Gate Park.



"Garage Under Fire"  
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## CRIME WATCH

### Robbery

Sacramento Street and Presidio Avenue  
September 9, 5 a.m.

A man walking down the street was grabbed from behind. His assailant said he would be killed if he did not do as he was told. The pedestrian informed his attacker he did not have his wallet with him. He was then approached by a second suspect, a woman. She reached into his pockets and took out a set of car keys and a dollar's worth of change. Both suspects then fled on foot. An investigation is ongoing.

### Assault on a Police Officer

Geary Boulevard and Fillmore Street  
October 6, 5:30 p.m.

Officers received a call about a man who was assaulting a woman. When they arrived on the scene and attempted to intervene, the man attacked one of the officers, biting his leg and creating a sizable open wound. The officers called for backup. Before the suspect was subdued, he injured four additional officers.

The officer who was bitten was transported to California Pacific Medical Center for further treatment, and is still unable to work due to the injury. After a medical evaluation, the suspect was booked at the county jail.

### Arson

Washington and Divisadero Streets  
October 9, 4 a.m.

Officers received a call about a fire in an apartment building. When they arrived, they determined that the fire was the result of arson and not an accident. They notified the SFPD arson unit. The investigation continues.

### Methamphetamine

Pierce and Post Streets  
October 17, 5:50 p.m.

Officers received a call about a man who was trying the handles of car doors. Officers located a man who matched the description given by the dispatcher. A computer inquiry revealed outstanding warrants for his arrest. After the police arrested the suspect, they discovered he possessed a large quantity of methamphetamine. He was booked at county jail.

### Street Robbery

Sutter and Broderick Streets  
October 20, 10:52 p.m.

A man walking east on Sutter Street was approached by a man with a handgun. Fearing for his life, the pedestrian ran into the street. The man with the gun followed him, and they engaged in a brief struggle over the duffel bag the pedestrian had been carrying. Finally he released the duffel bag and the suspect fled on foot. The investigation is ongoing.

### Violating a Stay-Away Order

Scott Street and Geary Boulevard  
October 22, 5:24 p.m.

A witness called police about a man who was behaving in a strange manner and scaring children in the park. The officers contacted the man and discovered he had been given a court-issued order to stay away from all playgrounds. There were also outstanding warrants for his arrest. The officers arrested the man and booked him at county jail.



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## No More Group Yoga at International Orange



The yoga studio will be carved into retail and treatment spaces.

**A**FTER A DOZEN years upstairs at 2044 Fillmore, with its oversized windows overlooking the heart of the neighborhood's retail row, International Orange is demonstrating its flexibility by shaking up its yoga and retail offerings.

As of November 15, group yoga classes will be eliminated and instruction will only be given one-on-one or semi-privately to two or three practitioners at a time.

Leslie Su, retail and brand manager, says the change was prompted by current clients asking for more "individual wellness" when they come to the studio and spa.

Future yoga clients will meet with IO staff to assess what they would like to work on and their preferred styles of practice. "We will then pair each person with an instructor and set up sessions based on the time and style that works for them," says Su. "We like to go first with the style."

Five of IO's current instructors will stay on to work with clients in private sessions: Allison Hodge, Lindsay Thomson, Nicole Cronin, Marie Murphy and Erin Gilmore. Su says that collectively they have experience in offering athletic, rejuvenative and pre- and post-natal styles of practice.

The individualized instruction comes with a price: \$125 for a 60-minute session — a substantial hike over the current rate of \$12 for a drop-in class, several of which run 75 minutes.

And while private yoga clients get the added perks of full access to the spa amenities — steam, shower, sun deck and "relaxation lounge," Su acknowledges that some longtimers are bucking at the price hike — and especially

at the move away from group practice.

"Certain clients are pretty sad about it going away. But restaurants take away your favorite dishes. And many people just don't like change of any kind," she says. "Besides, there are a ton of other yoga studios in the area. We are seen as a luxury spa in San Francisco. The price for one-on-one yoga instruction is comparable to the cost of a facial."

She adds that IO aficionados have been given a month's notice, and that those with outstanding credits for classes can use their value for private yoga or spa treatments such as waxing, facials and massages.

A "transition celebration" is slated for Sunday, November 2, when all final group classes will be free. Juice cleanses and other wellness samplings and discounts will also be offered.

*"We are seen as a luxury spa in San Francisco."*

— LESLIE SU  
International Orange

As part of the transition, the spacious group studio will be divided into a more intimate space for private clients, an additional treatment room and more retail space. The yoga studio and spa will be

closed from November 17 through 20 for construction.

IO has offered organic In Fiore complexion and body treatments nearly since its opening. In Fiore founder Julie Elliott will relocate her Post Street *parfumerie* to a shop-within-a-shop as part of the remodeling.

Su says this change too was prompted by client demand. "More clients care about what they're putting on their skin, but the science behind it also needs to be top-notch," she says. That includes organic make-up as well. "We will certainly be growing this segment as part of our retail expansion," Su says.

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# A Barista's Farewell

Goodbye to  
12 Years at Tully's

By DAVID PEREZ

**H**ALLOWEEN would have marked my 12th year with Tully's at the corner of Jackson and Fillmore. Instead, Tully's closed its doors just days before on Sunday, October 26.

I have a few thoughts about neighborhood and community — not the least of which is that we need more places like Tully's. It was as intimate a coffee shop as I've ever seen, where people went to meet — or just run into — their neighbors. Many of our regulars had been showing up on our corner since its days as Spinelli's.

Your neighbors at the top of Fillmore were our regulars — as were Muni drivers, teachers, nannies (you could push a stroller through our door), mommies, cabbies, techies (share your table), carpenters, kids(!), commuters, the retired and the unemployed. Free WiFi meant we got to meet our new neighbors first. Many of you have become (and are still) our friends.

## ■ FIRST PERSON



Manager Blanca Ramos and barista David Perez kept their smiles in the final hours Tully's was open.

When people came back to the neighborhood, they came back to us.

For 12 years it's been my home away from home and my extended family. But not too far from home. In 2006, I moved into my apartment across the street, just above Gino's. The Mayflower Market and Tully's are the view from my windows.

I might take a moment here to mention that our manager, Blanca, should be sainted for the way she kept the store viable and

listened to your craziness. If you never met her, well, it's been your loss.

Justin gives his dog cinnamon rolls. If you ever got to the coffee shop late and thought "Man, who keeps eating all the cinnamon rolls?" now you know.

Why is Tully's closing? Well, to be clear, they're only closing this location and they really didn't want to do it. A few months ago the building was sold and the new landlord began to "mess with us." Lawyers came out. Instead of taking the huge rent increase,

Tully's decided to pull the plug. Supposedly they weren't willing to work with us. I'm sure they have a different story.

I've been trying to remember anecdotes from the 12 years I worked behind the counter.

My first Halloween on the job, a lot of the parents were bringing their costumed preschoolers in to mix and mingle. I don't remember how, but I ended up with a Polaris of these three little girls wearing tiaras

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and coats over their princess dresses. On the bottom I wrote "Do not accept checks from these girls" and taped it next to the register. It stayed there for years. The girls' parents would bring their friends to the store just to see it. Eventually it went home with one of the moms.

One time I remade this woman's drink eight times. By the third drink, I was pretty sure she was a nut — "This doesn't taste like a latte" — but I was committed to the bit, and it was a really slow day. First I timed the shots, then I recalibrated the thermometers, then I took the beans out and cleaned the machine and put in new beans. On and on for eight drinks! I don't even remember who gave up first. When I told Blanca the story, she said, "I would have killed you for wasting all that product."

Before I came to Tully's I'd been living at Post and Broderick (in lower, lower Pacific Heights) when I got a job with Starbucks. I trained on Fillmore with the idea that I would transfer to Divisadero at Bush when that store opened. It was when the Divisadero store opened that I really, for the first time, started getting to know my neighborhood. The neighbors embraced us, too. The ladies at El Burrito Express would give me free burritos. I was there five and a half years. Good times.

Then one day you get a new manager and it's all over. You put in your two weeks notice and start stressing over unemployment

and how you should've gone to the dentist while you still had insurance. Bad times.

Elena at the Bank of America suggested I should go to Tully's. ("They just fired a bunch of people.") Tim Piper, the store manager, walked up to the next teller at just that moment. Elena made the introductions. ("He needs a job.") That was it.

A couple of days ago I saw this tiny little boy staring at Trevor. He got up enough courage to ask: "Why are you leaving?"

Trevor leaned in and used his best little kid voice: "We're trying to renegotiate our lease." Trevor's been about 20 minutes late since the first day I started opening with him. I figure he's saved the company thousands of dollars.

I'm fighting a really strong urge to get up on my soapbox and talk about how jobs make our identities,

how neighbors need places where they can get together and be neighborly and how faceless entities can take it all away.

I will take a moment to say thanks. Get out there and meet your neighbors. It's not as easy without a local coffee shop, sure. But they're still around. Support a small business and treat yourself. Buy a magazine from Juicy News.

Goodbye, all. Happy trails. I hope you follow me down the hill to Peet's.



"The Loss of Tully's"  
VIDEO | [newfillmore.com](http://newfillmore.com)

## FAN NOTES



### Losing a true neighborhood gathering place

I hopped off the number 10 bus this morning at Jackson and Fillmore, as I have been doing every morning for many years. I love this busy intersection, with its intricate pattern of overhead wires for the Muni buses, the stately Calvary Presbyterian Church, the grocery stores on either side. There are kids on their way to school — lots of them, and parents walking with the little ones — plus construction workers, nannies, housekeepers, teachers, folks from Pets Unlimited and all of us miscellaneous others who work and live in the neighborhood.

At this early hour we used to find our way into Tully's. It was always warm and bright, noisy with chatter and the hiss of the espresso machine, fragrant with the smell of coffee and pastries. What a pleasurable way to start my day: a double espresso waiting from the always friendly and always busy crew.

Not this morning. The windows are covered with brown paper and some scribbled messages of thanks and goodbyes.

Tully's was a true neighborhood gathering place, a real asset and a welcome beginning for me, especially on those cold, dark, early winter mornings. Good luck to all you guys who made it easier on those days. You are already missed, especially this morning as I stood on the street looking longingly at your closed doors and needing that jolt to get me going.

— An October 28 dispatch from BARBARA WYETH, a longtime Fillmore denizen who works at Bloomers florist on Washington Street. She brought farewell flowers.

## KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES IS SO 20 MINUTES AGO

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# Sexy at 70

## Nick and Judy Are Writing the Book on How to Remain Youthful and Vital

**W**HEN Judy Steinberg and Nick Nickolas talk about their lives together and apart — cavorting with celebrities, rocketing to riches and back to earth, reuniting as a couple a half-century after they met — it sounds like the stuff of which books are made. So they're writing one.

Judy was Tommy Smothers' girlfriend when *The Smothers Brothers* was one of the hippest shows on television, and later married comedian and director David Steinberg. She met everyone. James Taylor and Carly Simon attended her wedding. George Harrison stayed at her house. When John Lennon and Yoko Ono staged their Bed-In for Peace, Judy was in the bed — along with Tommy Smothers and Timothy Leary.

Nick, the man Oprah Winfrey introduced as "one of the country's most eligible bachelors," was also one of the country's top restaurateurs. He was as well-known for his outrageous personality as for his classy restaurants, dominating the *Oprah* show with his unapologetically old-fashioned views on men and women.

Judy and Nick met for the first time in 1968 and began a hot romance and a warm friendship that has lasted on and off for nearly half a century. During those decades they dealt with the same kinds of success and adversity many others have faced. But their story has a happy ending: After losing touch for years, they reconnected in 2012 through Facebook and are now engaged. They're sharing their story and their tips for staying youthful and vital in a new website and a book they're writing titled *Sexy at Seventy: It's Never Too Late!* (*The Judy and Nick Story*). In these excerpts, they tell their story.

**JUDY:** In August of 1968, my boyfriend and boss Tommy Smothers thought I needed a vacation before we went into production on *The Smothers Brothers* for the new season. His idea of a vacation for me was a couple of weeks in Maui. My girlfriends suggested I get myself to Honolulu, to the Kahala Hilton, the place to stay. Tommy offered to make a dinner reservation for me at a restaurant owned by his old college roommate. The restaurant was Nick's Fishmarket and his old roommate was Nick Nickolas.

**NICK:** Tommy and I had been roommates

at San Jose State College back in 1956. We got to be friends. I was a 240-pound football player and he was a 140-pound cheerleader. I'd be on the field and he'd be in the stands with a giant megaphone. That's where Tom found his destiny, making large crowds of people laugh.

Tommy and Dickie made it really fast. They released their first album, *Live at the Purple Onion*, in 1961. For a while there, they were releasing one or two albums a year. And then they got their TV show in 1967 and they really took off.

So I wasn't too surprised when Tommy called. I wasn't doing so badly myself. The Fishmarket was a raging success. We opened in October 1967 and we were a hit from day one. We did a million dollars our first year. We were the classiest joint in town.

Anyone who came to Honolulu in those days came to Nick's — athletes, movie stars, politicians. So when Tommy said his girlfriend Judy was coming to Honolulu, I wanted to put on a good show for her.

**JUDY:** I'm not saying Nick Nickolas was transfixed by the sight of me, but he didn't look unhappy when I identified myself as his dinner companion for the evening. And I wasn't disappointed either. He was tall and handsome, with a mega-watt smile and dancing eyes.

He led me to a private dining room, small and empty except for the table that was set for our dinner. We had a fabulous dinner and he poured champagne as if it came from a bottomless well.

He was charming and interesting, funny and flirtatious and all-out fabulous to look at, not to mention sexy as hell. The chemistry was immediate. He made me feel like I was the only woman on the planet.

**NICK:** I had dinner set up in my private dining room, just the two of us. We drank champagne and talked. We couldn't keep our hands off of one another. I chased the staff out of the room and we made love right there under the table.

**JUDY:** I cannot completely explain how or why we ended up under the table, making love like two wild animals in complete abandon. It was the single, sexiest night of my life.

Even though I fell in love with Nick, there were practical matters to consider. We were both committed to other people. And Nick was on the verge of a very big



Judy Steinberg and Nick Nickolas

*Their initial romance turned into a friendship that's lasted on and off for 45 years. Now it's on again, and they are finally engaged.*

life. Once that was in motion, the last thing he wanted or needed was a relationship. I went back to my life not knowing when or if I would see him again.

**NICK:** Judy returned home. I knew she was going back to Tommy and her life with him. She had a great gig. He was a famous entertainer. Tommy was my friend. We got away with it once, but I wasn't going to get in the middle of them. We didn't make any

plans to see each other again. There really wasn't much I could say to her. The restaurants were everything to me.

**JUDY:** After Hawaii we didn't see each other for five years. By then I was married to another friend of Tommy's, the comedian and director David Steinberg, and Nick had opened Nick's Fishmarket in Beverly Hills.

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life for Nick. He was opening restaurant after restaurant all over the country. I would go to Nick's with David and friends of ours and we often shared special occasions with him. There was always the pull of our attraction, but when we saw each other, it was always with our families around. That kept us vertical.

And that was the way it stayed for a couple of decades — keeping in touch through the events of our lives including, as the years passed, those of our children and spouses — until we both found ourselves divorced and single again. Then we started meeting all over the country — in Miami, Key West, New York — whenever it was possible. He was more alluring as he aged.

In 2000, Nick called. He asked me to be his date at a special event in San Francisco. His family and friends were going to be there. He came from Florida and I came from L.A. This was the first and last time that I demanded my own room. I wanted him to get the message loud and clear: *I'm not sleeping with you!* I was angry with him. The last time we had been together, we went to the Keys and had a wonderful weekend. And then three years went by and I didn't hear from him.

**NICK:** Whenever I had a special event to attend, I always asked Judy to be my date. She always looked great and we liked being around each other. We loved dancing together and it was always exciting to see her. But when I invited her to San Francisco and she requested her own room, I was pretty shocked.

I'll admit, I'd gotten in the habit of calling women when I wanted someone to be with for a few days. That's how I was back then. If the women didn't like it, I didn't care. There was always someone else. I never apologized for my behavior. But Judy was different. I messed up. Even so, we had a great time that night. We danced most of the night. Then I took her to her room and kissed her good night.

**JUDY:** Until San Francisco, I always made it a point to be in touch with Nick — at least to know where he was and what he was doing. I was always hoping he'd make some kind of a move, but he never did. After San Francisco, I just let it go. But I never stopped caring about him and when I decided to try to reach him again, I couldn't find him. Several years went by. And then I thought, "Maybe he's on Facebook."

The good news: He was there. He had a bunch of pictures online and he still looked the same, as fabulous as always. The bad news: He said he was looking forward to spending the rest of his life in Greece. I sent him a message: *"Don't even think about leaving the country without speaking to me"* and I left him my phone number. That was in July 2012. I waited. And waited. Nothing.

**NICK:** I never looked at Facebook. My kids put me on it. That message from Judy probably stayed there a month and I never saw it. Finally my nephew Aaron said, "Are you going call to call her or what?" So I called, and it just so happened she had a seminar in Santa Clara in September.

**JUDY:** It was a marketing seminar in Santa Clara, which is not that far from Alameda, where Nick was living. I asked him to drive there and have dinner with me. I was excited to see him. But still, we hadn't seen each other in 10 years. I was nervous. Until I saw him that night in Santa Clara, I had no idea what had happened to him in the last decade. He told me everything over dinner.

**NICK:** I've had an amazing 55-year career, opening and closing dozens of restaurants. At one time I had 12 restaurants in five cities. We kept going in good times and bad. But in 2008 I had to close my last restaurant, Nick's Fishmarket of Hawaii in Boca Raton, and declare personal and business bankruptcy. It was a depressing time. My youngest daughter Ruby and I moved to the Bay Area. We stayed with my sister Helen while I looked for a job.

Meanwhile, my oldest daughter, Nesha, and her boyfriend had some problems. They couldn't take care of their baby, Phoenix. I flew to Arizona and we spent four hours together. I fell in love with the little guy. I told him my name was Papou — Grandpa in Greek. He became my new roommate: He had just turned 2. I had just turned 72.

So now here we are, Judy and me, after 10 years. We're sitting in this fancy restaurant in Santa Clara. She looks great. She smells great. She's dressed to kill in some off-the-shoulder number. And me? My money's gone, I'm living with my sister and I'm raising a kid.

**JUDY:** I was shocked. Once I heard all he'd been through, I understood why he'd been out of touch. So much had happened.

**NICK:** My long term plan was to move to the island of Crete. I figured I'd meet a nice Greek girl who'd help me raise Phoenix.

**JUDY:** My heart ached for him, but he wouldn't let me be sad. He was the same delightful, playful man he'd always been. He sat next to me in a booth at the restaurant and within moments it was clear that our chemistry was still there.

**NICK:** We couldn't keep our hands off each other, and half way through dinner we retired to her suite.

**JUDY:** It was not unlike that first night we met for dinner in Honolulu. Except we didn't get under the table.

**NICK:** I left in the middle of the night. But I knew I wanted more of her. I started to think, "What if?"

TO PAGE 10 ►

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## Judy and Nick Tell Their Story

► FROM PAGE 9

**JUDY:** I wrote him a letter I enclosed with his watch, which had somehow wound up under the bed.

August 9, 2012

Dear Nick,

*I was so excited about the possibility of seeing you. I recognized you before I could see your face. The tilt of your head, your walk, the way you carry yourself — it was like seeing you for the first time all over again. That first night in Honolulu 44 years ago lives in my mind like it was last week.*

*So outrageously sexy! And at 75, you haven't lost one tiny bit of your allure or charisma. Surely it's no secret that I've loved you all my adult life.*

*As always, Judy*

*P.S. I forgive you for never marrying me.*

**NICK:** I swear I read the letter 50 times! We started talking every day. I was never great on the phone, but before long, I was a phone junkie. I would text or phone her

all the damn day long. This was a new me.

**JUDY:** He began asking what my plans were for the future. I didn't have any! He suggested we have a rendezvous in Monterey for my 70th birthday on October 9.

**NICK:** She flew up from Palm Springs, landing at noon. I had driven to Carmel earlier in the day to set up our hotel room: Dom Perignon on ice, gardenias, roses, blueberries, dried fruit, chocolate — the works! I'd brought crystal champagne flutes from home.

**JUDY:** At some point, he said he'd been thinking about how we had never had a chance to live together and be a real couple. He wondered if I could get behind the idea of being with him on a permanent basis. That's when we began to plan our future together.

*For more of Judy and Nick's story and their advice for staying youthful and vital, visit [sexyatanyage.com](http://sexyatanyage.com).*

## 'He Treated Guests Like Kings and Queens'

Still practicing at Dino's what he's always preached

By CHRIS BARNETT

ASK Yanni Placourakis about his "Uncle Nick" Nickolas, and he'll tell you the founder of the once high-flying Nick's Fishmarket chain of 30 fine dining houses "was always more concerned about making every guest feel like a million bucks rather than the size of their tab."

Keith Sansone agrees. "Nick understood, long before anyone else, that a great restaurant was all about hospitality and treating guests like kings and queens," he says. "Today, with most restaurateurs, it's all about portion control, pour costs, the bottom line. With Nick, it was always: 'Make sure the customer gets enough great food and goes home happy, blown away by the experience.'"

Placourakis and Sansone were both longtime Nick's Fishmarket general managers who today head popular California restaurants. But like all of Nickolas's GMs, they started as busboys and had to work their way up. Nick himself started at the bottom of the business — picking pineapples in the fields of Hawaii, where he eventually opened his first restaurant in 1965.

The perennially tanned movie-star handsome guy who today works the door and the floor part time at Dino and Santino's on the corner of Fillmore and California to help out another "nephew" — owner Dino

Stavrakakis — still practices what he's been preaching for almost 50 years.

Nickolas greets with a mile-wide smile, takes the orders, serves the food and drinks, even busses the tables. And while it may be a pizza and a pitcher of beer these days, he delivers it with the same style and flourish as if it were platters of prime steaks, lobsters, buttery baked potatoes and glacial martinis.

"Nick delivered the classic kind of hospitality that has disappeared in so many restaurants," says Sheila Donnelly-Theroux, who remembers him when Nick's Fishmarket suddenly came on the scene. "It opened in the Waikiki Marine Hotel in the '70s and took Honolulu by storm," she says. "It was the cool, sophisticated restaurant to go to. He brought in dishes like shrimp scampi and Nick's Greek salad."

According to Donnelly-Theroux, who heads a Honolulu-based global communications firm for the luxury travel market: "Nick could make you feel like you were the only person in the world. A lot of restaurateurs don't really like their customers. They tolerate them. Nick loved them," she says. "He was one of the guys. He knew how to schmooze. He had a macho attitude in the best way, comfortable with the guys in the backroom. But the moment a lady came in, he stood up. In that way, Nick was incredibly attractive to both men and women."

Sansone, who is currently general man-



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DANIEL BARMANI

*"Nick always had that charisma. The women wanted to be with him. The guys wanted to be like him."*

— a former employee on NICK NICKOLAS, pictured with the crew at Dino and Santino's on Fillmore

ager of Sullivan's Steakhouse in Palm Desert, claims Nickolas always had confidence but never had attitude — and treated his employees with respect.

"I was 19 years old and working in an auto parts store in Chicago and cooking for my mom when I met Nick," he recalls. "I arrived at 9 a.m., someone welcomed me, took my coat, sat me down. Nick walks in with that big smile of his, shakes my hand and says 'How ya doing? So if you want to learn the restaurant business, you learn from the best — and I'm the best.' And then he asked me: 'How would you

like to work with me? Give your other job two weeks notice; I don't want you to just quit on them.'"

Sansone says he started as a "stocker," which was two levels below a busboy, but he learned how to be a general manager by watching the boss.

"He always dressed great and looked perfect but he never stood around like a boss. One time I was struggling with a platter of lobsters and bussing the table and he didn't just order someone to give me a hand. He stepped in and started bussing it with me," Sansone recalls. "He was larger

than life for me. It was a blast to work with him. Nick always had that charisma. The women wanted to be with him. The guys wanted to be like him."

Yanni Placourakis, who today owns the 1400 Bar and Grill in Alameda, contends there's no way to draw a word portrait of his Uncle Nick. "He had all of his servers wearing tuxedos in Hawaii in the '60s, which was unheard of in those days. He always had a car and driver. As a kid, he was charming a flight attendant at the airport and ended up as a stowaway on his first flight to Hawaii," Placourakis says. "He

drank more Donnie P (Dom Perignon) over the years than any single person in the world. He knows how to work hard, play hard and have a good time. Always has. Always will."

For Dino Stavrakakis, who became a single dad when his son Santino was born in 2011, Uncle Nick has been a blessing. "He stepped in then, when I needed a seasoned professional, and just took over," he says. "From his cooking to his charm to his motivation to working together with him on the restaurant's redesign, I don't know how I made it this far without him."



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# Investments Give Way to Jewelrymaking

By JUDY GODDESS

**Y**OU MIGHT SPOT recent New York transplant Brooke deDiego Miller in the local cafes and eateries, deep in conversation with a client, as she puts the finishing touches on a sketch. She then disappears to her neighborhood workshop and emerges with a creation: jewelry handcrafted to the buyer's exact specifications.

In July of last year, after eight years in New York City working in contract compliance for a large investment firm, Miller and her husband moved to San Francisco.

"I wanted to be closer to my family and live a slower life," she says. "It just so happens that the stars aligned and my husband and I found an apartment in the same building as my sister. It's kind of like *Friends*, but set in San Francisco."

Her roots also inspired the name for her jewelry company, Porter Gulch Designs. "I grew up in Aptos, in Santa Cruz County, on Porter Gulch," she says. "Some of my best memories are playing with my sisters on our street."

Miller designs and crafts fine jewelry: pendants, necklaces and rings of all kinds — engagement rings, wedding rings and stacking rings. A section of the kitchen in her Gough Street apartment serves as her workspace. Surrounded by neatly arranged saws, drills and pliers, she designs and creates her offerings.

"I need a larger space," she says. "Jewelrymaking is noisy work. I need a space with other jewelers."

A kind comment inspired her to explore jewelry design. "When I complimented my friend on her ring, she told me



*"I love  
making rings."*

— BROOKE DEDIEGO MILLER

she'd made it herself," Miller says. "That did it. I began taking jewelry classes and discovered I loved making rings."

While Miller's degree in business management and her work experience helped prepare her to open her own business, the reality was more than she bargained for at first. "As an owner, you wear so many hats," she says. "I had to buy photography equipment so I could quickly get my designs online, and I needed help with my website."

But business was in her blood.

"My parents are both entrepreneurs and I knew that I too would love to own my own business," she says. "And I've always been a creative person. I feel so much more satisfied working with my hands."

Initially Miller held on to her day job. But just before she and her husband relocated here when he took a job at Google, she quit her finance job to plunge full time into jewelry design.

"It was a learning experience," she says. "By following a few sellers on Etsy, I learned that you can sell fine jewelry online if you have a good product and good service."

She offers some ready-made designs — spare, stark and simple, sometimes embellished with precious and semi-precious stones. But most of her creations are made to order.

Family, friends and friends of friends bought her first designs. While word-of-mouth still brings in customers, 75 percent of Miller's business now comes from Etsy, a website with offerings from independent artisans. Other customers come her way through her own website and through craft fairs and retail stores. Locally Mudpie, the children's store at 2185 Fillmore Street, carries her designs — mostly stacking rings and initial pendants intended as gifts for mothers.

"My goal for the coming year is to expand into other retail stores nationwide, but I don't want to give up the face-to-face contact," Miller says. "I meet local clients at Fraiche, the yogurt shop on Fillmore Street, or at Sugar Café on Union. I show them my designs, we discuss their ideas, and I offer suggestions and ideas of my own. Usually we spend about 45 minutes to an hour working out the design."

Then it's back to the kitchen workshop. Miller estimates that it takes one to two weeks to complete a custom-ordered ring. "I never like to feel rushed," she says. "If I don't like what I've done, I just start over."

For more information about Brooke deDiego Miller's jewelry, visit [portergulch.com](http://portergulch.com).

I've always enjoyed putting pen to paper. Here, I am writing a whole new chapter.

After teaching for years and founding the Dilena-Takeyama Center for the Study of Japan & Japanese Culture, Dr. Kay Dilena now has time to do what she likes. Writing is among her interests which culminated in her newly-published autobiography. So rather than worry about the mundane—cooking, cleaning, and access to medical services—she focuses on reading, writing, travelling to Japan, and enjoying the richness of living in San Francisco. Are you ready for a new chapter, too? Contact Candiece at (415) 351-7900 to start yours!

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TR 9:40 - 10:05 AM HC 202 Graham

**Jour 21: News Writing and Reporting 3.0 Units**

M W F 10:10 - 11:00 AM BNGL 715 Gonzales

R 06:30 - 9:20 PM Mission/Rm 217 Rochmis

**Jour 22: Feature Writing 3.0 Units**

T 06:30 - 9:20 PM Mission/Rm 217 Rochmis

**Jour 23: Electronic Copy Editing 3.0 Units**

W 06:30 - 9:20 PM Mission/Rm 218 Rochmis

**Jour 25: Editorial Management 3.0 Units**

MWF 12:10 - 1:00 PM BNGL 615 Gonzales

**Jour 26: Fundamentals of Public Rel 3.0 Units**

TR 11:10 - 12:25 PM HC 202 Graham

**Jour 29: Magazine Editing & Production 3.0 Units**

T 06:30 - 08:45 PM Mission/RM 218 Graham

T TBA Mission/RM 218 Gonzales

**Jour 31: Internship Experience 2.0 Units**

PREREQ: JOUR 24 HOURS ARR Gonzales

**Jour 36: Advanced Reporting 3.0 Units**

M 6:30 - 9:20 PM Mission/RM 217 Gonzales

**Jour 37: Intro to Photojournalism 3.0 Units**

T R 9:40 - 10:55 AM BNGL 615 Lifland

W 6:30 - 09:20 PM Mission/RM 217 Lifland

Questions? Call Juan Gonzales at 415-239-3446

www.ccsf.edu/schedule

**NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SALES**

Single Family Homes	BR	BA	PK	Sq ft	Days	Date	Asking	Sale
3022 Pine St	3	3			19	10/9/2014	1,950,000	2,025,000
2209 Sutter St	3	2	1,920		3	10/3/2014	1,995,000	2,265,000
3829 Clay St	5	2	3,480		11	10/14/2014	3,695,000	3,475,000
2536 Green St	4	4	4,992		61	10/3/2014	3,950,000	3,540,000
3962 Clay St	5	5			89	9/19/2014	5,495,000	4,350,000
2752 Filbert St	4	3			9	10/3/2014	4,195,000	4,471,875
2900 Baker St	4	4	4,465		5	10/6/2014	4,100,000	4,680,597
3800 Clay St	5	2	5,530		34	10/7/2014	6,750,000	6,300,000
1973 Filbert St	4	4			2	9/16/2014	6,300,000	6,700,000
2118 Vallejo St	4	6	6,605		14	10/2/2014	7,950,000	7,950,000
2672 Filbert St	5	6	5,219		34	10/3/2014	8,600,000	8,500,000
3725 Washington St	5	7	9,540		23	10/14/2014	8,995,000	8,995,000

**Condos / Co-ops / TICs / Lofts**

2925 California St #4	1	1	484		92	10/1/2014	499,000	495,000
1600 Webster St #108	1	1	836		46	9/24/2014	795,000	805,000
32 Harris Pl	1	1	882		10	10/10/2014	799,000	895,000
2211 Broderick St #2	1	1	961		18	10/9/2014	925,000	941,750
1895 Pacific Ave #105	1	2	1,165		22	10/9/2014	898,000	999,999
1701 Jackson St #303	2	2	1,109		53	9/25/2014	1,135,000	1,130,000
2200 Sacramento St	1	2			14	9/26/2014	1,200,000	1,150,000
2875 Jackson St #41	1	1	1,208		4	10/3/2014	1,150,000	1,300,000
3981 Clay St	3	2	1,825		60	10/15/2014	1,750,000	1,750,000
1919 Octavia St #T4	3	2	1,901		28	10/3/2014	1,795,000	1,795,000
3524 Clay St	3	2	2,262		126	9/26/2014	1,875,000	1,800,000
1870 Jackson St #403	2	2	1,800		39	10/1/2014	1,695,000	1,849,000
2257 Washington St	3	2	1,743		10	10/1/2014	1,625,000	1,900,000
2865 Jackson St #13	2	2	1,623		1	9/24/2014	1,950,000	1,950,000
2948 Fillmore St	3	3			8	9/22/2014	1,795,000	1,950,000
2957 Jackson St	3	2	2,138		4	10/10/2014	1,995,000	2,300,000
3590 Washington St #2	3	2	2,332		36	9/17/2014	2,495,000	2,400,000
315 Cherry St	4	3			24	10/15/2014	2,850,000	2,850,000

**Both old and new homes selling fast**

Homebuyers in San Francisco's northern neighborhoods were off to the races as the typically brisk fall real estate season began: Half of all single-family homes that sold in Cow Hollow, Lower Pacific Heights, Pacific Heights and Presidio

Heights between mid-September and mid-October were claimed in two weeks or less.

Two of those homes – one just built and one built more than a century ago – found eager buyers in less than 72 hours.

In Cow Hollow, 1973 Filbert Street sold in two days for \$6.7 million, or 6 percent more than its listing price. Constructed earlier this year, the ultramodern, four-bedroom home is a high-tech affair, enabling its owners to control home security, entertainment, climate and lighting systems via a smartphone or an iPad.

On the other side of the spectrum was 2209 Sutter Street (left), which left the market after only three days in early October. Built in 1900, the remodeled three-bedroom Victorian home also commanded a premium, selling for \$2.3 million – 13.5 percent

more than its listing price. The home blends classic San Francisco design and architecture with updated amenities such as stainless-steel appliances and a wine refrigerator.

Age aside, both homes benefit from desirable locations within blocks of bustling commercial corridors.

— 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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BY PER SKOVJÆR SAND

I REMEMBER the screams from the kitchen: "Help! Help!"

I rushed down the stairs and on the floor was my landlord and dear friend Richard O'Donnell in the arms of my roommate. Richard had choked on peanut butter. His heart stopped beating. I remember the firefighters rushing in, the paramedics, the hospital, the coffee and the blueberry muffins we bought because we didn't know what else to do. I remember waiting. One and a half weeks later, I saw Richard for the last time in California Pacific Medical Center. On a blackboard next to his bed somebody had printed: "Keep comfortable."

When Richard died last April, everything suddenly changed in our artist collective on Broderick Street. Richard did not have a will and his out-of-state relatives were about to inherit the house. And we, six artists renting a place to work, would have to go.

Art was what brought me to San Francisco in 2011. Like so many other people who moved here, I had read the Beat author Jack Kerouac. I had found relief in the adventures he described in his most popular book, *On the Road*. Smoking an anxious cigarette on a rainy night in Denmark, I decided to study in San Francisco. Destiny brought me to the Broderick House through a post on Craigslist.

I arrived one night at the end of January 2011. The house had two floors and a basement. White paint was cracking on the outside. I rang the doorbell. A small man with grey hair and a slightly curved back opened the door. "Per is here," he called out.

A shiny black piano stood in the living room. Old carpets with red patterns



Violinist Charles Molle created the Broderick House collective in 1947.

## A House of Art & Music

Change looms for an artist collective on Broderick

covered the dark wooden floor. There was space. These walls had been blessed with great music. Tunes of love and happiness had been composed in the basement underneath the floor.

Richard O'Donnell's partner, Charles Molle, had moved to San Francisco in 1947 and bought the house on Broderick Street. He was a Pearl Harbor survivor awarded two bronze stars for bravery, a gay man and a musician — a violinist. Molle met O'Donnell in 1959, and they were partners until Charles died in 1999.

Broderick House became a breathing organism, growing and shaping the change going on in the 1950s, '60s and '70s in San Francisco. Beat painter Michael Bowen exhibited his art in the living room. Jim Henson, who created the Muppets, visited. Author Isabel Allende was a friend.

More recently, musician Tom Luce of the band Luce lived with Charles and recalled: "Charles saw life through the eyes of an artist and he related to everyone from a nurturing and caring place. He set the house

up as a place to share this art and music, but ultimately he was using these tools to help us get to know ourselves, our artistic side, and everything in the world around us."

Richard was more silent. He listened. He was understanding. He was supportive.

Charles and Richard rented out rooms to artists, many of them young gay men. Broderick House, near Clay Street, became a family to many, and Charles and Richard provided security and love.

When Charles died in 1999, Richard became the trustee of the property. The love and the magic lived on. Remixes slipped from Jordan's room. Todd, another DJ, bounced his headphones at the kitchen table. Richard smoked Benson and Hedges in the garden accompanied by his deaf cat, Lars. One day Richard and I sat for half an hour in the garden watching the baby bumblebees that had moved into a crack in the concrete. Richard was worried about them and was careful not to spray them whenever he hosed the plants.

Richard did not care about numbers and lawyers and paperwork. He cared about people. He also was not aware he actually owned the house. He thought that Charles' family would inherit it when he died.

Since Richard's death, we have thought of ways to save the house. Tom Luce picked me up one afternoon and we drove to a meeting with members of the San Francisco Community Land Trust. They said the trust has already saved four houses by finding investors who wanted to help the tenants buy their own property. We saw a hope. We have to find investors. We have to raise \$1 million. That's a lot of money.

But then again, the house is still alive, and so is the art. Tom Luce plays shows in the living room. Tatiana writes a play, commissioned by an Off-West End theatre in London. Loren works on his second big movie; the first one went to Sundance. Peter composes new songs in his room and runs down the front stairs with his guitar on the way to another show. Marion teaches French. Sarah has recitals with her string quartet in the living room. Every day I write.

Our friends are ballerinas and Buddhists and beer experts. If we find investors, Broderick House could continue as a community of working artists, carrying the vision into the future. If not, we will become part of a narrative often told these years in San Francisco of artists being evicted from their homes. If we find investors, we will host shows, teach, learn and share the arts. We will help immortalize the words Charles Molle wrote on the back of a picture of him playing the piano in the 1980s: "My music is my solace and comfort. It has no beginning or ending."

For more information, contact the artists at [broderickhouse@outlook.com](mailto:broderickhouse@outlook.com).



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