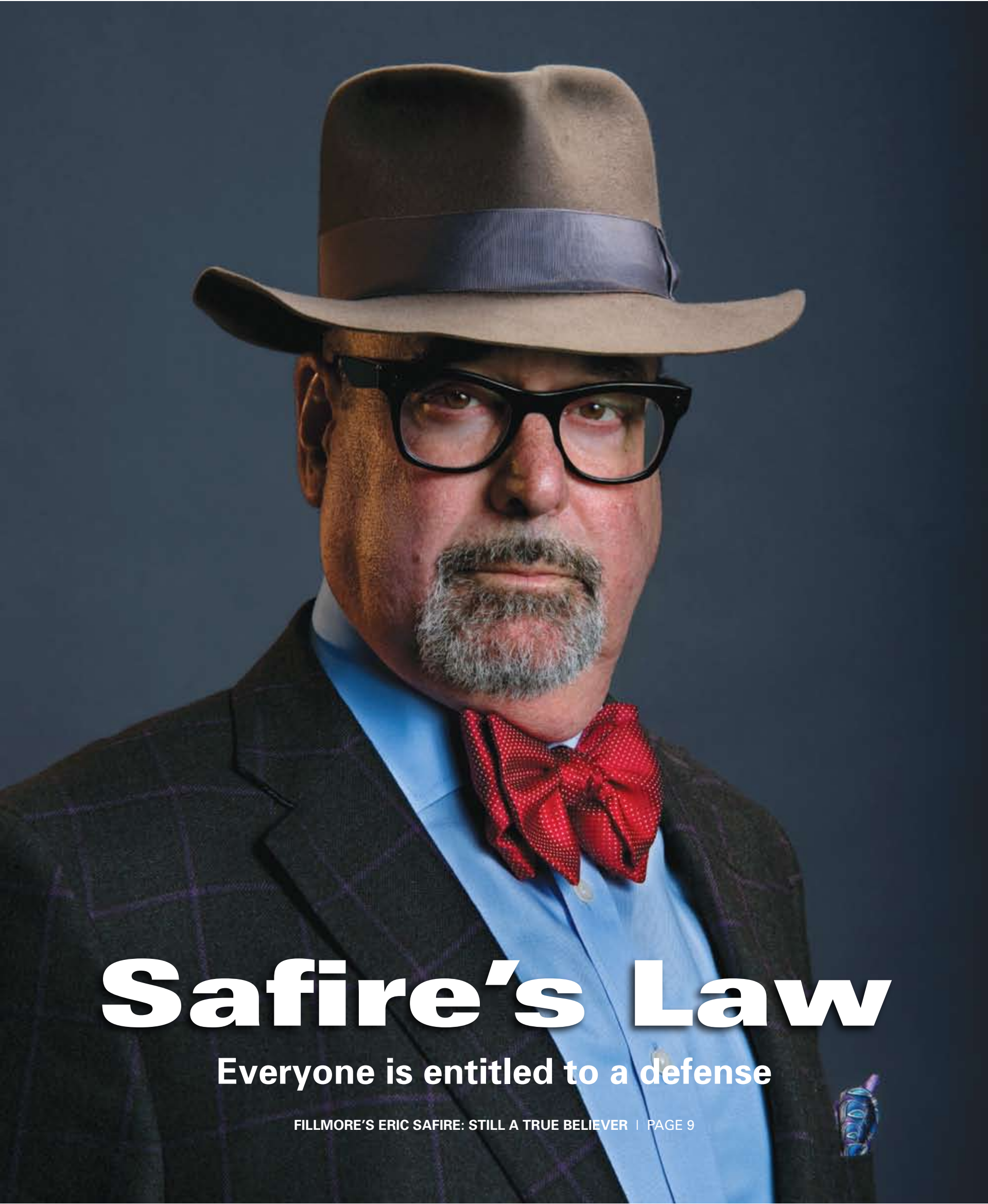


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THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ JUNE 2018



Safire's Law

Everyone is entitled to a defense

FILLMORE'S ERIC SAFIRE: STILL A TRUE BELIEVER | PAGE 9

PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANK WING

STILL THINKING ABOUT WHAT TO GET DAD?

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UPFRONT

A BELOVED BOOKSTORE

A Go FUND ME campaign to raise \$75,000 to retire the debts of Browser Books and help keep it in business was overwhelmingly successful and topped its goal in a month. The campaign brought out many donors and well-wishers. Here is a sampling of their comments.

I love your bookstore! Fillmore Street wouldn't be the same without it.

ANGELA TERRY

Thank you for providing our neighborhood with a valuable service and neighborly vibe for all these years.

PAM HOMMEYER

Tithing.

ALICE SEBOLD

We love Browser Books! We live in Cambridge, Mass., and never miss an opportunity to shop at Browser Books when we visit San Francisco.

CYNTHIA MALTBIÉ

Love your store — such a vital part of the neighborhood.

ALAN FEDERMAN

Shopped here for 30 years. Happy to help save a neighborhood treasure.

WILL HEARST

We love Fred! With our best wishes for Browser Books.

CLAUDIA & TOM SCHWARTZ

S.F. is nothing without its great independent bookstores! I've spent many memorable hours at Browser. Long may you reign!

DAVID TALBOT

I have always been so proud to have Browser Books in our neighborhood and will fight to see it stay. I will ask my friends and family to buy from Browser Books and, since I live around the corner, I will offer to pick up and deliver to them. Any other ideas? We have to save the things that make this neighborhood great, and Browser Books is top of the list.

LISA VICTOR

A wonderful place to browse and buy books. Let's not have *Fahrenheit 451* happen little by little by buying books online. Support bookstores!

BARBARA GEORGE

I used to live in San Francisco and love your store. Thank you for supporting books and authors like myself. I look forward to visiting again when I'm in town.

HENRY NEFF

Go Browser!

NION McEVoy

THE NEW FILLMORE

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Connecting the neighborhood

Every month, 20,000 copies of the New Fillmore circulate 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.

It's not just a bookstore, it's a neighborhood gem.

DAVID TAVERNAS

Yes to neighborhood bookstores! But make this an opportunity to revisit selection and presentation.

JACOPO LENZI

My daughter and I regularly come in and read for an hour and then leave with a new book. Good luck!

RACHEL WATSON

The heart of Fillmore Street. Closure is not an option! We love you, Browser Books.

MEGHAN BERCKES

It is an honor to be able to support you in return for all the joy I have experienced at Browser Books.

LEE GRYGO

Good luck! Kudos for your children's book section.

MARY ELLEN KEMP

I came in here often when living in Pacific Heights. Local bookstores are so much more than the book bought; they remind one of a person, a feeling, a place of belonging. I truly hope you reach your goal!

PAYAL SHAH

Hoping you can continue this wonderful legacy!

CYNTHIA DUBENSKY

I've never been to Browser, but too many bookstores and other wonderful small businesses are going away. I needed to do my part.

ANNE SCANLAN-ROHRER

THE NEW FILLMORE

newfillmore.com | for updates and archives

Facebook YouTube



HANDEL ARCHITECTS

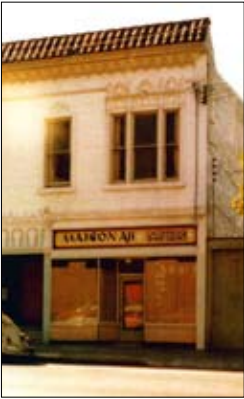
Stepping up the wine scene

One of New York’s top wine shops, **VERVE WINE**, is opening a West Coast outpost at 2358 Fillmore this month, bringing master sommelier Dustin Wilson back to San Francisco, where he and director of operations Eric Railsback collaborated at the late RN74 and Mason Pacific. Wilson went on to greater glory in New York at Eleven Madison Park and in the film *Somm* before launching the first Verve shop in Tribeca.

“We’re super excited to join the neighborhood and looking forward to getting involved and supporting the community,” Wilson said. The stylish shop will offer small-production wines from Italy, France and California, as well as classes and tastings.



FRANK WING



COURTESY OF LEE BURNS

Curbside Cafe turns 40

The crew at **CURBSIDE CAFE** had no idea, but they were about to celebrate the restaurant’s 40th anniversary with the person who started it all. Lee Burns came for dinner on Saturday night, May 26, just as he had 20 years earlier, and 20 years before that, when he and partner Manuel Pena (above) opened the restaurant at 2417 California.

When they took over what had been the Maison Aji (left), the rent went from \$150 to \$300 a month. Two years later when the rent went up to \$450, they sold the restaurant to concentrate on a second Curbside in Napa. “It was the most fun I’ve ever had in my life,” Burns said.



KASSIE BORRESON | FOTOGRAFIE




Dine in or carry out

A combination craft grocery and restaurant, **MERCHANT ROOTS**, opened at 1365 Fillmore on May 5. It’s the brainchild of chef Ryan Shelton (left) and sommelier Madison Michael. The couple bring impressive credentials and an innovative concept, with a carry-out counter featuring freshly made pasta, pastries, sandwiches and salads — plus wine, cheese, charcuterie and artisan pantry items.

Coming soon: The Table at Merchant Roots, an intimate three-night-a-week tasting menu for eight diners at \$110 per person, plus an optional \$70 wine pairing.

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We must have full-staffing of our police force. Our City Supervisors permitted this shortage, affecting the safety of our Citizens, and exposing the Cops on the street to greater harm. In 1994 we voted for Prop D, mandating that officers be brought up to full strength — 1,971. That minimum may have been sufficient 25 years ago, but doesn't meet today's needs. In July, due to retirement eligibility, we may have 300 fewer officers. As mayor, I'll guarantee a sufficient police staffing level.

We need to prosecute felons, **not** protect them!

I wrote the Sanctuary City law in 1989 because so many people were deported in one night and the City was left to care for the children of the deported. As a mother, it broke my heart to see families torn apart and so many children left without parents.

I never wrote it to protect dangerous felons. The petition ordinance that I filed at City Hall will be on the ballot in November. It will roll back the 2016 amendments that allowed dangerous felons — people who commit murder, rape, and mayhem — to stay on our streets. That was never the intent of the Sanctuary City law.

Vote Angela Alioto Mayor on June 5th!

The SF Police Officers Association Endorses Only Angela Alioto for Mayor.



www.aliotoformayor.com

"The Mayor of San Francisco ... must understand that compassion must be balanced with common sense when tackling public safety issues, and keeping San Franciscans safe and free of crime. Most importantly, she must understand our police department and its members and care about public safety.

"The only candidate who meets this criteria and has the passion, historical perspective, common sense, and unquestioned love for our City is Angela Alioto."

— Martin Halloran
SFPOA President

Angela ALIOTO FOR MAYOR

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CRIME WATCH

Robbery

Laguna and Ellis

April 18, 2 a.m.

A driver pulled up beside a female pedestrian and offered her a ride to her car. Once she got inside the vehicle, the man drove her to a dead end street and said he wanted to have sex with her. The woman said no and struggled with him. He punched her and grabbed her purse, which contained her ID, cell phone and car keys. Eventually she managed to get out of the car. The woman sustained minor injuries in the scuffle. The suspect is still at large.

Stabbing

Laguna and Turk

April 21, 6:25 a.m.

A man walking on Laguna Street was jostled, and then felt a sharp pain. After he arrived home, he realized he had been stabbed with a sharp object. He called the police, who transported him to a hospital. It was determined that his injury was not life-threatening. The matter is under investigation.

Prohibited Weapon, Marijuana Possession for Sale, Theft, Battery, Resisting Arrest

Geary and 21st

April 24, 2:32 p.m.

Officers on patrol witnessed a traffic violation and stopped the driver. When they saw a knife in his waistband, they asked him to step out of the vehicle. A records check revealed an outstanding warrant, a suspended license and his association with the Norteno street gang. An arrest search uncovered a large amount of currency in different denominations and a Ziplock bag full of marijuana. Inside the car were several additional bags of marijuana along with a scale and additional packaging material — all indicating that the marijuana was for sale. The man was arrested and booked at county jail.

Possession of Prohibited Weapon, Battery, Theft, Resisting Arrest

Fulton and 7th

April 26, 6:53 p.m.

A heavily intoxicated man walked into a neighborhood store to buy beer. When the employee at the register refused to sell it to him, he shouted profanities and started to leave, merchandise in hand, without paying for it. The store employee started out in pursuit. The man opened the beer, poured it on the employee, then emptied the rest onto the floor. Officers detained the inebriated man a block away. A search revealed he was carrying brass knuckles and a large knife. He was arrested and booked at county jail.

Hot Prowl

Turk and Webster

April 27, 7:45 p.m.

A woman heard a noise inside her apartment. When she looked out her window, she saw a man crawling out of another room in her apartment. She ran to the other room and discovered that her laptop and cell phone were missing. She called the police, who have no suspects at this time.

Robbery

Franklin and Ellis

April 28, 11:45 p.m.

A man out walking was approached by another man in his early 30s who shouted threats at him. He then attacked the pedestrian and wrestled his bag away from him; his laptop and cell phone were inside the bag. The suspect then jumped on a bicycle and fled southbound on Gough Street. Police are still investigating the matter.

Assault

Van Ness and McAllister

April 29, 4 a.m.

A man who was working in a building in the early morning hours was opening a rear door to admit a co-worker when he was jumped from behind by a man in his late 20s who punched him several times, then fled on foot. The worker who was assaulted was transported to the hospital with minor injuries. Police have no suspects at this time.

Pedestrian Struck by Car

Buchanan and Lombard

May 7, 1:30 a.m.

A man was crossing Lombard Street against a red light when he was struck in the intersection by a vehicle traveling westbound. The driver fled the scene and police have no description. The man who was struck was transported to the hospital with serious injuries. According to the police, this intersection is part of the city's high-injury network, where 70 percent of the city's fatal accidents occur. Anyone with information about this incident is urged to call the 24-hour tipline at 415-575-4444 or to send a text to 847411 with SFPD at the beginning of the message.

Car Break-in, Officer-Involved Shooting

Steiner and Geary

May 11, 12:59 p.m.

As police were detaining a man while investigating a car break-in, a second man suspected in the same break-in ran to a white Hyundai sedan parked near O'Farrell and Webster streets, jumped inside and drove off at a high speed. Multiple units were called to assist and a car chase began. Eventually the fugitive driver stopped, but only after he had been involved in two collisions with marked police cars and an officer-involved shooting.

Police reported that no one was hurt by the gunfire. They took the man into custody at Polk and McAllister streets. Both suspects were transported to a hospital with non-life-threatening injuries, and an officer was treated for minor injuries at the scene.

The shooting is under investigation by the district attorney's office, the Department of Police Accountability, the Internal Affairs Division and the homicide detail. The SFPD will hold a town hall meeting to discuss the incident. Anyone who has further information is encouraged to contact the SFPD.

Shooting

California and Pierce

May 25, 1:36 p.m.

A woman was shot while walking down California Street. The shooter fled before police arrived. The woman who was shot is expected to survive. Police have no information on the suspect, who is still at large. Anyone with information on this incident is urged to call the 24-hour tipline.

Shooting

Fillmore and Golden Gate

May 25, 10 p.m.

A man and woman were driving on Fillmore near Golden Gate when they heard gunshots ring out. They stopped their car when they realized they had been hit. When police arrived, the two were taken to the hospital. Both gunshot victims are expected to recover. Police have no description of the suspect and are currently investigating the matter.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This information comes from Richmond Station, which serves the neighborhood west of Divisadero Street, and other sources. No information was released again this month from Northern Station, which serves the area east of Divisadero.

Noosh Is the Name

By CHRIS BARNETT

THIS JUST IN: **NOOSH** is the name of the new restaurant being created on the corner of Fillmore and Pine. The concept is a fresh take on casual fine dining at reasonable prices. The cuisine: Eastern Mediterranean inspired, California made. The name — soon to adorn the Victorian storefront that once housed the revered Pacific Heights Bar and Grill and most recently Thai Stick — is a festive Persian toast



“to eat and drink” that also translates as “lovely lady.” Partners **JOHN LITZ** and the husband and wife chefs **SAYAT AND LAURA OZYILMAX** are still noodling the menu. Says Sayat: “Think California cuisine, locally sourced, farm fresh, healthy with an eastern Mediterranean inspiration — your favorite dishes from Turkey, Iran, Greece, all carried through to the bar and beverages.” Adds Litz: “We’re not just about food and drink. It’s about elevating the aesthetic, the service, the hospitality. We hope to set a new standard.”

The trio have the chops. The chefs have cooked in five of the world’s 50 highest rated restaurants.

Litz has launched restaurants in Chicago and Mexico and is a founding partner in the tough-to-get-into Lazy Bear in the Mission.

Fillmore residential interior designer **EDEN WRIGHT** has been commissioned to collaborate with the partners on a totally new look for the space. She has an easy commute. The **EDEN WRIGHT DESIGN STUDIO** is just up the stairs above Noosh.

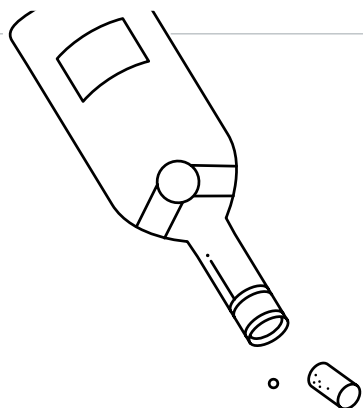
■ **COMFORT CUISINE:** Across the street, **HARRY’S BAR** has again reworked its dinner and weekend brunch menus to make it more of a neighborhood comfort food hangout. The always-busy, 31-year-old, six-screen sports saloon has also nabbed the crown as Fillmore’s best happy hour with \$2 off well drinks, \$3 off house wines and tasty bar snacks, including a thin-crust Mexican pizza for \$6 and pork tacos for \$2. After a couple of false starts, co-owners **RICK HOWARD** and **GEORGE KARAS** have hired chef-restaurateur **SCOTT YOKILIS**, who recently shuttered Hog & Rocks in the Mission, to fire up Harry’s kitchen. This latest move comes after they installed **SALIN MOHMEL** from Mumbai, India’s, five-star Taj Mahal and Oberoi hotels, as a personable GM and host. With hefty pours and new dishes such as a Southern fried chicken sandwich, a bacon-wrapped “danger dog” and a double-decker burger, Harry’s is highballing into its fourth decade.

■ **BORDELLO CHIC:** The **MONTE CRISTO INN**, a former brothel, saloon and speakeasy turned B&B at the corner of Pine and Presidio, may be S.F.’s oldest hospitality structure, built in 1875. Today it’s a lushly furnished, little-known 14-room hideaway with WiFi, flat screen TV, a computer kiosk, marble baths, even a junior suite. Rooms start at \$200 a night. The basic breakfast is continental, but you can upgrade to a full morning meal. No bar, no ladies (or gentlemen) of the evening anymore, but lots of history. And front desk manager Jack Ma has stories to tell.

■ **SUMMERTIME, SUMMERTIME:** The neighborhood is short of swimming holes. But if you don’t want to trek through the fog to the beach, you can take the plunge at three nearby gyms. **FITNESS SF**, at 1455 Fillmore, has a 25-yard-long swimming pool with swim coaches on staff plus long opening hours for \$99.95 a month, with no signup fee. The **JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER**, at 3200 California, also has a 25-yard-long pool as part of its fully equipped fitness center. Basic memberships are \$130 a month for adults, \$111 for seniors, or there’s a \$25 day rate if you’re not a member. Best deal of all: **HAMILTON RECREATION CENTER**’s 25-yard-long pool at 1900 Geary and Steiner. It’s \$6 per swim — only a buck for kids 17 and under — and even has water slides.

■ **CHAMPIONSHIP HOMES:** Golden State Warriors coach **STEVE KERR** just picked off a choice home on the 3000 block of Pacific Avenue for \$7.35 million. Another “fixer” on the same block went for \$9.7 million. Meantime, the former University of the Pacific dental school, artfully morphed a few years ago into The Pacific, the 76-unit luxury condo complex by Trumark Urban SF residential whiz **ARDEN HEARING**, is a virtual sellout. Still remaining: a grand penthouse at \$13.85 million.

The Beat goes on. Send newsy local items to chris@cbarnmedia.com or call 415-921-5092.



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The Final Days of Kelly Johnson

BY ARASH MALEKZADEH

A MONTH AGO, I was offered the opportunity to film the last days of Kelly Johnson's life. I did not know him. I did not know how or why his death was predetermined.

I was told to meet the next morning at Peet's for coffee. Then I'd walk half a block with my equipment to a beautiful blue Victorian overlooking Fillmore Street where he'd lived since 1969. After climbing two flights of stairs, each step creaking with antiquity, I entered the top flat. I followed an oxygen tube strewn across the carpet.

Kelly Johnson sat on his red couch, calmly staring out the window, as I approached with my camera in hand. A smile stretched across his face as he greeted me. He was ready for his close up.

I met Kelly only during the last two weeks of his life, but came to feel as if I had known him longer than I've been alive. His spirit was unrestrained. But his body was incapacitated, tethered to his oxygen concentrator and restricted to a walker and, at the end, a wheelchair.

"My body has given out," he said. "You take away my medication, my oxygen, and I'll be dead by sundown."

At 75 years old, Kelly was terminally ill with pulmonary disease, his breathing labored, his body racked with arthritis. After several years of declining health, barely able to leave his apartment, he began planning his death. On May 7, Kelly Johnson died after invoking California's new aid-in-dying law — a memory I cannot erase.

California's End of Life Option Act went into effect on June 9, 2016, allowing terminally ill adults to be prescribed aid-in-dying medication under certain conditions. Patients must have the capacity to make medical decisions for themselves and self-administer the drug, either by eating, drinking or swallowing it. Pharmacies and physicians can opt out at any point.

Kelly came to his decision on the way to Peet's, a community hub on the corner of Fillmore and Sacramento. He was a regular there, having spent countless mornings and afternoons cultivating friendships over cups of coffee and conversation.

"I reached a point where people were coming and dragging me down to Peet's, and I was just gasping for breath," Kelly said. "There was nothing left of me." He realized his patronage at Peet's would soon come to a halt. "I got about three or four steps from my house and I just wanted to die," he said. "I wanted it to be over."

As a child, Kelly performed with his sister on the vaudeville circuit as a contortionist and tap dancer. When he moved to California as an adult in the late 1960s, he and his wife started the San Francisco Dance Theater on Fillmore Street — and changed the face of Bay Area dance in the decades that followed.



In the final minutes of his life, Kelly Johnson was surrounded by his friends and family.

His spirit was unrestrained, but his body had given out. So he exercised his right to die under California's contested End of Life Option Act.

In the 1980s, he shifted his focus after becoming executive director of the Berkeley Symphony, working alongside international greats like conductor Kent Nagano, until his diminishing health pushed him toward retirement. In the final stretch of his career, he got to do what he had always wanted: He became a concert pianist, embarking on a tour of retirement communities in Northern California, playing classical piano concerts and composing original music of his own. Earlier this year he issued a final CD of ballet music he wrote and performed.

"I've managed to produce something that I've loved until the very end," he said.

Kelly Johnson was an entertainer at heart. He'd arranged countless performances throughout his life and was determined to orchestrate his own death — the grand finale.

"I look back at my life and I've choreographed an extraordinary dance," he said. "It's over. Strike a pose! Bring the curtain down!"

As I documented his final weeks, I witnessed a person truly coming to peace with the end of his life. Kelly spent his evenings in the intimate company of his friends, listening to private performances from various musical guests. The sounds of the B3 organ, vocal melodies and clinking glasses floated through his living room window out into the night air.

"I'm in my home, I've got live music, I've got a lot of people," he said. "I can go to a nursing home and I'd have a chest at the end of my bed with all my belongings in it, with someone who's prolonging my life in misery. But you

don't have to have a black period in your life. I don't, and I'm very fortunate."

At first, I felt intrusive — following his final moments with a camera, recording private conversations and interactions. Yet Kelly didn't mind. He wanted the world to hear his story and to know about the end-of-life option.

Kelly acknowledged that he could let his life naturally take its course, or take his chances by quitting the medication that was keeping him alive. But he was determined to choreograph exactly how he would leave the world.

"I'm happy he can go the way he wants to," said Leda Meredith, his daughter. "And what the rest of us have to deal with as far as grieving after the fact is not his problem."

On his last day, seven hours before his death, I followed Kelly on his final trip down to Peet's. He was surrounded by his eclectic community of longtime companions and neighborhood friends, all eager to say their final goodbyes. On the wall was a newly hung portrait of him. He read from a brass plaque attached to the place where he often sat, engraved with the words "Kelly's Corner."

"In loving remembrance of Kelly Johnson, Mayor of Peet's and friend to all," he read aloud before the emotional crowd erupted in applause. After an hour of goodbyes, he retreated back to his home to prepare to die.

I set up my tripod next to his baby grand piano. My lens peeked around the corner of the archway leading into his living room. I knew what to expect, although I couldn't say I was ready. But Kelly was.

He took his anti-nausea medication in preparation for the aid-in-dying drug. He sat with his daughter on his left and his best friend and downstairs neighbor on his right. He drank a rare tequila from India as he listened to a recording of himself playing Scriabin's *24 Preludes, Opus 11*. His hands jolted as his muscle memory played along.

"They're not perfect but I love those pieces," he said. "If anything musically is me, it's those pieces."

After the 40-minute composition ended, he was handed the aid-in-dying medication — 90 capsules of powder mixed with orange juice. He had two minutes before the concoction turned to sludge.

"I think now my brain is telling me it'll fade away peacefully and leave me with my friends," Kelly said. "That's my everlasting life. And I'm very happy, just very happy."

On his cue, the room filled with his most recent recording, Chopin's *Nocturne 21 B*. With no hesitation, he quickly sipped the cocktail through an oversized straw. As the music fluttered through the speakers, his eyes settled shut in the embrace of his most beloved.



Arash Malekzadeh's film screens this month.
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Buyer to verify all information including but not limited to the square footage, lot size, and schools.



By Pamela Feinsilber

INTERNATIONAL opera singer David Cangelosi has been subletting an apartment in the neighborhood since April, when he began rehearsals with San Francisco Opera for Richard Wagner’s epic Ring Cycle: four operas over three evenings and one afternoon each week for three weeks. Cangelosi, a tenor, sings in the first opera, *Das Rheingold*, which opens on June 12, and the third, *Siegfried*, opening on June 15, and will perform on the two following Tuesday and Friday nights.

What brought you to the neighborhood?

Artists are more and more these days in charge of finding our own accommodations. I started coming to San Francisco almost 20 years ago and usually stayed closer to the Civic Center. I thought this is a beautiful city, with a lot of diverse and interesting neighborhoods. A number of colleagues have stayed here and raved about it. The unit is like the top of a dollhouse. It’s on top of the hill at Presidio and California, with a spectacular view facing east as you wake up in the morning and as the sun goes down. It’s like a little bird’s nest, just exquisite.

What’s a typical day like?

We often start rehearsing at 10 a.m., and since I rise early, I go to one of my favorite locations in the neighborhood, the Jewish Community Center, for a workout. One lovely thing about the apartment is that one room flows beautifully into the other, so there’s a nice through-line from the bedroom through the living room into the kitchen and out the door. I go back to the apartment, pick up the few things I need, and continue to flow my way to the Opera House to rehearse. During that 40- or 50-minute walk, I warm up my opera voice, which garners a few strange looks.

Maybe you’re not the only one singing on the street.

Yes, lots of people talk to themselves on the street. Sometimes people will start singing along with me, with

whatever crazy warmup I’m doing; some people will try to imitate me. One of San Francisco’s homeless got up and danced a little bit, and I started dancing with him. But usually it’s just looking or smiling. These vocal exercises really aren’t very pretty; they’re meant to warm up your instrument and stretch it in various ways. As we shift closer to performances, we’ll start rehearsing closer to evening, because we have to transition to nighttime singing.

How would you describe your role in the Ring Cycle?

Mime is the downtrodden brother of the opera’s main antagonist, Alberich. In *Das Rheingold*, he turns the gold his brother steals from the Rheinmaidens into the ring everyone pursues. He is also charged with driving the action in *Siegfried* by raising Siegfried from a baby to a powerful young adult he intends on using to regain the magic ring. He never leaves the stage for 90 minutes and has a wonderful death scene. It is the most towering role in all of opera for someone like myself. I’m a very specialized kind of character tenor. I do unusual personages, everything from romantics to evildoers or interlocutors and comedic characters. You need a wide variety of acting skills to do the roles I do, as well as athletic and dancing skills. It’s like being a utility baseball player; you have to be able to play every position.

What are you doing in your free time?

I like to become part of the fabric of the neighborhood. Right next door is a great breakfast place, Ella’s. I like strolling down to Mollie Stone’s, strolling up to Bryan’s or Trader Joe’s. I love b. patisserie and Smitten Ice Cream and Yum Yum Hunan — I was just there last night — and all the little bars and restaurants along Fillmore.

Around Presidio Heights, a favorite place is the public library, a beautiful building in a beautiful setting. One block farther on Sacramento are all these beautiful trattorias and interesting art and antique and furniture stores. There’s a wonderful place called Wisteria, with decorative prints in the window. And the Vogue, a classic old movie house. We see few of these anymore, so when I see one, I always like to patronize it.



DAVID CANGELOSI

Tenor David Cangelosi is a guest artist with SF Opera.

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BY CHRIS BARNETT

IN A CITY where big name lawyers have small armies of partners, paralegals, powerful clients, corner offices and \$1,000 an hour fees, Eric M. Safire travels a lonely road. He works solo out of a Fillmore Street Victorian, often representing dead-broke clients accused of murder or crimes almost as bad.

Safire doesn't have the marquee rep of San Francisco legal legends Mel Belli, Jake Ehrlich, Vincent Hallinan and his boys, Stewart Hanlon or Tony Serra. But his courtroom cunning, relentless cross-examination and skill in compassionately connecting with jurors and planting the seeds of reasonable doubt have won him a large dose of respect from judges and prosecutors over the last three and a half decades.

"Eric is a true believer in defending the individual's constitutional rights," says Savannah Blackwell, a San Francisco criminal defense lawyer. "I've seen him reduce a cop almost to tears on the stand when he senses the guy was stretching the facts to establish cause for an arrest. Eric's like a bulldog. It gives you the chills."

Yet in person Safire is not the bombastic, swaggering, headline grabber often portrayed in film and television courtrooms. He has a certain cinematic flair about him, but it's more low-key.

"Eric Safire was a formidable opponent in the courtroom — honest, clever and creative, with a lot of jury appeal — who took on cases nobody else would touch," recalls Paul Cummins, a former prosecutor and chief assistant in the San Francisco district attorney's office for 34 years. "He doesn't talk down to jurors; he kinda relates to them. He goes to court wearing a hat, rain or shine, fights hard, fights ethically. He doesn't come in bare-knuckled. He doesn't throw dirty punches. I respect him. I can't say that for all criminal defense lawyers."

Cummins, now in private practice specializing in workers' comp cases, says Safire got more than a few unexpected courtroom victories against the D.A.'s office. "It's not because we were better than the defense attorneys. But because our charging standards are so high, we're not going in with a 'maybe' case," Cummins says. "So when Eric would win his cases against us, that was a very unusual thing at the Hall of Justice — and we heard about it."

ERIC SAFIRE does not come from a long line of lawyers, never clerked for a federal judge, didn't attend an Ivy League law school. His dad was a used car salesman in Scranton, Pa., who later went into the advertising business with Eric's uncles. Muses Safire: "Just like my dad, who was trying to sell a reasonable used car, I'm trying to sell reasonable doubt."

Safire opened Philadelphia's first Haagen-Dazs shop while in college, then was among the students picked to help plan bicentennial events around the country. That introduced him to San Francisco. He later applied to every law school in Philly, but when they were slow in responding, he mailed an application to Golden Gate University School of Law, was quickly accepted and moved west. "I didn't want to wait around," he says.

When Safire graduated, he couldn't get work locally, so he took a job in 1978 as a public defender in the wilds of Alaska's Kenai Peninsula. As a rookie, he tried 80 cases in three years, defending accused murderers, drug dealers and hunters shooting moose out of season. He won 30 percent of the cases. Safire returned to the Bay area in January 1981, passed the California bar exam and hung out his first shingle on



FRANK WING

Criminal defense lawyer Eric Safire shows up for his clients and takes every case.

Still a True Believer

From his Fillmore Street Victorian, Eric Safire maintains that everybody deserves a lawyer

lower Polk Street, eventually moving to an office in the heart of the Tenderloin at 433 Turk.

"My father always wanted me to be a doctor or a lawyer because they would be respected. As a lawyer, he told me to always show up for my clients and take every case," Safire says. And he took his dad's advice, every word of it. "Everyone is entitled to a defense and there are varying degrees of guilt," he says. "I never ask my clients if they're guilty or not. I take a look at the evidence the prosecution has and formulate a defense. The other side has the burden of proving guilt *beyond* a reasonable doubt."

In 1984, early in his career, Safire was a plaintiff's lawyer working civil actions when 19 SFPD plainclothes officers with guns drawn raided Lord Jim's fern bar at Polk and Broadway, arresting the owner on charges of drugging and sexually assaulting two women and accusing him of selling cocaine. About 60 customers and employees were searched and detained for two and a half hours. But it was a bad bust.

"I hung out at Lord Jim's all the time and so did a lot of public defenders and people from law school — and while I wasn't there that night, they were," says Safire. "I sued the city and the police department on behalf of 22 people who were victims of egregious police misconduct." Eventually, the city settled out of court, paid the detainees "hundreds of thousands of dollars" and the D.A. dropped the charges against the bar owner for lack of evidence.

He pocketed \$5,000 for six years of

work and bought a 1971 very used convertible Mercedes. "I loved that car," Safire says. "Charles Breyer, a very successful lawyer in town who's now on the federal bench, drove one and I wanted to be just like Chuck." (Breyer is a judge on the U.S. District Court in San Francisco; his brother Stephen is an associate justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.)

Safire didn't endear himself to the police department or to City Hall when he got eyeball deep in an explosive civil case known as "Fajitagate" that erupted into a full-blown scandal for the police department. The year was 2002. Two young men walked by the Bus Stop bar on Union Street at 1 a.m. carrying takeout steak fajitas. They were allegedly attacked by three 20-something off-duty police officers who had been drinking. One was the son of then-deputy police chief Alex Fagan Sr. A fight broke out and there were arrests — followed by a grand jury indictment alleging obstruction of an assault investigation that named a platoon of police brass, including the chief, that was later dropped.

Safire represented one of the victims, Adam Snyder, a bartender at Boz Scaggs' Blue Light Cafe down the street, who suffered minor injuries. The three cops were eventually acquitted. Fagan Jr. left the force, but the defendants still filed a \$2.5 million assault lawsuit against the city. "We settled for a lot less," says Safire, clearly not gloating over the small victory. "In those days, before videos and cameras everywhere, it was very hard to beat City Hall."

Today, Safire works out of a restored two-story Victorian on upper Fillmore, a flashy red candy-colored Cadillac parked in the driveway. He bought the Victorian with fees from civil cases he claims no one else would touch. "But my heart was in criminal defense," he says.

San Francisco's Public Defender Jeff Adachi, head of an office of 100 attorneys and 80 support staff who represent the indigent, describes Safire as the go-to person for those who are in really big trouble. "He's an amazing lawyer with a huge heart, who takes a lot of cases other lawyers would shy away from, and works those cases really hard," Adachi says. "He's insistent, persistent and his victories are legendary."

Adachi is quick to point out he never worked at the defense table with Safire. "When I was fired 20 years ago as chief attorney by Kimiko Burton after she was appointed to fill out a term as public defender, I didn't have anywhere to go. I decided to go into private practice and Eric was kind enough to offer me a rented office, and I got to know him." A year later, with Safire's support, Adachi ran against Burton, was elected public defender, and took over the office. "Eric was one of my strongest supporters," Adachi says. "And he became a lifelong friend."

SAFIRE HIMSELF took a flier at elective office when he ran for Superior Court judge in 2006. Lillian Sing, a retired judge and politically connected Democrat, was running unopposed and Safire was solicited to take her on. "It was a last-minute, three-month campaign and great fun," he says. "I was signing up people in churches, at Muni bus stops. I won North Beach, got 28,000 votes and was defeated."

Stuart Hanlon, a seasoned, high-profile San Francisco criminal defense attorney whose clients have ranged from Black Panther Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt to several Symbionese Liberation Army members to ex-S.F. Police Chief Greg Suhr, notes that a lot of lawyers look down on their clients. "Erik finds the good — the humanity — in people he represents," Hanlon says. "He is a standout guy for young African American men in the Fillmore — a really, really good lawyer who's never gotten the recognition he deserves."

Still, Safire's reputation is not pristine. A former San Francisco public defender, now a criminal defense attorney, remembers him from the old days in the Hall of Justice. "There are a lot of stories under that hat, not to mention a lot of brains," he says. "Eric knows all the tricks and some of them are shady." He declined to elaborate.

One Safire tactic that almost worked caused a furor at a preliminary hearing and accusations of witness tampering by the prosecutor. Safire's client, an alleged Western Addition gang member named Charles "Cheese" Heard, was on trial for murder after he was identified by a witness to a 1 a.m. shooting outside a North Beach nightclub in 2008. "She told the police my client was the shooter, claiming he had gold teeth," Safire recalls. "I asked for a police lineup, but the D.A. squashed it. I asked the hearing judge if I could bring in some guys to the courtroom and hold a little impromptu lineup. He said okay."

Safire brought in eight young African American men with grillz, or gold teeth, and told them to stand up. But the witness still picked out his client as the shooter. It wasn't that hard. He was sitting at the defense table in an orange jail jumpsuit. The case went to a jury trial and to shield Cheese from a murder charge, Safire tried a high-tech tactic: facial identification

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biometrics, a strategy usually used by prosecutors, not criminal defense lawyers.

Safire knew that a surveillance camera captured the footage of the person who “probably” shot the victim, and persuaded the trial judge to allow testimony from an expert witness from Beverly Hills who made a biometric comparison of still frames from the video with photos taken of Cheese while he was in jail, arguing the defendant could not possibly be the shooter. The D.A. brought in its facial recognition expert from the national crime lab at FBI headquarters in Quantico, Va. Despite being outgunned, Safire convinced the jury his client didn’t pull the trigger. But that was cold comfort. Cheese was convicted of murder based on “accomplice liability” and got a life sentence. “I beat the D.A., but I couldn’t beat the jury,” he says.

Other cases have been more decisive. Jaime Gutierrez was a gang member as a teenager who grew up, opened an auto mechanic repair shop in the Mission and built it into a success. Abraham “Spanky” Guerra was a notorious Norteno gang member and a paid confidential informant for the SFPD Gang Task Force who attempted to extort Gutierrez for a piece of his business. One day, Guerra showed up with a loaded gun and made a threat. The mechanic grabbed a shotgun. “Spanky fired, Jaime blew him away, was charged with murder one and we pled self-defense,” says Safire.

Safire’s longtime private investigator Steve Vender, who worked the case, says he was actually helped by another gang, the Nuestra Familia. “Spanky was collecting taxes on drug dealers and not kicking back to the leadership in Pelican Bay and was about to be hit,” Vender recalls. There were two jury trials. The first resulted in a hung jury and the second a verdict of not guilty. Says Vender: “It was some of the greatest courtroom drama I’ve seen in my 23-year career. It pissed off the cops and the D.A. because Spanky was a snitch and they had to show they could protect their street sources.” Adds Safire: “We stuck with it until we got him out of jail. Jaime’s out today with his family, working, raising his kids.”

ERIC SAFIRE isn’t one of those attorneys who logs every billable minute, doesn’t return phone calls and is always in a meeting. He does not burn out his staff; his current personal assistant, Francine Ferris, has worked for him for the last 17 years. “We were introduced by a mutual friend, a private investigator,” Ferris recalls. “We sat down and talked. Never gave him a resume. Within 15 minutes he



Eric Safire’s personal assistant, Francine Ferris (left), has worked with him for 17 years.

Eric Safire: ‘I’m a Scrapper’

said: ‘You’re hired, when can you start?’ I stay because he truly has a heart of gold and wants to make a difference. In San Francisco, all good people find each other.”

Friends and colleagues insist Safire gives far more than he gets. “Eric has a profound sense of service and his goal is to help people,” contends Paula Canny, a Burlingame criminal defense lawyer who met him in the mid-1980s. “Eric is the perfect neighborhood lawyer who can write a will, draw up a trust, probate an estate and defend you,” she says. “Any neighborhood person could walk into his office and he would know how to solve their problem.”

Canny says Safire is also a supportive friend. “We trauma bonded 12 years ago when I was super, super sick with breast cancer — too sick to practice for a year. He was super helpful, always there for me. He’s real.” Canny returned the favor when Safire was diagnosed with leukemia two years ago in the middle of a murder trial. It slowed him down for a while, but did not knock him out of the game. He’s currently in remission.

His game extends beyond the courtroom. “Eric Safire is known here as Moshe the Deliverer,” says Nancy Sheftel-Gomes, education director at Temple Sherith Israel on California Street, where she runs a synagogue soup kitchen for two homeless shelters. “Eric picks up the food religiously and delivers it to the shelters and the congregants in lower Pacific Heights and the Western Addition and has been doing it for 25 years,” she says.

Safire and the temple have teamed up in

other ways. The congregation was supportive of his efforts to reverse the conviction of J.J. Tenison, a local high schooler who was locked up for 14 years for a murder he did not commit. Safire’s tenacity eventually sprung him, and the lawyer arranged for his client to speak at Sheftel-Gomes’s classes. “J.J. was so honest with the children,” she says. “He said, ‘I didn’t do it, but I could have done it. I had good parents, was in school, but I was in the wrong place at the wrong time and making bad decisions.’”

Safire works in the north Fillmore and lives in the outer Richmond but his ‘hood, according to Sheftel-Gomes and others, is the Western Addition. “Geary Boulevard in this city could be the Panama Canal, the great divide, and when someone needs him down there or anywhere, he’s ready to get in his car and go, anytime of day.”

Since 1997, Safire has also been sponsoring a pro-am basketball league through the city’s parks and recreation department aimed at keeping inner city youth off the streets. One of the players became a client. After a game, police followed Alfonso Williams home, found a residue on a plate they believed to be a narcotic, arrested and jailed him. “I was so mad. Alfonso was set to be observed by college scouts,” Safire says. “I went out to the Olympic Club, got in a golf cart, caught up with a judge on the second hole, explained the situation, got a release order and drove him to the basketball court where the scouts were.” Williams wound up with a full scholarship to Kentucky Wesleyan University.

While Safire’s tactics have sometimes

been unconventional, retired San Francisco Superior Court Judge Jerome Benson, who presided over two of his murder trials, recalls he also showed respect for judicial authority. “Eric would fight me on issues, but once I ruled on a motion. I never had to worry he would disobey me,” Benson says. “He would keep raising the issue outside the presence of a jury, but he did it without antagonizing me, which is a respectful technique. He was pleasantly persistent.”

A prosecutor in the San Francisco D.A.’s office before his 24 years as a judge, mostly on the criminal bench, Benson says of Safire’s opening and closing arguments: “They were factual and intellectually respectable and not innovative creations with little basis in fact. I think jurors appreciated they couldn’t see anything in his presentations that were contrivances.”

Benson adds that Safire projected an image of being a good-natured person. “He wasn’t Mr. Sweetness and Light, but he discussed evidence in a way that the ordinary person could relate to,” Benson says.

THESE DAYS, Safire is taking life a little bit easier. But not much. At 64, he is a single dad. His daughter, a City College student, lives with him and Ringo, his current rescue pooch. He also has a 27-year-old son interested in left-wing journalism who has a day job as a server in a San Francisco restaurant. Safire works out four times a week at the Presidio Golf and Concordia Club. He gave up drinking five years ago.

He’s strictly a coffee guy now. The habit started when San Francisco’s famed private investigator, Hal Lipset, would invite young criminal defense lawyers over to his Pacific Heights home to talk cases over morning coffee and *The New York Times* crossword puzzle. “Hal was my mentor. That’s how we all started the day, and then went to court.”

That was more than 200 trials and 40 years ago. And most of those trials he lost — sort of. “When you’re defending the accused against ‘the people’ in a criminal case, the state almost never loses. They have the full force of the police department behind them. They have the D.A.s and their investigators who only go forward on a case when they are sure they’re going to win. The deck is stacked against us and they beat the shit out of us.”

But even when Safire wins one, he doesn’t crow about it. “If the guy gets off, that’s huge. But if he gets 10 years instead of 20 years, I like to say that I prevailed,” he says. “I’m not an intellectually gifted lawyer, but I’m a scrapper.”

How much longer will he keep scrapping? “Retire? Me? Never. I don’t know what I’d do.”

“Just like my dad, who was trying to sell a reasonable used car, I’m trying to sell reasonable doubt.”

— ERIC SAFIRE

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DocFest in Japantown This Month

By Andrea Chase

DOCFEST RETURNS to the neighborhood this month with an excellent slate of films that once again proves the documentary is an art form that encompasses more than the merely pedantic. Jeff Ross’s mission in founding the festival in 2001, as part of his IndieFest empire, was to prove that the doc can be as entertaining as the narrative. Every year he proves that thesis — this year in Japantown at New People Cinema at 1746 Post Street. The scoop on the festival’s full two weeks of programming, some screened at the Roxie, is available at SFIndie.com. Here’s what’s screening here in the Fillmore.

Mr. Fish: Cartooning From the Deep End (June 8, 9:15) uses the career of the eponymous editorial cartoonist to ponder questions of how the media has changed over the years. It’s not for the better, according to filmmaker Pablo Bryant. Mr. Fish, a man with the unassuming appearance of a nerd and the soul of gadfly, has been pushing the boundaries since he was a kid.

While his violent, anarchic, left-leaning aesthetic hasn’t changed since he was depicting bloody mayhem between Peanuts characters or identifying with Angela Davis, his media outlets have become less



‘The Seagull’ at the Clay

The Seagull, now playing at the Clay and directed by Michael Mayer, is being heralded as the best adaptation yet of Chekhov’s play about unrequited love and unbridled vanity. I was lucky enough to talk with Mayer a few weeks ago, and asked him to comment on the irony of having Annette Benning (above), an actress who has chosen to age naturally and beautifully, play a vain narcissist obsessed with remaining young.

Said Mayer: “It’s what makes Annette so uniquely suited for this role. She can play this woman who is vain because she isn’t. I feel like people who are actually vain in real life wouldn’t know how to play a vain character, because they would be so invested in the audience finding them attractive or young or likeable. Annette doesn’t care about that. She cares about finding the truth of the character and how that tells the larger story. She brings her own humanity to it so brilliantly and her own true vulnerability.”

willing to challenge their audiences, leaving the bad boy of *Harper’s* contemplating a future where his mix of political commentary and lewdness will find no takers. Pablo Bryant’s film pointedly refrains from telling us what to think. Instead, it forces us to come to terms with the ideal of free speech and the reality of making space for opinions we might not share.

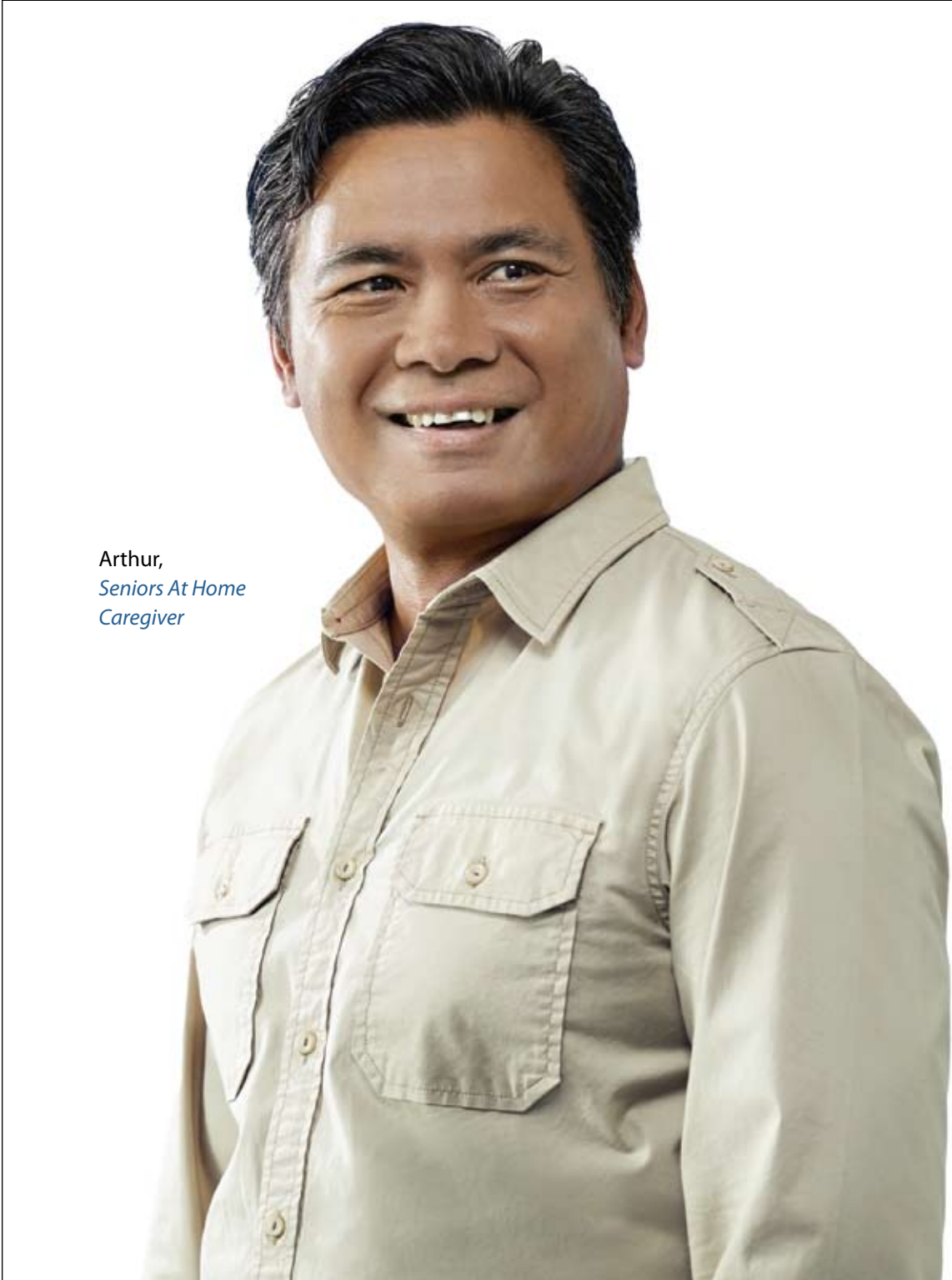
Jeremie Saunders, the subject of Andrew MacCormack’s *Sickboy* (June 10, 4:45), would also like to confront us, but not

about politics as such. As someone living with cystic fibrosis, he wants to challenge the norm of not talking about illness by doing just that on his podcast, also named Sickboy. It’s anything but a downer of a film. Saunders tells us exactly what the disease is doing to him before it will, as he acknowledges, kill him at an early age. But he’s decided to take the power away from the disease by finding the humor in it. He does this not only with his own illness, but with the people he invites onto

his wildly popular podcast, from a woman with PTSD to the guy with brain cancer. Full disclosure: There are some emotionally wrenching moments, but they serve to demonstrate just how resilient Saunders is, and how determined to live the time he’s allotted on his own terms.

Other highlights include:

- Ben Nile’s *The 5 Browns: Digging Through the Darkness* (June 2, 2:45) is a haunting story of three siblings who are brilliant classical pianists with a dark secret that eventually catches up with them.
- Colin Hardin’s *The Trouble With Wolves* (June 9, 2:30) is equally provocative in presenting two, mutually exclusive, compelling views about how to treat the once threatened species.
- Heather White’s *Complicit* (June 9, 7:00) exposes the human cost of the smart phone in your pocket as activist Yi Yeting battles the factory from which he contracted leukemia by working with dangerous materials used in its manufacture.
- Guy Florito’s *Mole Man* (June 9, 9:15) introduces audiences to Ron, a man with autism whose obsession with building an intricate maze in his backyard gives way to a quixotic quest when his circumstances change.
- Melody Gilbert’s provocative *Silicone Soul* (June 10, 12:15) explores the phenomenon of people falling in genuine love with life-like, life-sized dolls, and dares to ask what, if anything, is wrong with that.
- Ashley York and Sally Rubin’s *Hill-billy* (June 10, 2:30) takes viewers to York’s native Appalachia while contrasting the popular perception of the coal-mining residents of that area with her own truths about them.



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In the Gothic Style

THE ST. DOMINIC'S BLOCK

BY BRIDGET MALEY

ONE OF San Francisco's most impressive interpretations of Gothic-inspired architecture, St. Dominic's Catholic Church, at the corner of Steiner and Bush Streets, is the fourth ecclesiastical structure to stand on this site.

In 1863, the Dominican order paid \$6,000 for the city block bounded by Steiner, Bush, Pierce and Pine Streets. The parcel purchased for its new church was originally described as "impossible to reach" because of the shifting sands in the mostly undeveloped area. Nonetheless, a wood-frame, Tudor-influenced, Gothic-style church was constructed there, dedicated by Archbishop Joseph Alemany on June 29, 1873.

Soon deemed inadequate to serve the growing congregation, the small church was replaced by a much larger, more imposing structure designed by architect Thomas J. Welsh in 1883. The original church was moved to another area on the Dominican's large block of land and reused as the parish hall.

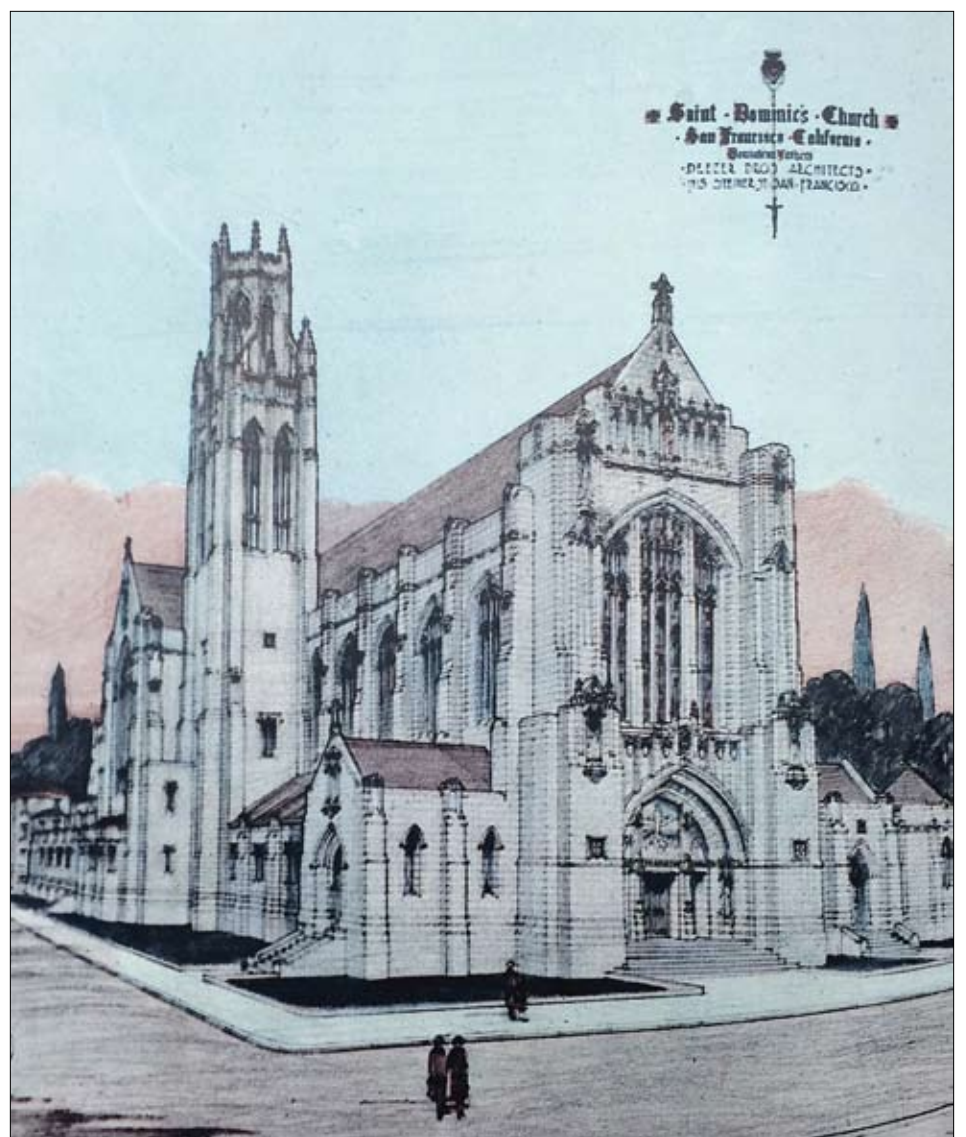
Welsh's design for St. Dominic's was described in a November 13, 1887, *Chronicle* article as "a substantial brick structure of Basilican form, in the purest classic style of the 16th century, and a seating capacity for about 2,000 worshipers." The accompanying sketch showed a handsome, masonry, Baroque-inspired church with two domed

towers and a sculptural, yet symmetrical edifice with the three-part formality typical of Italian Baroque churches. While not fully completed until 1893, when the towers were capped, the church became one of the city's most popular houses of worship. Welsh, an Australian by birth and a devout Catholic, designed many of San Francisco's Catholic churches between 1879 and his death in 1918. Sadly, only two remain: Sacred Heart at Fillmore and Fell Streets and St. Agnes at Masonic and Page.

In addition to destroying many of Welsh's other considerable works, the 1906 earthquake toppled St. Dominic's, and a third, temporary, wood-frame church would serve the community for more than 20 years before a fourth structure was built for the congregation.

Completed in 1928, the current St. Dominic's is the work of architects Louis and Michael Beezer, twins who hailed from Pennsylvania. In 1907 they relocated their successful practice from Pittsburgh to Seattle, where they designed the well-known Colman Dock and several noteworthy commercial buildings. But their mainstay client was the Catholic Church. By the early 1920s, their ecclesiastical work was so admired that the Archdiocese of San Francisco hired the Beezer brothers to design and build a church to replace Welsh's ruined St. Dominic's.

Of the St. Dominic's design, a May 1924



A rendering of St. Dominic's Church from the May 1924 edition of *Architect & Engineer*.

Architect & Engineer article proclaimed: "The Beezer Brothers show they have had a remarkable succession of ecclesiastical work and that they are thoroughly at home in handling archaeological Gothic." Indeed, the gray granite structure conveys strong Gothic influences, with its pointed arches, tall windows, bell tower and steeply

gabled roof. While the highly decorative lantern of the tower was lost in the 1989 earthquake, the building subsequently gained medieval-inspired flying buttresses. Inside, a soaring, vaulted Gothic nave is augmented with stained glass windows by Charles J. Connick of Boston, whose signature appears at several locations.

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When Louis Beezer moved to San Francisco to oversee the design and construction of St. Dominic's, he brought with him Arnold Sutherland Constable (1885-1981), an Englishman, who played a significant role in the design. After Louis Beezer died in 1929, Constable moved to San Francisco.

Constable subsequently designed the St. Dominic's School building facing Pine Street. A restrained two-story Gothic building, the school was erected in 1929, a year after the church was completed. An offshoot of the American embrace of the Gothic style of church design, its Collegiate Gothic style became a favorite in American academic settings.

Inspired by the cloisters and quadrangles in Oxford and Cambridge, many American universities used a similar aesthetic in academic settings, including Harvard, Yale, Georgetown and Duke on the east coast; Washington University in St. Louis; and, in the west, Portland's Reed College and the University of Washington in Seattle. Certainly familiar with the Seattle campus, including its remarkable 1926 Suzzallo Library by architects Bebb and Gould, Constable's design for the St. Dominic's School was a subtle nod to these more formal interpretations of Collegiate Gothic.

A two-story structure, rectangular in plan with a projecting entry along Pine Street, the school building has Gothic detailing at the windows and along the cornice. The entry, through a Gothic arch, and up a set of stairs, is decorated with crests and shields and Gothic-inspired lettering proclaiming St. Dominic's School. Centered above the entry is a more elaborate window lighting the entry stair, capped with a statue of St. Dominic and set within a decorative Gothic niche.



The proposed new pastoral center at Steiner and Pine would include offices, a child care center and a new parish hall.



The school was completed in 1929.

Plan to tear down St. Dominic's School sidelined

A proposal to tear down the historic St. Dominic's School and replace it with a modern new pastoral center over a 59-car below-grade parking garage got a chilly reception from the Planning Commission on May 24.

The project came before the Planning Commission with a recommendation from its staff that the proposal be rejected as inconsistent with the city's general plan, which calls for preserving historic buildings.

"The project would demolish a known historic resource that has been deemed to be individually eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources because it represents the work of a master architect and possesses a high degree of artistic value," the Planning Department report noted. "Demolishing the subject building would represent the irreversible loss of a historic resource with significant architectural and aesthetic value."

Noting that the project was located in what is primarily a residential area, the report concluded: "The department does not find the project to be necessary or desirable, as there is ample space on the subject site, namely the surface parking lot at the northwest corner of the site, that would be better suited for redevelopment. Likewise, there are opportunities to adaptively reuse the existing school building or to construct a rear addition to the building, which would achieve many of the project sponsor's programming objectives while retaining the building."

The planning commissioners voted unanimously to continue the proposal indefinitely and told church leaders to come back with a comprehensive plan for the St. Dominic's block that included the school building.



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JOIN US ON JUNE 13, 2018 AT DBI's EARTHQUAKE SAFETY FAIR!

At this event, you will have the opportunity to meet with various City agencies, contractors, design professionals, and financial institutions to answer your building and earthquake preparedness questions! This **FREE** event will feature an exhibitor hall and informative workshops, along with hands-on emergency training.

EVENT DETAILS

DATE: June 13, 2018

TIME: 10am- 4pm

LOCATION: Bill Graham Civic Auditorium - 99 Grove Street

WEBSITE: www.sfdbi.org/earthquakefair

ATTEND ONE OR ALL OF THE INFORMATIVE WORKSHOPS:

- 11:30AM: Home Remodeling Process Made Stress Free
- Meet the Experts
- 1:30PM: Making the Best use of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) & Unit Legalization Programs
- 2:30PM: Complying with the Accessible Business Entrance Program

Space is limited. Register at www.sfdbi.org/earthquakefair.

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NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SALES

Single Family Homes	BR	BA	PK	Sq ft	Days	Date	Asking	Sale
1707 Baker St	2	1	2	1,300	49	4/30/2018	2,200,000	2,200,000
2409 Vallejo St	2	2	2	n/a	7	5/1/2018	2,995,000	3,515,000
2566 Pine St	5	5	3	n/a	1	4/18/2018	4,588,000	4,460,000
3376 Clay St	5	4	2	5,410	6	4/23/2018	7,995,000	8,800,000
2737 Divisadero St	4	5	1	n/a	47	4/25/2018	10,000,000	9,600,000
2219 Scott St	5	5	3	6,350	9	5/3/2018	7,995,000	9,600,000
3515 Pacific Ave	6	6	2	5,705	8	5/9/2018	9,750,000	9,750,000
3020 Pacific Ave	9	5	2	6,540	47	4/20/2018	16,500,000	16,500,000

Condos / Co-ops / TICs / Lofts

1450 Post St #1005	1	1	1	519	262	5/1/2018	270,000	158,132
1450 Post St #1116	1	1	1	718	21	5/15/2018	470,000	375,000
2040 Laguna St #2	1	1	1	n/a	14	4/26/2018	699,000	762,000
1945 Washington St #602	1	1	1	n/a	10	5/8/2018	769,000	851,000
1990 Green St #102	1	1	1	n/a	19	4/16/2018	899,000	925,000
2040 Franklin St #1402	1	1	1	n/a	42	4/26/2018	879,000	930,000
1905 Laguna St #305	1	1	2	768	30	5/4/2018	850,000	932,500
190 Arguello Blvd #1	1	1	0	784	17	5/4/2018	850,000	950,000
2051 Scott St #203	2	1	1	733	8	5/8/2018	859,000	969,000
2918 Octavia St	2	1	0	n/a	43	4/28/2018	1,049,000	1,180,000
3065 Clay St #203	1	1	1	1,184	20	4/25/2018	1,199,000	1,180,000
1770 Pacific Ave #101	2	2	1	1,246	13	5/3/2018	1,350,000	1,188,000
2142 Franklin St	2	2	1	1,202	24	4/19/2018	1,195,000	1,210,000
880 Presidio Ave	3	2	1	1,078	5	4/17/2018	1,198,000	1,250,000
1770 Pacific Ave #301	2	2	1	1,500	12	5/14/2018	1,545,000	1,700,000
2200 Pacific Ave #12F	2	2	1	n/a	13	5/2/2018	1,695,000	1,800,000
2208 Sutter St #1	2	2	1	1,353	16	5/2/2018	1,295,000	1,805,000
2200 Sacramento St #702	2	2	1	1,139	5	4/26/2018	1,395,000	1,825,000
2186 Vallejo St #4	1	1	1	1,128	11	4/26/2018	1,695,000	1,850,000
2033 Pine St	3	2	1	1,710	14	4/27/2018	1,795,000	2,040,000
3247 Steiner St	3	2	1	1,770	5	5/4/2018	2,095,000	2,100,000
2440 Bush St #A	3	2	1	1,496	6	5/8/2018	1,875,000	2,307,000
2785 Jackson St #2	3	3	1	1,930	14	4/19/2018	2,275,000	2,340,000
3997 Washington St	3	3	1	2,070	11	5/7/2018	3,050,000	3,300,000
2151 Sacramento St #4	4	4	1	2,528	46	4/20/2018	3,398,000	3,350,000

High-end housing market still strong



DANIEL LEVIGOREUX

Although there have been fewer home sales in nearby neighborhoods than there were one year ago at this time, the top end of the market flexed its muscles.

There were 33 single-family home and condominium sales in Cow Hollow, lower Pacific Heights, Pacific Heights and Presidio Heights between mid-April and mid-May — down by 31 percent from the same period in 2017. But notable sales during this period included 3020 Pacific Avenue, a nine-bedroom home that sold for \$16.5 million on April 20, making it the second largest single-family home sale in the city this year. Also of note was 2219 Scott Street (above), which was listed for just under \$8 million and sold in nine days for 20 percent more than its original price; as well as 3515 Pacific Avenue, which sold in eight days for its list price of \$9.75 million.

And a record-breaking sale for the nearby Jordan Park neighborhood, also known as Laurel Heights, was rumored to have occurred on Commonwealth Avenue, when a home reportedly sold for \$9.7 million after listing for \$6.5 million and fetching more than 10 bids. Previously, the highest sale in that neighborhood was another home on Commonwealth Avenue, which sold for \$5.6 million last September.

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

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

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

Liturgy of the Hours (Daily)
Morning Prayer 7:15 am/Sat 8:00 am
Evening Prayer 5:00 pm
Reconciliation Sat 5:00 pm,
Sun 7:00, 9:00 & 11:00 am, 5:00 pm
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
Mon & Wed 8:30 am & 6 pm
Tue & Fri 8:30 pm



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14 NEW FILLMORE June 2018

The Mystery of the Three Lamp Posts

By JOE BEYER

FOR NEARLY A CENTURY, three lamp posts on the sidewalk in front of Calvary Presbyterian Church have added enlightenment on the busy corner of Fillmore and Jackson.

The two on either side have plaques attached dedicating them to the memory of Katie Flavel, who apparently died on August 19, 1910. But there is no record she was ever a member of Calvary.

A little sleuthing turned up the Flavel House Museum in Astoria, Oregon, a Queen Anne style home built in 1885 for Columbia River boat pilot George Flavel and his family. It is open to the public and some of the rooms are believed to be haunted, including the bedroom of — yes! — Katie Flavel, one of Captain Flavel's two unmarried daughters. The archivist of the museum reported that Mrs. Flavel and her two daughters made frequent shopping trips to San Francisco and that, when here, they attended services at Calvary Presbyterian Church.

During one of those trips, the 1906 earthquake struck. Katie's older sister, Mollie, wrote an extensive account of the quake: "The plastering was falling all around us but



Three old-style lamp posts stand in front of Calvary Presbyterian Church, dedicated to Katie Flavel. But who was she?



we did not seem to be struck with it. We held on to each other expecting every minute to be crushed to death by the house falling in on us." They were staying at the Occidental Hotel, on the southeast corner of Montgomery and Bush Streets, which was severely damaged by the quake and ultimately destroyed by the fire that followed.

The three women managed to escape the hotel, walk to Union Square and get a ride to Pacific Heights, where they had friends who were members of Calvary.

Mollie wrote: "As we passed Calvary Church it appeared to be standing all right. I could not see a thing the matter with it. Dr.

Hemphill [the church's pastor] was standing across the street from the church talking to some men. We stopped and spoke to him and he said he had been down to see his house and that he would not give 25 cents for it now. He said he would ask us to stay with him, but he hadn't any place."

Calvary member and elder H.L. Van Winkle invited them to stay at his mother's home on Broadway. Van Winkle also volunteered to go downtown to the Occidental Hotel and try to rescue their luggage. Despite the risks of the spreading fire and buildings being dynamited by the army, he was successful in getting to the hotel and

was able to retrieve most of their luggage, to the amazement of the family.

The final clue came when the Oregon archivist found a record that Mollie Flavel had made a donation to Calvary Presbyterian Church, used to create the three lamp posts, and had them dedicated to her younger sister.

It was in appreciation for Van Winkle's courageous help to the family in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake that the Flavel family gave the church the lamp posts, dedicated to Katie Flavel, that still light the night sky on Fillmore Street.

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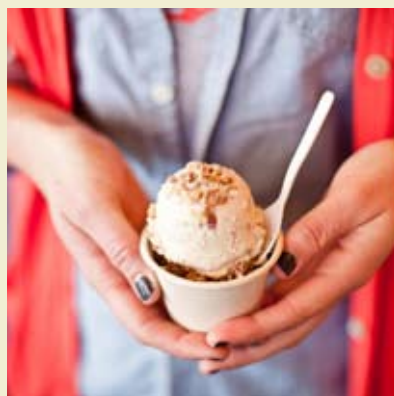


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