

MA FOR ASSEMBLY • NEVIN FOR SENATE • SAFIRE FOR JUDGE • NO ON A, B, C, YES ON D

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# ARGONAUT

*Published in San Francisco Since 1877*

*POLITICS, PLAGIARISM, AND JANET REILLY:  
The Desperate Packaging of a Seacliff Housewife*



# THE ARGONAUT RECOMMENDS

**Governor**

Democrat: Steve Westly  
Republican: Arnold Schwarzenegger

**US Senate**

Democrat: Dianne Feinstein  
Republican: write in Mike Garza

**Lt. Governor**

Democrat: Jackie Speier  
Republican: Tom McClintock

**Attorney General**

Democrat: Jerry Brown  
Republican: Chuck Poochigian

**Insurance Commissioner**

Cruz Bustamante

**State Assembly**

Fiona Ma

**State Senate**

Mike Nevin

**State Propositions**

81: No

82: No

**City Propositions**

A, B, C No

D (Laguna Honda) YES

**Democrat Central Committee**

*12th Assembly District*

Tom Hsieh  
Mary Jung  
Megan Levitan  
Jane Morrison  
Dan Dunnigan  
Arlo Hale Smith  
Connie O'Connor  
David Wong  
Michael Thieriaclt  
Jason Wong

*13th Assembly District*

Bill Barnes  
Holly Their  
Sue Bierman  
Jane Morrison\*  
Joe Julian  
Juan Cassiol  
Maria Martinez  
Eve Royale  
Rafael Mandelman  
Jordanna Thigpen

*\*We are endorsing Jane Morrison in both districts because...we can.*

**INTRODUCING THE ARGONAUT FOOD SECTION [P. 20]: THE OLD CONDOR GOES CAJUN**



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- May 13 Free\* His or Her Baseball Cap
- May 14 Mother's Day Brunch
- May 19 Friday's Alive Featuring Busta-Groove • Post Time 7:20 PM
- May 20 Simulcast of Preakness Stakes
- May 26 Friday's Alive Featuring Bud E Luv Orchestra • Post Time 7:20 PM
- May 29 Memorial Day - Family Festival & Concert with Garrat Wilkins & The Parrot Heads.  
Free\* Picnic Blanket and Free\*\* Art Set for the Kids
- June 2 Friday's Alive Featuring Super Diamond • Post Time 7:20 PM
- June 3 San Mateo Firefighters' Association Charity Car Show benefiting The Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation
- June 4 Comcast Day at the Races
- June 9 Friday's Alive Featuring Mother Hips • Post Time 7:20 PM
- June 10 Simulcast of Belmont Stakes
- June 16 Friday's Alive Featuring Pride & Joy • Post Time 7:20 PM
- June 18 Father's Day Brunch

\*Free with Paid Admission while supplies last. \*\*Free to Children 12 and under, when accompanied by an Adult, while supplies last.

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### THE CALIFORNIA NURSES ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS FIONA MA

### KEEPING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE

Fiona Ma started the “Slow Down, Look Around” campaign to increase pedestrian safety by installing needed stoplights, countdown signals at crosswalks, and high-visibility signs around every elementary school. San Francisco in general — and 19th Avenue in particular — has experienced a substantial decrease in fatalities and accidents.

### THE SAN FRANCISCO, DALY CITY AND BROADMOOR POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATIONS SUPPORT FIONA MA

### INVESTING IN NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

Fiona Ma fought to pass the Public Education Enrichment Fund, which will bring \$60 million to the financially strapped San Francisco Unified School District. She has also worked to help families send their kids to a quality school close to home. In the Assembly, Fiona will take on Gov. Schwarzenegger by fighting to restore Prop. 98 funding levels that would mean billions of dollars for our public schools.

### THE CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, THE CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION JACK O’CONNELL SUPPORT FIONA MA

### JOIN US IN SUPPORTING DEMOCRAT FIONA MA FOR ASSEMBLY

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 Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers, AFT 3267  
 California Federation of Teachers  
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 San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council  
 United Farm Workers of America  
 (Partial list)

**FIONA MA**  
 DEMOCRAT FOR ASSEMBLY

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Paid for by Fiona Ma for Assembly, FPPC ID# 1261603.



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—Jeff Adachi, Public Defender

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paid for by Safire for Judge

**FOR JUDGE**

**On June 6, Vote Lou Papan for State Senate District 8!**

As an Assemblyman Representing The 19th District For 20 Years,  
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# Laguna Honda: The Horror Story

By Jack Davis

*For 140 years Laguna Honda Hospital has taken care of San Franciscans in need of help. In its earliest days it was called the “Alms House.” Later it served as an infirmary for plaque victims and then shelter for survivors of the 1906 earthquake. Laguna Honda, as we know it today, was built at a time when dormitory style care was the norm and patient care pivoted around a bed where they ate, slept and received medical support in rooms filled with 39 other patients. For decades the facility was out of compliance with State and Federal guidelines and therefore faced continuous threats by oversight agencies to suspend the reimbursements/payments to the City and County needed to run the facility.*

Every Mayoral Administration since Dianne Feinstein had promised to study or formulate a plan but nothing happened until a Laguna Honda First Committee was formed by citizens and voters were asked to take a pledge not to support any future general obligation bonds until the disgraceful conditions affecting the poorest and frailest San Franciscans was enacted.

The Committee's first target was a \$60 million general obligation bond for the De Young Museums. “Old people before old art” was the battle cry and the bond was defeated. (The De Young was subsequently rebuilt by private contributions under the leadership of Dede Wilsey). The Laguna Honda First Committee announced that it would continue to defeat all general obligation bonds until Laguna Honda was brought into full compliance with all mandates.

Polling and an educational campaign began and Mayor Willie L. Brown, embraced the idea and organized meetings to create a proposal to present to the voters — not an easy task.

In 1999 voters overwhelmingly passed bonds that would in combination with anti-tobacco money save the crumbling, quake-damaged hospital. Then Supervisor Gavin Newsom was one of two member of the Board to oppose the bonds.

Since Mayor Newsome's election two events have occurred at Laguna Honda, first an announcement that the funds approved in 1999 for 1200 replacement beds would cover roughly half that number, and secondly, the

Mayor's Health Director had decided it was cheaper to send certain types of patients from S.F. General up into the Laguna Honda population.

In no time these new patients were raising hell with the older population and violence was occurring on a regular basis against staff and elderly. Even a priest giving last rights was beaten up. The Laguna Honda advocates who had served and fought for the best interests of the patients and staff were now pitted against a public

health administrator who defended has right to use the facility as he saw fit.

Angry citizens and advocates held meetings throughout the City and decided to draft an initiative ordinance that would stop such stupid medical decisions and Prop D was born to keep dangerous drug dealers and homeless psychos away from the elderly and terminally ill.

Dr. Katz as Public Health Director ginned-up a theory that under Prop D those with Alzheimer's, Parkinson, and dementia would not be eligible to remain at Laguna Honda at a cost of \$27 Million dollars to relocate these individuals, because under his interpretation these patients were potentially dangerous. I know a bit about this issue since my Mother died of advanced Parkinson disease five years ago. She lived 27 years with Parkinson disease and my family chipped in to pay for acute care on a 24/7 basis. The enormous financial costs were the easiest to handle. The slow deterioration of my mother who lived with tubes that fed her and kept her alive unconscious with no quality of life was the tragic toll inflicted on the entire family.

It is an outrageous abuse of power and dangerous political ploy to phony up the medical debate on these horrific diseases and the great pain and suffering that goes with them. Shame on Dr. Katz for his disastrous admissions policies that created this mess, Shame on Mayor Newsom, the only voice from the Board of Supervisors against the Laguna Honda bonds, who now shows his callous indecency as author of the No on D ballot argument that legitimizes Katz's demented medical theory. Shame on the Controller for not having the courage to stand up to this political outrage.

This gutter ball handling of the treatment of sick individuals who pose no risk to others will trigger an outcry from doctors, the medical community and advocates that will be heard from coast-to-coast. How could anyone who knows anything about these diseases believe anything from Dr. Katz, Mayor Newsom or the current political establishment?

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**On June 6<sup>th</sup>**

**VOTE YES ON D**

**To Stop the Violence at Laguna Honda Hospital**

Paid for by Committee to Stop Violence at Laguna Honda, Yes on D, a coalition of taxpayers, seniors, neighborhood associations and the Residential Builders Association of San Francisco ID #128585

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\$825	Downtown	601 O'Farrell	415.254.4206
<b>STUDIOS</b> <span style="float: right;">Manager</span>			
\$825-\$1095	Civic Center	508 Larkin	415.786.6815
\$850	Civic Center	516 Ellis	415.561.9580
\$875-\$925	Civic Center	925 Geary	415.574.6777
\$895	Downtown	675 O'Farrell	415.505.2162
\$895	Civic Center	437 Hyde	415.724.0061
\$895-\$950	Civic Center	815 O'Farrell	415.722.9563
\$895	Civic Center	315 Hyde	650.703.7732
\$925	Downtown	709 Geary	415.740.7620
\$925	Downtown	449 O'Farrell	415.254.4206
\$950	Downtown	691 O'Farrell	415.505.2162
\$975-\$1150	Lower Nob Hill	1020 Post	415.424.0586
\$1,050	Nob Hill	840 California	415.756.2969
\$1,125	Glenn Park	400 Monterey	415.841.9206
\$1,150	Civic Center	345 Fulton	415.558.9972
\$1,150	Mission	1085 S. Van Ness	415.695.7806
\$1,175	Castro	2339 Market	415.624.6259
\$1,250	Russian Hill	2238 Hyde	415.292.3904
\$1,275	Sunset	1290 20th Ave.	415.254.7078
\$1,295	Downtown	601 O'Farrell	415.254.4206
\$1295-\$1325	Hayes Valley	400 Page	415.552.6669
\$1295-\$1350	Upper Market	15 Hermann	415.756.4107
\$1295-\$1395	Lower Nob Hill	1330 Bush	415.244.4054
\$1,295	Pacific Heights	1520 Gough	415.359.9572
\$1350-\$1395	Hayes Valley	990 Fulton	415.756.5365

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\$1,250	Glenn Park	400 Monterey	415.841.9206
\$1350-\$1525	Lower Nob Hill	861 Sutter	415.440.0163
\$1,375	Downtown	676 Geary	415.928.0113
\$1,375	Cathedral Hill	950 Franklin	415.724.5681
\$1,395	Laurel Heights	325 9th Ave.	415.845.2843
\$1,450	Lower Nob Hill	1020 Post	415.424.0586
\$1,475	Lower Nob Hill	1025 Sutter	415.254.5399
\$1550-\$1575	Downtown	721 Geary	415.740.7620
\$1,595	Sunset	1855 10th Ave.	415.661.2004
\$1,895	Nob Hill	645 Stockton	415.788.7447
\$1,950	Hayes Valley	300 Buchanan	415.368.6003
\$1950-\$2350	Pacific Heights	1870 Pacific	415.760.1456
\$2,150	Castro	650 Alvarado	415.902.9756
\$2,400	Russian Hill	2677 Larkin	415.931.7732
\$2,500	Marina	1235 Bay	415.828.3360
\$2,750	Nob Hill	1340-1390 Taylor	415.699.1475

**TWO BEDROOMS** Manager

\$1,695	Glenn Park	400 Monterey	415.841.9206
\$2,025	Russian Hill	1611 Clay	415.425.2808
\$2,150	Richmond	1445 Lake	415.939.1608
\$2,195	Downtown	755 O'Farrell	415.640.3731
\$2,975	Nob Hill	1340-1390 Taylor	415.699.1475
\$3,750	Nob Hill	1250 Vallejo	415.601.5683

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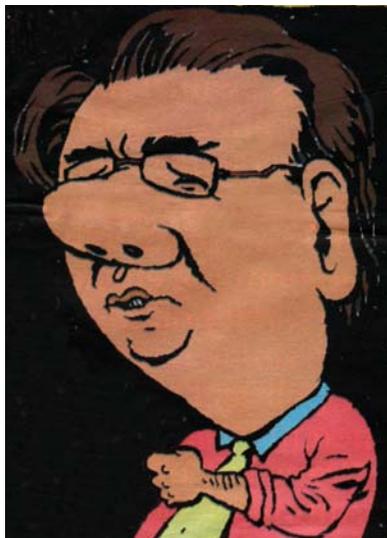
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# THE ASSEMBLY RACE

By Warren Hinckle



Janet Reilly



Clint Reilly



Fiona Ma

CLINT REILLY LIKES TO TELL POLITICANS HE CAN DESTROY THEM. TO HIS CREDIT FOR BLUNTNESS, HE HAS SAID IT IN THEIR FACES, OR AT LEAST IN THEIR EARS ON THE TELEPHONE. YOU CAN GET DESTROYED IF YOU DO NOT DO WHAT HE WISHES, OR CONVERSELY FOR NOT HAVING DONE WHAT HE WANTED. THIS THREAT WHICH REILLY HAS OFTEN VOICED OVER THE PAST DECADES BY IS SOMETIMES A COLLOQUY OF THE DRACULA PREDICATE THAT I INVENTED YOU SO I CAN DESTROY YOU. HE RECENTLY SAID THIS, NOSE TO NOSE, TO THE MAYOR OF SAN FRANCISCO, GAVIN NEWSOM, WHO IN REILLY'S RAGING EGO OF A MIND REILLY CREATED BECAUSE HE SUPPORTED THE GAVIN FOR THE JOB.

Now Reilly has turned against Newsom with a sulky fury because the new mayor did not do what Reilly wanted, which was to appoint his wife, Janet, a onetime TV newscaster and department store flack and a former aide to a Republican mayor of Los Angeles, to an open seat on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Newsom came away from Reilly's I-will-destroy-you-politically speech nonplussed and more than a little taken aback by Reilly's abuse of the vindictive arts. Now Reilly, a former powerhouse political consultant and tattoo artist of the campaign dirty deed who once spent \$4 million of his own money to run himself for mayor in 1999 but failed abjectly, is now financially propelling his wife, who has never held elective office, towards the stratosphere of the State Assembly to represent the western side of San Francisco. The unspoken assumption is that if Mrs. Reilly is elected she will be the speeding bullet aligned with Mr. Reilly's political gun sights aimed in Mr. Newsom's direction. Such is our civic harmony manifested.

Reilly has at times succeeded in destroying the political careers of those he said he would destroy. Examples

would include Annmarie Conroy, the daughter of a distinguished San Francisco police captain, and Kathleen Brown, the daughter of former Governor Pat Brown and sister of former California Governor Jerry Brown. (One politician who got away only partially winged was Dianne Feinstein. Reilly twice was her campaign consultant for Mayor of San Francisco but when he was running her for Governor in 1989 he famously "fired" his candidate because she had quite sensibly not committed to his proposed campaign budget which would have lined his pockets with unjustified riches. When Reilly "fired" Feinstein she was in the hospital recovering from surgery. He did not have the manliness to tell her directly but faxed word of her being terminated to reporters so she could read about it in her hospital bed. Reilly told the press that she was "lazy" and said words to the effect that the post-operative politician did not have the fire in her belly to advance in politics. Dianne did not become Governor but went on to the United States Senate, with no thanks to Reilly.)

There is thus an inevitable irony in Reilly push-

ing his wife to become the premiere woman politico from the west side of town as (although he botched the Feinstein defenestration) he had previously done in through a combination of greed and incompetence the political careers of two native-born real belles of the Sunset, Brown and Conroy. Both women got the destroy speech before he proceeded to politically destroy them; a dirty business that included, at least in Conroy's case, deliberate sabotage in the cause of putting more money in Reilly's already-bulging pockets.

A brief digression into recent political history is instructive here as it is indicative of the ethical standards of Mr. Reilly, who has his hands all over Mrs. Reilly's campaign. Reilly goes out of his way to insist that he has no involvement in his wife's campaign, but that is a Satanic lie (Reilly's nickname among the political cognoscenti is "Satan," a reference to his infamous methods of operation.) It is impossible to consider the candidacy of Janet Reilly, a political novice with no legislative experience for the post she seeks, without considering the role and past of her powerful husband, who jump-started her state assembly candidacy in full revenge mode after Gavin Newsom refused to appoint her to the Board of Supervisors, a position for which she also had no experience to serve, except perhaps doing damage control for Republican mayor Riordan of L.A.)

Conroy was running for re-election to the Board of Supervisors, to which she had been appointed by her Godfather, Mayor Frank Jordan. This was accompanied by some City Hall snickers about nepotism but Conroy proved herself to be wise, industrious and clued-in to the more conservative political culture of her West-of-Twin-Peaks constituency and was widely considered a shoe-in for re-election. Rather than position the first-term appointee as humbly seeking return to office Reilly packaged Conroy as "Number One" and positioned her campaign to bring in the greatest number of votes among her supervisorial equals which would, under the then rules of procedure, would have made her President of the Board of Supervisors. This put Conroy in a delicate situation as she was a Republican on the traditionally Democrat-dominated Board (this was a rarity but not an oddity - former Supervisor John Barbagelata also from the West of Twin Peaks was a Republican and there are other examples, although not numerous, of other Republican Supervisors.) Reilly had already overspent Conroy's campaign budget (as he did on Kathleen Brown's campaign for Governor) by spending early and often on television ads and glossy mailers that enhanced his salary through commissions. When the fiscally conservative Conroy refused to mortgage her house and otherwise borrow and beg for more money as Reilly demanded in Rumpelstiltskin-tantrum fashion and gave her the I-created-you-and-can-destroy-you speech he thereafter refused to take her phone calls (this was his exact MO with Kathleen Brown, who had been the front runner for the Democratic nomination for Governor before Reilly spent all her money early on lucrative-commission television ads)

Reilly guerrillad Conroy into putting \$20,000 into one of the political slate cards which were a lucrative sideline business for Reilly. What Reilly did not tell Republican Conroy was that he was putting her on his Democratic slate card. Conroy's Democratic opponents seized on her picture on a slate card mailed to Democrats which had the patina of an official Democratic Party endorsement as a hypocritical wolf-in-sheep's-clothing campaign gambit and used the incident to impugn Conroy's reputation for honesty and straight-shooting; she fell in the polls as the Democratic street panicked at the idea that a Republican might become president of

the Board. Reilly got his extra \$20,000 and Conroy instead of coming in first as Reilly had promoted her ran out of the money and lost her Supervisorial seat.

Some Democratic Party hacks might say that the piratical Reilly had done a good thing by taking out a promising Republican from electoral competition. But his shockingly bad behavior and profit-seeking at the expense of Kathleen Brown's 1994 race for Governor - her victory would have made the Brown dynasty the Bush family of Democratic politics if the comparison isn't too difficult to stomach - where his ineptness and greed caused a statewide disaster for the Democratic Party. Democratic leaders of long memory will tell you Reilly's handling of Brown's campaign not only cost the party the governorship but key Assembly seats and the Secretary of State's office as well.

Kathleen Brown started out as the clear front-runner for Governor. She hired Reilly over the objections of two of her aides who were aware of Reilly's reputation as a me-firster and wary of his past campaign trickery. The aides quit Cassandra-like in protest when Brown nonetheless piped Reilly aboard the ship of the campaign which he proceeded to sink; to continue the metaphor, he rapidly spent like a drunken sailor Brown's \$24 million (in 1994, that was a lot of money) war chest on early television advertising which was commission-rich for Reilly but unnecessary so soon in a front-runner's campaign. The campaign was running out of money in the last weeks when it became necessary to answer last-minute Republican attacks in a blitz of television ads and mailers. Reilly gave Brown his stock I-created-you-and... speech and made one last attempt to squeeze the tomato. When she didn't or couldn't respond to his demands for more money he treated her with a haughtiness verging on contempt and was no longer keen on taking her phone calls. Reilly had sucked his money out of the campaign and stuffed his cheeks with dough like a puffed-out hamster and the Democratic stalwarts who were furious at Clint for putting himself before the Party got an Alfred E. Newman what-can-you-do shrug as he blamed any problem on Brown, who, along with his other women candidates (see: Feinstein, Conroy) shared from Reilly's unique perspective attributes of laziness, no-fire-in-the-belly, or the guts to personally go more into debt and borrow millions to feed him more money to maybe correct his mistakes, after of course taking his commission.

The lack of an effective response from the Brown campaign to late Republican hits dampened the Democratic Party's get out the vote effort. Brown and other Democratic candidates went down. (Brown later sought legal address from Reilly over money issues but the matter was settled out of court and sealed.) Reilly went on but there was some cost to his hubris: in Democratic politics his name became mud, synonymous with what he specialized in slinging. The ignominious defeat of Kathleen Brown was the end of political consultant Reilly's oft-spoken hopes to manage a national Democratic presidential campaign.

It is of interest that Reilly is now running a woman candidate he hasn't yet fired - his wife - for political office because all his best known campaign kerfunkles have been with women. Backward looking at the multifaceted career of Clint Reilly it is apparent that he has had a real problem, and got into real trouble, with women in politics. He has been abusive, downright nasty, charged with sexual harassment and in one incident well-known to political insiders brutally beat and burned with a cigarette a woman who worked for him on a prior state assembly race. He has also beaten on, or attempted to beat on, men - but when he went after macho Phil Bronstein, then editor of the San Francisco Examiner (now editor of the Chronicle), Bronstein ended up stomping Reilly in the Examiner conference room and breaking his foot. Reilly

was taken away from the newspaper in an ambulance and later sued and received a settlement somewhere south of a million dollars. During the trial there were various attempts made to explain Reilly's legendary temper (fists shoved into walls, telephones tossed across rooms and the like.) One explanation, from Reilly, was that he was a bad drunk (he has since quit drinking, but still has that temper.) Another, from Bronstein's lawyers seeking a reason for Reilly's provocative behavior that led to the curious incident of his door being stomped in a newspaper's executive suite was the regular injections of the male sex hormone testosterone that Reilly was taking at the time. (See sidebar.)

Reilly's temper has most recently been exercised on behalf of his wife's candidacy. He gave an I-will-destroy-you telephone call to a member of a Fine Arts museum board when he learned she made a modest political contribution to Supervisor Fiona Ma, his wife's opponent in the 12th District Assembly race. Reilly unceremoniously told the woman that he had the votes to get her un-elected from the museum board if she didn't make at least an equal contribution Janet and support her campaign. (So much for Reilly's frequent assertion that he has "nothing to do with" his wife's campaign.)

Clint Reilly, the son of a milkman, and his wife Janet live in domestic harmony in a Seacliff mansion with a drop-dead view of the Golden Gate Bridge with waves dramatically crashing on the private beaches below their sprawling home on the edge of the cliff above.



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for  
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MIKE**

**NEVIN**

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 Senator Barbara Boxer  
 Senator Dianne Feinstein  
 House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi  
 State Senator Jackie Speier  
 California League of Conservation Voters

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 Nevin is that candidate."  
 —May 31, 2006

Paid for by Mike Nevin for State Senate 601 Gateway Blvd., Suite 630 South San Francisco, CA 94080



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- State Assembly: Fiona Ma*
- Attorney General: Jerry Brown*
- State Senate: Mike Nevin*
- Lt. Governor: John Garamendi*
- State Treasurer: Bill Lockler*
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- SF Propositions: No on A, No on C*



Joe O'Donoghue

2006 Citizen of the Year

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"Part of the Irish character is tenacity."

God Bless, Joe,  
and keep the poems coming!

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## NORTH BEACH UNDER SIEGE

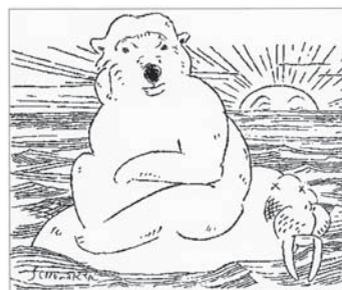
The time has come, the walrus said, to talk of many things. Let us limit that to one topic. The over-privileged view of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers has become something like Germany looking at Poland before WW Duece. These well-to-do do lads and lassies - we congratulate them on making a buck, that is after all the American way - have become extra territorial, hoping to extend their influence and power to Russian Hill; the Telegraph Hill Dwellers acutually, no kidding, tried a political land grab on that turf. (Check your Goggle for details - their crowd thinks they are the hyenas clean ass basking in the sun for all to kiss. The latest and most outrageous game against the flatlanders - which the Tele Hill dwellers offtimes call those living on the slopes below - is to use the political influence of busybody Supervisor Peskin to mess with the traditional North Beach festivals of culture and jazz by getting the Wreck-Park Commission to deny a permit to sell achocol - that wuold be beer and wine - in the public parks for the summer festivals. Everyone knows that without the income from those sales the festivals cannot econmically sand on their own. It's thwat simple. But oh, my dear, the Tele Hill gang does 't like the publician crowds and those loathsome underclasses crowding the Beach (that would be North Beachg.) This is class warfare I-A. North Beach is under siege, the top of the hill versus the bottom of the hill. Which side are you on?.

## MA FOR ASSEMBLY

Fiona Ma is a San Francisco person. Her politics may be a bit centrist for this journal's admittedly sometimes toward the left edge views but she has proved herself to be sound legislator committed to home ownership, in whatever form that is economically gradually possible, rather than this city stuck in the oh so dated seemingly eternal tenants v. landlords war which is becoming boring. The tenants' advocates are like some large 1960s Russian bureaucracy, which keeps itself alive by screwing the basic interests of those it pretends to represent. Ma is a fresh, interesting politician who is not at all a wacko and is the someone you can sit around the dining room table over coffee and maybe brandy and discuss what makes political sense for the city. Her opponent, Janet Reilly, has the admirable polish of a TV newscaster, which she once was and you cannot help but like her and cannot help but laugh at her manufactured - and now, apparently stolen - medical care platform which is out of Politics for Dummies. She is a manufactured Stepford candidate who someday may blossom into a real person once she individualizes herself form s the manipulative presence of her husband, Clint Reilly, who made his money screwing consumers and is known less than affectionately in political circles as Satan. Next time around, she may be more of a real person free from the dark. It is a vague foreshadowing of her husband. Meanwhile, especially now, vote for Ma. It is a vote for common sense vs. political packaging.

## VOTE FOR NEVIN FOR SENATE VS. THE FENCE-STRADDLER

There is a lot to like about Leland Yee as a person but it is difficult to endorse him as a candidate because it is darn hard to find where he stands except for straddling the next available fence, His reversible, changing position on the issue of seniors being beat up at Laguna Honda Hospital particularly distresses us. Mike Nevin on the other hand is a dependable, solid do-what-he-says guy. He represents the values that San Francisco natives were born and raised with. You can trust Nevin not to change horses in mid-stream. He is a likeable and honest man. We support him without reservation in his campaign for the State Senate.



Since its first issue in 1877, Argonaut has published this symbol. The Bear washed out to sea is floating on the back of a walrus, in the Pacific Ocean. He is thinking that if he devours it he will drown. If he remains on the back of the walrus, he will die of starvation. What to do?

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## COMMENTARY

by Jordanna Thigpen

It's time for this country to grow up.

Has it gotten to you yet? Waking up every day and watching Mornings on 2 and picking up the Chronicle from your porch or the hallway outside your door or taking some Ex from the stand on your way to work and assimilating American culture and just not feeling that there enough italics or CAPITALS in the entire world to express the rage, vehemence, and breathless pallor that you're feeling (all in the same moment) about the sorry state of our union.

It started in 2000 with the well-financed Broadway hit, sadly destined for an eight-year run: A Marionette Goes To Town. Starring, the marionette we all know and detest, the marionette made to look precisely like a chimpanzee that had lost its bananas from too many years in an isolated lab cage, with too many days of its parietal lobe exposed for testing the latest formula of Revlon ColorStay foundation.

We have had electronic voting machines (the 2000 election, the 2004 election), the forced resignation of Victor Baird of the Senate Ethics Committee, War on Terror, the Valerie Plame leak, Tom Delay, Duke Cunningham, War on Terror Ad Nauseum, and phone-jamming. We have had those g-damn little smirks and the feckless gleam in those beady little eyes for going on six years. We have had a vast and increasing deficit. We have had endless war-profiteering in which we are ad-

mittedly made darkly complicit because it drives our hegemony, our standard of living, and keeps us in proverbial silk right here in our sacred Democratic stronghold.

We have been juvenile.

It is time for all Americans to stand together, rich and poor, Democratic, Republican, and Green. It is time for us to graduate from high school and elect a Democratic Congress in November 2006.

The hallmark of American democracy has always been our individualism. This is both our greatest attribute, and singularly has already begun to seed our own destruction. We are each talented, beautiful, brilliant – and we know it, as Americans, we really believe that each of us can be our very own Idol.

The Republican Party is the Party of I. As a Republican, I am powerful, I am wealthy, I am fabulous even though every time I reach into my wallet, I pull out money that is dripping in crimson.

The Democratic Party is the Party of We. We are in this together, we are suffering shared social problems for which we must all be responsible, we don't need to agree on a single goal because there's something for everyone.

For a nation of individualists, which has been more attractive?

Every American has been rendered void, irrelevant, by the current administration. Do you have a voice left in you? Can you say you have done your part to oppose the Culture of Corruption? What can we do besides watch the latest installment of Marionettes Gone Wild and feel that hot rush of rage, just like a first run of China White, pure and deadly, taking maybe four hours off our lives

every time we pick up a newspaper or turn on the TV? Where is your outrage? It's time to own it.

If we are really Americans, if we have any bit of that bright and gorgeous optimism left in us, then by God, by Allah, let us stand in unity and beat the living hell out of the sadistic war profiteers that are running our country into the ground. Let us rise up and take back the House and the Senate. Let us ensure that only Democrats are serving as Secretaries of State, and let us engage in a massive reform of our voting technology and mandate optical scan ballots, with each Secretary of State united around the common cause.

The Republican Party has proved one thing over the past six years: it is the Party of our collective adolescence. True, adolescence is a necessary part of development. Ladies and gentlemen, did you ever run amok as a teenager? If you didn't have the lonely sordid pleasure of doing so, might I say that you are finally getting your chance, just by being an American in this time.

But teenagers, even wild ones, grow up.

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# NORTH BEACH for DUMMIES

*“The Leibers at Sea” by Peter Weverka*

“AND HERE YOU HAVE IT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,” ANNOUNCED MR. FLORENTINO, AS HE THREW OPEN THE HEAVY BLACK DRAPES.

On the way to the cottage, all out of breath, as he climbed the narrow leaf-strewn pathways to the top of the hill, the portly realtor told Ted and Cheryl that the cottage was a “genuine work of art.” And in the sudden sunlight that deluged the cottage when the drapes were parted, that is precisely what Ted and Cheryl saw—a work of art. Two months later, after they bought the cottage and it became the favorite place for their friends (“our set” they ironically called themselves) to gather, Ted and Cheryl would repeat the words of the realtor, “It’s a genuine work of art, it really is.”

On the rafters, the beams, the door lintels, window sills, and even the ceiling, were woodcarvings. Intricate, carefully made woodcarvings. Hundreds of them, perhaps thousands. Whoever made them knew his way around hand tools and had lived in the cottage for no small amount of time. You couldn’t make that many carvings in a decade, much less a year.

“Not the work of a master craftsman, mind you” said Ted, uncorking a bottle of Merlot for the dinner guests, “but no doubt the man knew what he was doing.”

“We think whoever made them was a sailor,” Cheryl added. “Notice how many carvings there are of ships, sea captains, whales, mermaids, and that kind of thing.”

“Plus this used to be the sailors’ quarter,” Ted added. “In fact, that gray house you passed on the way up here? It was a whorehouse, or so we’ve heard. We almost got outbid, but Cheryl and I decided what the hell, let’s extend ourselves. We loved the place.”

Their cottage was located in San Francisco’s Telegraph Hill neighborhood. To get to Ted and Cheryl’s you had to park your car some distance away, in North Beach, and hike over the hill through leafy, tree-shaded, narrow paths, past the box-like new condominiums and then the quaint ramshackle houses and cottages, to their front door. The cottage faced northeast, so that you could see across the bay to the Oakland harbor and Oakland hills. When there was fog, the foghorns bellowed their mournful music to make you think romantic thoughts—of ships at sea, or lovers saying good-bye at docksides. Breezes coming from the bay carried with them the bracing taste of sea salt. The plumbing in the cottage was antiquated to put it kindly, and it was hard to have to carry groceries all the way from the car to the cottage, but overall Ted and Cheryl wouldn’t have traded their little cottage for a roomy with-view in exclusive Pacific Heights.

“Who had the place before you?” asked one of the dinner guests.

“Oh, it’s had a whole string of owners,” answered Ted.

In truth, the cottage required a lot of maintenance. The roof leaked, and between

the termites and dry rot it was a constant battle to keep up the house. From what they gathered from a neighbor, an old-timer who had lived on the hill for decades, the cottage had a new owner almost every year.

“It’s a high-maintenance house,” Cheryl explained. “You have to make a real commitment to living here.”

“Well I, for one,” said a guest, “am most grateful that Cheryl and Ted made the commitment, both to each other and to the house, because without them we would not be enjoying this fine view, this fine company, and this fine wine.”

As the khaki-clad guests raised their glasses and drank the toast, Ted and Cheryl’s hearts swelled with pride. If you had told handsome Ted with his wind-swept black hair, his large round chin, and his lacrosse trophies, and blond Cheryl with her gorgeous legs and her knowledge of the bond market, if you had told them when they married shortly after graduating from their Ivy League university that someday they would be living in a beautiful house in a beautiful city and be surrounded by wonderful, and I mean truly wonderful interesting people.... If you had told them all that, they would have said, well, dreams do come true if you work hard enough. The uncommon house, the warm bright friends, and the high-paying jobs were precisely what Ted and Cheryl Leiber wanted life to give them, no more and no less.

“Maybe the house is haunted,” suggested a guest. “Maybe that’s why it gets resold so often.”

“Haunted?” someone else asked. “If it’s haunted, it’s haunted by appreciation. I mean, you figure a place like this cost twenty thousand just thirty years ago. Now it’s worth what, fifty times as much? Ted, don’t worry, I won’t ask. But my point is, it must be a real temptation to sell a place like this, the way the value appreciates.”

“I still say it’s haunted,” maintained the other guest.

Quite suddenly there was a knock on the door, a heavy, ponderous knock. Who could it be? The entire set was there, all present and accounted for.

“Better answer it, unless it’s the Spanish Inquisition,” said the set’s resident wit. When Ted answered the door he saw a stooped-shouldered old man with a wrinkled, swarthy face, gray bleached-out eyes, and a beard and white hair the color and consistency of dandelions. At first Ted thought, “Oh my god, it’s the homeless,” but then he noticed the navy-blue pee coat and weather boots. It was a sailor. He smoked a corn-cob pipe. He carried a duffel bag. He gazed over Ted’s shoulder at the interior of the cottage, and the widest, happiest, yellowest smile Ted had ever seen brightened his weather-beaten features.

“You’ll be having a party,” he growled, brushing past Ted and tossing his duffel bag on the Astrakhan rug. He declared, his hands on his hips, gazing at the woodcarvings, “It does a man good to land back home once in a fair while.”

Experience had taught Cheryl that it’s best to humor the insane and the demented. It’s best to humor them, so they understand that you mean no harm when firmly and resolutely you tell them that they must go away now. So she asked,

“How long have you been away from home?”

“Roughly speaking nine months, long enough to conceive and to beget, since you ask,” the sailor answered. “In my idle hours, I being stranded and without ship, I fashioned these here many carvings you see.”

He made a grand sweeping gesture that took in the carvings, the cottage, San Francisco, the Pacific Ocean, and not the smallest of which, his imagination. The guests politely and dutifully looked at the carvings as though they hadn’t until then noticed them. Ted said, “So you’re the one who made the carvings. They’re wonder-



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*Illustrations by Lynd Ward, taken from “God’s Man, A Novel in Woodcuts” published in 1929.*

ful. I can't tell you how many times I've told my wife, 'It's a genuine work of art, this cottage is.'" The sailor made a sour face.

"Be that as it may," he said, "if you look closely now, if you be not afraid to read pictures as you would words, you'll see here carved upon these walls the story of a life as yet uncompleted."

"Your life, I take it?" Cheryl asked. "And none other!" gushed the sailor.

He sat down and surveyed the guests, whose cashmere and khaki clothes, loafers and pastel shirts did not register in his sartorial vocabulary. Who were these people? Where did they come from? Sadly, his heart sinking, he noted as he often did of late how strange and confusing the world became once you touched upon land. It made him tired, seeing these incomprehensible people side by side with the carvings whose meanings he understand completely and implicitly. The chair was comfortable at least. A comfortable chair to sit in it was. A sudden wave of fatigue lifted the sailor ever so gently and deposited him in sleep's arms. His chin drooped as old men's chins will, and he fell asleep.

They stared at him in silence for a full moment. Then the wit said:

"Don't look now, but I think Ulysses has hit the hay."

Ted and one of the guests tried to wake him but the old sailor was such an adamant sleeper, was so stubborn about not opening his eyes, that they draped a blanket over him and let him be. In any case, the old man was harmless. The guests agreed that he had come here by force of habit. After all, this used to be his home, and judging by the number of carvings he made the sailor had lived here for many, many years. In the morning no doubt he would wake up feeling embarrassed and take himself to the residence hotel or sailor's home where he usually hung his hat.

Cheryl and Ted did not sleep well that night. Many times they tip-toed to the door of their bedroom to look in on him, and each time they found the sailor snoring in the club chair, his chin sunk deep into his chest and the hair of his beard quivering with each exhalation of breath. But in the morning he was indeed gone. And he hadn't stolen anything: they checked that. The blanket he slept under was folded neatly on the chair, but otherwise you would never have known that an old sea dog had spent the night in Ted and Cheryl's cottage.

As Ted fed oranges to the juicer and Cheryl toasted the bagels and prepared the nonfat café lattés, each silently rehearsed what he or she would tell the set about their unusual visitor.

Ted was thinking: "And when we woke up the next morning, he was just gone. Ever since I've been keeping an eye out for him, but I haven't seen him anywhere...."

And Cheryl was thinking: "He must have been so embarrassed to wake up where he did. But you know, I'm glad we met the person who made all these carvings. He was quite a character, that's for sure...."

They were rehearsing their lines, they were trying out different turns of phrase and fashioning their stories into amusing narratives, when into the front door of the cottage walked the subject of their respective reveries. Only now the sailor wore an ill-fitting worsted suit instead of his sailor's clothes. He had bathed and brushed his long white beard so it stuck out electrically from his chin. He was carrying a bag of groceries. "Early risers you'll be," he said with approval.

He eyed the bagels, wondering what they were, and frowned at the coffee drinks, which he mistook for chocolate. The sailor did not think it wise to drink sweet things so early in the morning, since sweet things weigh on the stomach and keep a body from doing the good strenuous work.

"I've brung yee some good hearty sausage," he announced, "and some stout coffee for strong souls."

He unpacked the groceries, pausing to unfurl a string of British bangers for Cheryl and Ted to admire. The Leibers were dumbstruck and completely taken aback by the sailor's bold and sudden reappearance. Passively, as if they had never seen such a thing before, they watched the sailor put the coffee to boil and drop the bangers in a pan. Only later, when the sausage fat began hissing, great gobs of grease leapt from the pan, and the house began to stink of pork fat, only then did the Leibers awaken to the severity of the situation. They didn't know this man, he was a total stranger, and yet here he was soiling the new tile in their kitchen with his greasy sausage splatter.

"Look here," said Ted, rising from the table, "this is our house—"

But the sailor raised his hand in a consummate, humble gesture that seemed to say "Yes, you are right, it is your house, but let's discuss it while we share breakfast together, shall we?" So Ted sheepishly sat down, and along with Cheryl he sipped his nonfat café latté while the sailor prepared and served them both a greasy sausage.

"You'll not be finding meat this new in the ship's galley," announced the sailor as he sat beside them. "Tis sixty years ago if it's a day and

I'll never forget it, the time we was caught up in a monsoon, a gale blast the likes of which I've not afore nor since seen, thank heavens. And I says to myself, 'I'd trade my living soul, I would, to be on dry land gnawing a chewy sausage link.' Aye, 'twas a long time ago, by graces. And the waves as high as a house! I recorded it yonder."

The sailor pointed with his fork at a beam on which was carved a little ship being tossed by huge, menacing waves while lightening flashed and rain fell slantwise from the puffy clouds to the churning sea.

They ate in silence. Ted felt obliged to eat his sausage, in spite of its high fat content, so as not to offend the old man. But Cheryl had no such scruples. Glum-faced, she stared with hatred at her husband. Why was he never masculine enough when the situation called for it? By now a real man would've pitched the sailor out on his ear.

"T'was kind of you, most kind," said the sailor, "to let an old deckhand take shelter in the cottage. For that I'm much obliged. You see, I've called this place home for nigh to fifty years. Aye, just beholding these walls fills an old boson with good cheer and spirit enough to go 'round the whole crew. Because on these walls you see carved the story of a life as yet uncompleted, my own life!"

The sailor, one hand resting on his heart, sighed. He gazed at the walls, beams, and window sills of his former home, a rapturous smile on his face, his eyes misting over, while the Leibers watched.

"And so," he continued, "I'll be making you a twofold request, now that I'm without ship. The first part of which is to see whether I might do yee the honor of sprucing up the place a bit, for as you see the carvings are worse for the dust and dirt that's accumulating in 'em."

The sailor looked at the man of the house, thinking that this man with his youthful, almost womanly complexion would eagerly agree to have the dust cleaned from the carvings. Everyone knows how hard it is to properly clean a woodcarving. But the man said nothing.

"I would be honored to spitten-shine them for yee," continued the sailor. "And second, as regards my request, a new adventure has befallen me, a most marvelous and seemly adventure, perhaps my last, and with your permission I would grace these walls with a new depiction, a new carving to set my adventure before the world." Again the man said nothing. He only glanced at his wife.

"You want to make another carving?" she asked.

The sailor nodded and smiled his bright yellow smile.

"I'm afraid it's out of the question," Ted said. "We're very busy people and the cottage is so small."

"The cottage is small and we'd get in each others' way," Cheryl added.

"Ma'am," promised the sailor, again holding his hand over his heart, "I would come and go as stealthily as a wee cloud. I would be here but for the hours that you're not here. I would be no nuisance, I assure yee."

"The problem is," said Cheryl, "we often have house guests. Who knows when someone will drop by?"

"The fact is," said Ted, "we do a lot of entertaining."

Entertaining? Already, the sailor noted sadly, the conversation had taken the turn—as so many conversations did on land—toward that obscure region where everything is incomprehensible. Entertaining? So they used the cottage as a nightclub or playhouse?

"Then you'll not let me render the carving?" the sailor asked, looking incredulously at the young man and wife.

"I'm afraid not," said Ted. "I'm afraid we can't," Cheryl confirmed.

"Ah well, such are the lives we old folk lead," said the sailor, trying to inspire pity in the young couple. He stood, squinted at the carvings, and massaged a spasm of pain that had advantageously reared in the small of his back. "I will have my memories, all that's left an old gaffer, but not my carvings. Preserve you your memories. When you're old and decrepit they're all you have."

Slowly he tottered to the door, fully expecting Ted and Cheryl to relent, but instead he heard: "We're very sorry" from Ted, and "We really are" from Cheryl.

That day, a Sunday, was a hard one for the Leibers. The old man had made such a touching albeit clumsy gesture by cooking them the sausage breakfast. His offer to clean the carvings, his request to make a new carving of his "most marvelous adventure," had been made with such humility and feeling. But they had to turn him down. They had to! Letting a stranger in the house, no matter what the purpose, simply could not be considered. They felt bad about turning the old man away, however, so they did what people of their age group and social class do when they encounter a frustrating obstacle, a setback, or feelings of guilt or shame: the Leibers went shopping.

Ted and Cheryl drove the BMW across the Golden Gate Bridge to a



gorgeous upscale mall in Marin County. Ted, thinking of the sailor and remembering an uncle back in Connecticut who decorated his home with nautical knickknacks, bought a brass gyroscope. Cheryl purchased a black, hand-sewn lambswool sweater. Then they drove to the ferry at Larkspur Landing, changed into jogging clothes in the back seat of the car (while giggling), and took the ferry to Angel Island, where they jogged around to the back side and admired some pelicans.

The view of the bay was outstanding. It was a warm day, with “no weather” as the saying goes, and the bay was dotted with sailboats that sliced the water as smoothly and gracefully as swans. Back at Larkspur Landing they had an early, light pasta dinner on the terrace of a restaurant. Cheryl bought two Danish coffee mugs in a gift shop and Ted looked at but didn’t purchase some audio equipment. Then they drove home, intending before they went to bed to watch a video while they lingered over the Sunday newspaper.

On the face of it, the day had been a perfect one, the kind of dreamy relaxing Sunday to which Cheryl and Ted treated themselves every week before the rigors of the office began. But on this particular Sunday the Leibers fretted about the old sailor. Did they dismiss him too abruptly? Suppose they let him clean the carvings. No harm could come of that, and it would make the cottage look even better. And what if they let him make a new carving of his “most marvelous adventure”? If you thought about it, another carving would add equity to the house. How much of the house’s worth came from the carvings? Ten, maybe fifteen percent? So adding a new carving, at least in theory, would add to the house’s value.

But no matter how the Leibers reasoned, no matter how they tried to justify granting the old sailor his wish, it still boiled down to the fact of the old man being in their home. They couldn’t permit that. When you bought into Telegraph Hill, you paid a pretty penny for your privacy. Ted and Cheryl’s sleepy neighborhood didn’t have the foot traffic, the noise, or the ruffraff that most neighborhoods have. So why spend all that money for solitude, why let the mortgage payments eat up so much of your disposable income, and then turn around and let an old man, a complete stranger, come right into your living room?

That evening, when they got home, they discovered a woodcarving, a likeness of Cheryl’s face, on the doorstep.

“How darling!” Cheryl exclaimed.

Around the mouth it captured Cheryl exactly—the fullness of her lips and the way her lips at the corners were pinched ever so slightly as if she were about to say something charming. Cheryl couldn’t get over how wonderful the carving was or how nice the old sailor had been to make it for her. Later, when they were drinking their nutrition drinks, she put it on the coffee table so they could admire it.

“It really does look like you,” said Ted.

“Thanks for the compliment, Mr. Leiber,” said Cheryl brightly.

She took his hand. For a long time they sat in silence, looking at the woodcarving of Cheryl’s face and at the other carvings, the hundreds and hundreds of them, that graced the cottage interior.

“He does good work, doesn’t he?” asked Cheryl.

“He’s very good at what he does,” declared Ted.

It was getting dark outside but neither Ted nor Cheryl turned on a light. In the semi-darkness, as the room grew dimmer, the carvings seemed to take on a new life. It was hard to tell where one carving began and another ended, so that after a while the carvings ran together into a sort of mural. The carvings all seemed to fit together somehow, which of course was only natural seeing as all the carvings shared the same theme, namely the old man’s life, his marvelous adventures.

By the time darkness fell completely, Ted and Cheryl had the distinct impression that they were not alone in their cottage, that the carved figures were there too, if not in flesh then in spirit. The hundreds and hundreds of figures, the mermaids, sea monsters, Polynesian princesses, African women balancing baskets on their heads, Tongan kings, kayaking Eskimos, bare-breasted Cuban girls, giant squids, lions growling on the shoreline, all seemed to be present in the room. For a brief moment the yuppie couple understood that the old man had a certain claim to their cottage. Although they were the ones making the mortgage payments, he had certain rights in his former home, rights too subtle for a lawyer to detect and too consequential for a banker to acknowledge.

“Let’s let him make his carving,” suggested Cheryl.

“I was thinking the very same thing,” said Ted.



Reflecting on the ghostly events of the following autumn and winter, what disturbed the Leibers most was never seeing the old man again. They saw him on Monday evening, a day after he left the carving on the doorstep, but then he disappeared. Literally, he disappeared.

They found plenty of evidence of the old man being in their home. They found fresh wood shavings in the trash, for example. He was very careful to wipe his feet on the doormat, and they often saw his footprints there. But the Leibers never saw him again in the flesh.

On the Monday evening when they saw him last, he came, hat in hand, to their doorstep looking contrite. He owed the Leibers an apology, he said. He had rudely spent the night in their home without being invited, and then, to add insult to injury, he had thrust an unwarranted request upon them, a request which, naturally, they being a young man and wife in the throes of love, could not be granted, for he conceded that privacy was important, most important indeed, to young lovers.

As he finished his speech, however, Ted handed him a key. While the sailor, open-mouthed, stared at it on his flattened palm, Cheryl instructed him to come only in the mornings, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. And when the old sailor understood what they meant, that his request was being granted, he beamed his yellow smile at them and saluted.

“You should’ve seen him,” Cheryl told the set. “When Ted told him he could make the new carving, he actually saluted.”

“Like this,” said Ted. Ted stooped like the old sailor. Then, arching his back and eyebrows at the same time, he quite suddenly snapped to attention and gave a crisp military salute.

“Actually,” Ted clarified, “besides making a new carving of his ‘marvelous adventure,’ as he calls it, we’ve hired him to restore the other carvings in the cottage.”

“Woodcarvings need to be cleaned regularly and thoroughly,” added Cheryl.

“He promised to clean, and I’m quoting him here, ‘every crack and fissure,’” said Ted. “Well, the old place does look a little brighter,” commented one of the guests.

It was true. The sailor had cleaned and polished the carvings, restoring their luster, and now the cottage seemed even more crowded with figures and images. Or perhaps it was just a matter of sunlight. Now that October had arrived and brought with it the Indian summer that San Franciscans so look forward to, the cottage got more light, which made the figures stand out more. You couldn’t put your finger on it necessarily, but the figures and images seemed more real somehow, as though they had emerged a degree or two from the walls, ceiling, windowsills, and door lintels. “I can’t wait to find out what his marvelous new adventure is,” said a guest. “Has he told you?” “All we know,” answered Cheryl, “is that he’s carving it on that block of wood above the fireplace mantel.”

“He told us it would be, and I’m quoting him again, ‘my consummate carving,’” said Ted. A guest who was leaning against the mantelpiece eyed the block of wood. “Well, I hope he knows what he’s doing,” he said. “That’s mahogany, old-growth by the looks of it.”

“Old growth?” asked Cheryl with alarm. She saw, an image from a television documentary, tropical trees being felled en masse by a powerful bulldozer.

“So it would be hard to replace if it got damaged?” asked Ted in a worried voice.

“Hard to replace?” said the guest. “It’s irreplaceable. All the old-growth mahogany was cut down years and years ago. On today’s market it would cost, well, it would cost a heavy chunk of change.”

“It would cost a fortune,” said the wittiest member of the set. “Wood doesn’t grow on trees, you know.”

Previous to his run-in with the old sailor, coming home to his cottage after work had been Ted’s favorite time of day. If you were to assign a single word to Ted’s feelings in the evening when he rounded the top of the hill, breathed the damp-earth smell, and gazed at his little cottage with the waters of the bay shimmering below, that word would be “joy.” The cottage represented the fulfillment of Ted’s every aspiration. It was his love nest and his refuge. It represented his connection to his adopted city and its glorious past. Let the rest of them stay home and re-seed old ground. Like the Forty-Niners, like the untold adventurers who came after them, Ted had bravely gone west to seek his fortune. And now he was well past the seeking stage. He was doing it! When others learned what he did for a living (“I’m in venture capital”), they sat up straight, pricked up their ears, and considered strategies for asking Ted for money. His ironclad portfolio was unsailable. His after-tax income put most men his age to shame. And this cottage, this perch in one of the most desirable neighborhoods in one of the most desirable cities in the world, represented his triumph.

That was how Ted used to feel; the sailor changed everything. Now when Ted rounded the top of the hill and saw his little house, he experienced a mild feeling of dread interlarded with a dose of indignation. It offended him to know that an old sea dog may have spent the day defiling his cottage. He crept carefully to the front door, pressed his ear against it, and listened. He wanted more than anything to surprise the sailor inside his home and affirm that the sailor was indeed



at work on his “most marvelous adventure.” But every evening without exception, Ted burst into a silent, empty house. And every evening, were it not for the wood shavings he found in the garbage and other clues, Ted would have concluded that the sailor hadn’t been carving. The block of old-growth mahogany above the fireplace mantle looked the same. It looked like a gash or wound. It looked like an act of vandalism. What kind of “marvelous adventure” was that?

The old man, it appeared, spent his time, not carving, but cleaning their house. If they left breakfast dishes in the sink, the dishes were washed and put away by the time they got home. The old sailor even made their bed, and he made it to military specifications, with the sheet stretched as tight as a drumhead. Papers left haphazardly on the desk were put away in drawers. Towels in the bathroom were folded and re-hung. The old man scrubbed down the bathroom fixtures till they gleamed. They employed Guadalupe to clean their house; the old man’s cleaning their house was insulting, is what it was. “Does his carving look like anything to you?” Ted asked.

Which one?” answered Cheryl.

“The carving on the mantle, his ‘consummate carving.’”

“It doesn’t look like anything yet.”

Ted said, “It doesn’t look like anything at all.”

After Cheryl understood that the carvings were more than decorations, that they portrayed episodes from the old man’s long life, she accorded them more respect and attention. The anxious face, a single pronounced tear on its cheek, staring wistfully through a round porthole window; the buxom woman dancing, her plump fingers holding castanets; the sleepy river town that looked so idyllic... What did these images mean to the old man and why had he carved them into the walls of his house? So many of his memories were carved into the wood, she sometimes felt his memories enclosing or overwhelming her. When she thought of the many hours he must have devoted to making the carvings, she felt his presence in the room, as if a third person lived there, as if time had folded back on itself and another life besides hers and her husband’s inhabited the cottage.

At the onset of winter the Leibers learned an important lesson in housing construction—they learned the difference between a flimsy cottage and a bona-fide house. Their cottage, built partly into the hillside, was afflicted by dampness and drafts. It was impossible to keep warm. The floor heater rattled and wheezed but could not hold back the cold air, which seeped into the house through the walls and window sashes. Ted thought of having the flue cleaned and putting the fireplace to work, but a neighbor informed him that fires weren’t permitted on the hill anymore because the smoke bothered the wealthy condo crowd who lived higher up. In the morning, when it was coldest, Cheryl and Ted dressed and bathed hurriedly. They took to eating breakfast in North Beach cafés because their cottage was too cold.

Their low-ceilinged cottage had the appearance of a dark cave, and to compensate for the lack of sunlight and the winter gloominess, the Leibers turned on every light and lamp in their cottage. This had the effect of making the carvings look even more pronounced. Contorted by shadows, illuminated by light from different sources, the carvings seemed to multiply in number. At night, with all the lights turned on, the cottage still resembled a cave, but now, because of the carvings, it looked like a cave where pagans conduct their torchlight ceremonies and secret initiation rituals. Ted hated the place. He began to loathe it, especially since the old sailor’s “consummate carving” remained incomplete, a gash in the wall of their house, an open wound. But Cheryl thought the carvings were entrancing. She stared at them for minutes at a time, sometimes to the neglect of the prospectuses and financial reports that she brought home to read.

One day in winter, Cheryl slept in after Ted went to work, and she didn’t awaken until mid-morning when a fit of nausea overtook her and she had to vomit. She felt ill deep in the pit of her stomach, an all-pervading nausea she had never experienced before. She wished Ted was home to look after her and make her a soothing cup of tea. She wanted to be pampered in her illness as her mother used to pamper her when she had been sick from school and her mother plied her with chicken soup and let her watch TV all day. To re-create something of the maternal care her mother provided, Cheryl took pillows and blankets from her bed into the sitting room and lied down on the couch. She intended to watch TV, to do nothing all day, to lie there quietly in the warmth and snugness of the blankets and savor her illness as she used to do as a little girl.

But she was delirious. She felt like she was riding a merry-go-round and couldn’t get off. Her eyes wandered across the carvings: seabirds; breaching whales; porpoises swimming beside a ship’s bow; a drowned man, his face contorted and eyes bulging out; a freighter seen darkly against the bright rays of a rising sun; a sailor in a watchman’s cap staring into starry darkness; a narrow cobblestone street with laundry drying on clotheslines and plump women leaning on their elbows on window sills; King Poseidon; a tattooist in the window of his parlor; a young

woman crying on the quayside with a handkerchief pressed to her eye...

The images flitted before Cheryl’s eyes, and hardly did she register one when the next arrived and then the next. Her head was spinning, but it was pleasurable, this phantasmagoria, this delirious parade of images. As she watched them, she felt herself shrinking, as if she were receding into girlhood and recovering the simple joys of a child’s imagination.

Then she heard a key jiggling the lock and the handle of the doorknob being turned. Who could it be?

Cheryl sat up, a gleeful expression on her face. It was the old sailor come to work on his “consummate carving.” She wanted more than anything in the world to see him face to face. She wanted him to explain what each carving meant. She wanted to hear the story behind each carving. She wanted to know if these carvings were works of his imagination or records of real events.

But the door opened to reveal not the sailor, but a man she didn’t recognize at first, an intruder. He was a fierce-looking black-haired scowling man with a hateful expression in his eyes. Cheryl fainted.

When she came to, Ted was—ridiculously she thought—holding her arm aloft and slapping the backside of her hand as people do when a woman faints in old movies. He had come home to check on her. She hadn’t answered her cell phone. And when he arrived, he thought the old sailor was in his house, so he burst open the door with the expectation of finding the old bat and having it out with him once and for all.

Cheryl’s education, all her mental training, her way of thinking told her that she should reserve the verdict until she had taken a pregnancy test. But she knew. Her intuition, which until this moment had hardly uttered a peep, positively screamed it. She could feel it in the pit of her body. She was pregnant. Having a baby would mean leaving the cottage, since it wasn’t a suitable place to raise a child, and she would have to leave the carvings behind, but so be it.

She said to Ted, “Let’s have a baby.”

“A baby?” asked Ted.

“It’s not like we’re too young to have a child or we don’t have the means to support one.”

“A baby?”

“Yes, we could do it.”

“We could have a baby,” said Ted.



As the realtor Mr. Florentino led the young man and woman up the stairway under the trees, he couldn’t help but remark to himself that the cottage was a gold mine. How many times had he sold it? Eight times? Twelve times? And who would have thought, forty years ago when he got into the business, that anyone would pay this much for a little nook on Telegraph Hill? When Mr. Florentino was a boy, his mother forbade him from playing on the hill on account of the lowlife, but now you needed a sack of gold to live there. Who would’ve thought it? Will real estate miracles ever cease? “Thank you St. Joseph,” he whispered under his breath to the patron saint of realtors.

In front of the cottage, the portly Mr. Florentino stopped to catch his breath. He mopped his sweaty brow with a handkerchief.

“You’ll appreciate this place,” he told his clients.

He couldn’t read these two. The man wore the oddest-looking pair of glasses he had ever seen, horn-rim glasses half as large as his face. And a tuft of brown hair grew like a weed under his lower lip. Mr. Florentino hadn’t seen a tuft like that since the old days when jazz musicians roamed North Beach. The guy’s wife or girlfriend had black bangs that almost obscured her eyes and a sexless black smock that could well have been pinched from a vampire corpse. Probably they were in computers, Mr. Florentino reasoned. The computer people, he remembered a colleague saying, were into authenticity. They wanted things to be authentic. That’s why they shelled out so much for the rickety old Victorians.

Mr. Florentino said, “This place is authentic, the real thing. It’s a genuine work of art in here. Wait till you see what’s on the walls.”

He threw open the drapes. On the beams, rafters, door lintels and window sills were hundreds and hundreds of intricately made woodcarvings. The woman gasped. “Told you so,” said Mr. Florentino.

While the young couple marveled at the carvings, he wandered to the fireplace. “Nice,” he thought as he ran his stubby fingers across a large carving above the mantelpiece. It showed, in bas-relief against a seashell that had been etched deep into the wood, a fat baby with a big round chin, a toy tugboat in one hand, and a mermaid doll in the other.





art by Jorge Santos (www.asgallery.com)

## the war against cars

In the era before the growth of the credit card industry and computerized banking – before the very internet – there was a tradition in San Francisco of bars and restaurants keeping on hand blank checks for the convenience of their customers. Blank checks were sold by stationery stores as “counter checks” in bundled packages looking much like your check book – but there was no bank name or person’s name printed on them.

They were blank – with room for a customer to write in his or her name and the name of the bank and the date and the amount to be paid. At that time most everyone in San Francisco operated on neighborhood reputation and, well, trust – that sort of civic trust is not a commodity in abundance in the today’s political climate – and the bar or restaurant cashed the blank check and gave the customer cash to pay the bill of the day.

What a wonderful Old Town world that was! We alas do not live in such a town anymore – except that there is still a blank check, but it is in the hands of City Hall bureaucrats and ever-more power grabbing members of the Board of Supervisors.

They believe they can do and spend as they want – just fill in the amount on the blank check – without any oversight except by toothless City Hall cronies and in abject disregard of the will of the voters.

The specific blank check increase in sales tax authorized by Proposition K in 2003 – and my fiends, we was fooled. We were bamboozled by a charming snake oil salesman with a Falstafian miscommand of the English language, Supervisor Jake McGoldrick.

Proposition K gave a blank check to the bureaucrats and their Supervisorial co-conspirators to do what they want – a goal hidden in the small type of Prop. K – which was to eliminate automobile traffic lanes and parking spaces along the Geary boulevard and Van Ness corridors

to make them more bicycle friendly.

At the cost of hundreds of millions of dollars, this would send 55,000 cars which use Geary Boulevard daily into the surrounding residential streets and kill the businesses of hundreds of merchants who in one way or the other depend on automobile access. The results on Van Ness would be almost equally devastating affecting the auto dealerships who have made a brave stand to stay in the city and adversely effect furniture and other large retail stores during the many years of ripped up streets and construction.

All this for the questionable goal of increasing the time of a bus ride by perhaps four minutes. This plan would devastate our local merchant economy – the hostile reaction of one of the transit planners being paid by the blank check of Prop. K was “Let the merchants move to a mall!” – the equivalent of the famous New York Daily News headline “Ford to New York: Drop Dead.” This plan would decimate our businesses and plague our neighborhoods with traffic – but it was the voters most who would be most affected.

No one in their right mind would have voted for this plan if voters knew the true intent of Prop. D. The blank check was there and the planning has been paid for and has proceeded rapidly in a sneak attempt to make it a fait accompli before the neighborhoods and merchants affected have even a chance to say boo!

This is not the way government should be run in San

Francisco. The blank check bureaucrats and their anti-car and anti-business Supervisorial allies have a corresponding Brass Ring mentality – that once you get the electoral brass ring on the merry-go-round you can ride around free forever. This mentality infects some district Supervisors who think that, once elected by a small number of voters in their district, they can act like Sun Kings free to do what they wish – no matter how it affects other people outside their districts. This is after all one city, not a balkanized peninsula.

How is the Brass Ring mentality manifested by the Blank Check artists at City Hall? By ignoring, even scorning, the will of the voters who have already made their feelings clear. Examples of that are the Supervisors rush to judgment for a Saturday closing to automobiles in the upper part of Golden Gate Park and the addition to supervisorial staffs despite voters sentiment being clearly in the other direction.

What we have here is San Francisco’s version of taxation without representation. Such imperial attitudes have led to revolutions in the past – not the least the American Revolution.

What we need here is not a revolution but a solemn civic pact on the part of neighborhoods affected by an out-of-touch and elitist City Hall. We continue to pay more than our fair share of taxes while the number of city employees increases and services to the neighborhoods decline.

The ill-thought Geary and Van Ness anti-merchant plans are our Rubicon – can you imagine a half-decade or more of nightmare traffic congestion if these projects proceed at the same time as Sutter Medical proceeds with tearing town this hotel and building a new hospital on lower Van Ness?

We must draw the line here. At the very minimum, there must be full public hearings in the Geary and Van Ness corridor plans, an EIR done, and not one more blank check of public money spent until the voters can be heard in full.

# NEW ORLEANS IN S.F.

## Historic Condor Club is Reborn as Cajun Venue



**A**ndrew Yaeger's *House of Seafood and Jazz* opened at the famous Condor Club in North Beach shortly before Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans. His Cajun and Creole cooking has made his place a favorite among locals who love the new dimension of flavors he's brought to San Francisco.

Andrew grew up over the seafood restaurant that his family ran for 45 years in New Orleans and his flagship restaurant, *House of Seafood and Jazz* in New Orleans' French Quarter, is a favorite of both locals and visitors looking for the finest in fresh seafood with a kick.

Along with writing partner Jon DeMers, Yaeger has put out three fantastic cookbooks: *New Orleans By The Bowl*, *Ten Speed Press Berkeley* full of authentic recipes for gumbos, jambalayas, soups and stews; *New Orleans Seafood Cookbook*, *Ten Speed Press Berkeley* and *Oysters*, *Celestial Arts*, Berkeley.

I never realized how many versions of gumbo and jambalaya existed until I read *New Orleans by the Bowl*. And, since Macque Choux is one of my favorite things, I was thrilled to see his versions with chicken and with crabmeat.

Both of these books include an extensive glossary of food terms for the novice Creole or Cajun cook, as well as an interesting history of how the flavors of the regions developed.

*Oysters* is a small, but comprehensive book of oyster for anyone who loves oysters.

It was difficult to choose just a few of his recipes to tempt you, so I encourage you to run out and buy both books. You'll be glad you did. But here are a few of my favorites.

**Macque Choux** from *New Orleans by the Bowl*, *Ten Speed Press Berkeley* (Of course you'll have to buy the book for his chicken and crabmeat versions. Serves 10)

12 ears corn  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
½ cup chopped onion  
½ cup chopped red bell pepper  
½ cup chopped green bell pepper  
½ teaspoon dried thyme  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon ground white pepper  
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper  
2 cups chopped plum tomatoes  
½ teaspoon ground black pepper  
¼ cup heavy cream

In a medium mixing bowl, cut the kernels from the corn and scrape the cobs with a fork to obtain a milky pulp. You should have about 8 cups of corn.

In a large sauté pan, heat the butter and oil. Add the onion and bell peppers and sauté until opaque, 10 to 15 minutes. Add the corn, thyme, salt, and white pepper. Fry until the corn begins to stick. Add the cayenne pepper, tomatoes, black pepper and heavy cream. Bring to a boil and lower heat to simmer. Cook for 10 minutes. Serve in bowls.

Chilled Tuna Remoulade from *New Orleans Seafood*, *Ten Speed Press Berkeley*, is amazing as a summer lunch or dinner. Serves 4

### Remoulade Sauce

2 anchovy filets  
½ tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice  
½ cup mayonnaise  
½ cup Creole mustard  
1 teaspoon white wine  
½ teaspoon Tabasco sauce  
½ teaspoon paprika  
Mash the anchovy fillets with the lime juice in a bowl until a paste is formed, and stir in the remaining ingredients. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator to chill for at least 3 hours.

### Poaching Liquid

1 cup white wine  
2 tablespoons fresh dill  
1 lemon, sliced and squeezed, with rind reserved  
1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper  
1 tablespoon chopped garlic  
1 bay leaf  
4 (4 – 6 ounce) tuna steaks  
½ cup chopped fresh tomatoes  
1 tablespoon cold butter  
Fresh dill sprigs, for garnish

To prepare poaching liquid, mix together all of the ingredients for the liquid in a medium pan and simmer over medium heat. Add the tuna and poach for 2 to 3 minutes. Remove the tuna from the pan, reserving the poaching liquid. Cover the tuna with plastic wrap and chill on a plate in the refrigerator for about 1 hour.

Add the tomatoes to the reserved poaching liquid. Boil over high heat until reduced by half, 3 to 4 minutes, and then strain. Whisk in the butter to finish the sauce. Keep warm.

To serve, spoon 2 tablespoons of the warm sauce into each of 4 small bowls. Place 1

piece of the chilled tuna in each bowl and top with 2 teaspoons of the refrigerated remoulade sauce. Garnish with fresh dill and serve.

**Shrimp Creole** from New Orleans by the Bowl, Ten Speed Press Berkeley, is an amazing, but easy, recipe. (serves 8)

1 cup unsalted butter  
 3 green peppers, julienned  
 3 onions, julienned  
 ¼ cup all purpose flour  
 2 cups canned plum tomatoes with their juice, crushed  
 4 cups chicken stock  
 1 cup tomato juice  
 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley  
 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning  
 1 teaspoon ground black pepper  
 1 teaspoon paprika  
 1 teaspoon Louisiana hot sauce  
 ¼ cup dry sherry  
 2 pounds peeled and deveined extra large (16/20) shrimp  
 4 cups cooked white rice

In a large saucepan, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Sauté the bell peppers and onion until limp, about two minutes. Add the flour, stir thoroughly, and continue to cook and stir until the flour browns, about 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes, chicken stock, tomato juice, parsley, Italian seasoning, pepper, paprika, hot sauce, and sherry. Bring to a boil and lower the heat to a simmer. Simmer for 30 minutes. Add the shrimp and cook until they are pink, 5 to 7 minutes. Serve in bowls over rice.

*Andrew Yaeger's House of Seafood and Jazz*  
 Corner of Broadway and Columbus  
 415.781.8222  
[www.condorsf.com](http://www.condorsf.com)

The quest for the perfect french fries continues with these recommendations:

Le Central on Bush Street near Grant, serves the quintessential steak pommies frites, with excellent thin crisp fries. These fries also accompany the roast chicken or can be ordered a la carte.

Frijtz on Hayes Street near Laguna, specializing in of course fries. The fries are a thicker version, but well made. With more than a dozen dipping sauces for the fries, including curry ketchup, thai chili ketchup and balsamic mayo, it's an experience that all true frie lover can't pass up.

We'll continue to update you on new and new to us french frie experiences. We welcome any suggestions from readers.



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# Eating Well Out Of Your Freezer

By Our Food Correspondent

More and more we're seeing cooking shows and magazines focused on quick and easy cooking, cooking ahead for week-night meals, all types of ideas to help us to eat well on a very busy schedule.

This is great for people like me who love to cook and entertain, but also have a demanding career. We're the ones who invite people over at the drop of a hat. We love to have a lot of friends drop by for drinks, lunch on weekends and impromptu suppers. So we need to be prepared.

With a little advance planning, a well stocked pantry and freezer and a little imagination, you can host a cocktail party for 20, a sit down dinner for 12, or an impromptu supper after the theater for a few good friends with little stress.

When I make dinner, I often double the recipe so that I can freeze a second batch for later. If you intend to freeze a lot of dinners, I suggest that you invest in a vacuum sealer. It keeps food fresher longer and prevents freezer burn. Also, food packed in a vacuum seal bag takes up less space in your freezer.

Your pantry should be stocked with the basics; chicken broth, dried pasta, an assortment of beans and rice, as well as items like roasted peppers, sun-dried tomatoes, assorted salsas, olives, cornichons, capers, good quality jams in fruit varieties and hot or sweet pepper jam. With these you can always come up with some appetizers and a nice sauce for fish, chicken or pork. Add a simple rice dish, a fresh vegetable and salad and you've got a dinner party.

I also keep my pantry stocked with tomato sauce that I make and can every summer, which you can also freeze if you're uncomfortable with home canning. I also keep a number of home canned appetizer items in my pantry. Michael Chiarello's Calabrese Antipasto from his Casual Cooking book is one of my favorites. I make large batches and can it. You can serve it straight from the jar, or chop it coarsely and top crostini with it. I've also used it to make a terrific pasta salad. In his Tra Vigne book there's a recipe for Lemon Braised Artichokes that I also make in large batches. It makes another wonderful crostini topping, and can be used for a last minute pasta sauce. You can also find terrific alternatives at most markets.

My freezer is always stocked with a variety of soups and chili to use for last minute guests. It's easy to double a soup, such as the Chicken Corn Soup below, or chili recipe when you make it for dinner and freeze the second batch. I freeze them in 2 serving portions so that I can take out one for just us, or multiples for friends who stop by. Pair this with some good bread and a great salad and your guests will be very satisfied.

When I make any lasagna, I double the recipe. Before baking, I freeze one in the pan that I'll eventually bake it in. When frozen solid, remove it from the pan and either seal it in a vacuum seal bag or wrap tightly with plastic wrap, then in foil. When you remove from the freezer, remove wrapping and put it into the original pan to defrost. The Butternut Squash Lasagna is not only quick and easy, but very low in fat and freezes well.

I always have a few special appetizers in my freezer. Phyllo triangles with a variety of fillings can be made on a rainy Sunday afternoon and freeze very well. Choux puffs (see recipe below) also keep well and can be filled with any number of sweet or savory fillings.

I like to make a variety of cookies that keep well, such as biscotti, to serve with fruit or sorbet for dessert.

Another basic is an herb garden. This can be as simple as a few often used herbs in a pot near a window. I always have rosemary and thyme (my personal favorite), sage, tarragon, and oregano. Adding fresh herbs to soups and stews, or for use with your favorite meat dishes, makes a world of difference. It also looks lovely. You can make a last minute omelets or scrambled eggs with a little parmesan cheese and a handful of fresh herbs for a last minute brunch, lunch or even dinner. Fresh herbs in a salad, or in your basic vinaigrette, make a simple salad seem special.

This isn't to say that fresh foods aren't important. I always

buy my meat, fish, poultry and vegetables fresh. We're lucky to have numerous farmer's markets throughout the bay area. I usually stop by at least one or two a week. But, when you don't have time to get to the store, you don't have to give up entertaining. And you don't have to panic when friends just stop by.

One of my favorite impromptu dinner items is a take-off of something my mother made when I was a kid when she came home from work too tired to cook a big meal. She would sauté some onions, garlic and leftover ham. To this she would add beaten eggs and pasta and stir until it was just cooked, but still creamy then sprinkle on parmesan cheese. I sometimes use prosciutto or turkey bacon and always add a handful of fresh herbs. You can also add leftover vegetables like peppers, broccoli, peas or asparagus. Improvise with whatever you have on hand. Try gruyere or chevre instead of the parmesan. It's so easy and always a hit.

## Chicken Corn Soup

1 cup diced onion  
 1 cup diced carrot  
 1 cup diced celery  
 5 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
 salt/pepper  
 red pepper paste or cayenne pepper to taste  
 1 cup dry white wine  
 1 cup lime juice  
 1 Tbl chopped thyme  
 1 Tbl basil, chiffonade  
 4 cups chicken broth  
 2 chicken breasts  
 2 cups corn, fresh off cob or frozen  
 1 cup half and half (fat free is OK)  
 chopped chives garnish

Sauté onion, carrot and celery with salt and pepper to taste until translucent, about 8-10 minutes. Add garlic and pepper paste or cayenne and thyme, sauté additional 2 minutes. Add wine and cook until almost dry. Add broth, chicken breast. Poach until chicken is cooked through, about 25 minutes. Remove chicken and shred. Return to pot. Add basil, lime juice, corn and half and half and simmer for about 10 minutes.

Garnish with chives.

Variations: Leave out thyme, add cilantro and mint, use nonfat coconut milk in place of half and half for Thai style. Garnish with fresh cilantro, mint and basil.

## Butternut Squash Lasagna

3 cups butternut squash, cut into small cubes  
 1 medium onion, diced  
 3 cloves garlic, minced  
 1 tsp red pepper flakes  
 1 cup chicken broth  
 1 tsp olive oil  
 4 cups 1% milk  
 1/3 cup flour  
 1 tsp salt  
 1 tsp pepper  
 1 tsp ground nutmeg  
 1 cup gruyere grated (for a lighter version use jarlsberg lite cheese)  
 1 cup parmesan, grated  
 12 no boil lasagna noodles

Spray a pan that will hold four of the noodles, about 8 x 12, with cooking spray. Preheat oven to 375

In nonstick pan, sauté onion (sprinkle with little salt and pepper) until lightly caramelized. Add garlic and continue to cook for one minute. Add squash, red pepper flakes and sauté for about 3 minutes. Add chicken broth and cover. Cook over medium low heat until squash is soft (about 7 minutes). Set aside.

In saucepan combine milk, flour, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Whisk until all flour is incorporated. Bring to boil over medium heat, whisking constantly. Continue to cook over low heat, stirring often, until thick. Since there is no fat in this, you must be careful not to let it burn.

Combine cheeses in a bowl. Mash or process squash into thick puree with some small chunks.

Pour about 1 cup of sauce in bottom of pan. Put four noodles to cover. Spread of the squash on top evenly, then pour about 1 cup of sauce over. Sprinkle with 1/3 of cheese. Repeat with another layer of noodles, rest of squash, sauce, cheese. Place four more noodles on top. Put rest of sauce over this and sprinkle with rest of cheese.

Bake for about 45 minutes or until top is lightly browned and bubbly.

## Choux puffs for the freezer

(The puffs are one of my favorites to have on hand for appetizers. They defrost in about 20 minutes and can be filled with so many different things. They can be made in advance and frozen for up to a month (longer if you carefully freeze them with a vacuum sealer). Around the holidays, I make a huge batch to use for various last minute get-togethers.

1 1/4 cups water  
 1 1/2 sticks (3/4 cup) unsalted butter, cut into pieces  
 1/2 teaspoon salt  
 1 1/2 cups unbleached flour  
 4 to 6 large eggs

In a heavy saucepan bring water to a boil with butter and salt over high heat. Reduce heat to moderate. Add flour all at once and beat with a wooden spoon until mixture pulls away from sides of pan, forming a dough.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Combine water, butter, salt and sugar in heavy medium saucepan. Bring to boil, stirring to melt butter. Add flour; using wooden spoon, stir vigorously until mixture clumps together, forming ball. Stir 1 minute longer. Remove from heat. Transfer dough to medium bowl. Using electric mixer, add eggs 1 at time, beating until dough is smooth after each addition (dough will be slightly soft and shiny). Using 1 rounded tablespoon dough for each cream puff, spoon dough onto prepared baking sheet, spacing about 2 inches apart and forming mounds about 3/4 inch to 1 inch high and 1 1/4 inches in diameter. Using moist fingertips, gently press tops of cream puffs flatten any peaks. Bake until golden brown, about 35 minutes. Transfer baking sheet to rack; let cream puffs cool. Freeze solid on a baking sheet, then transfer to a freezer bag.

You can add 1/4 cup of grated cheese (gruyere or parmesan are my favorites) or 1 cup of chopped herbs such as parsley or thyme, to the dough just before piping for savory puffs.

## Sweet Fillings:

Ricotta cheese sweetened with powdered sugar. Add chopped chocolate or candied orange peel if you like. Or, stir in a couple of tablespoons of your favorite jam.

Vanilla or chocolate pudding

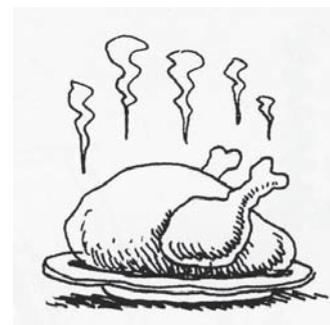
Lemon curd mixed with mascarpone, ricotta cheese or whipped cream

Savory Fillings:

Chicken salad

Ham salad

Chevre with herbs



# COMINGS & GOINGS



There was a fine wedding party at the Washington

Square Bar & Grill for North Beach artist Winston Smith and his bride Chick, hosted by WASHBAG, as it is colloquially known. Owner Guy Ferri and his wife Rose attended with their two children. Among the writers and artists at the wedding party were dirty commix books publisher Ron Turner of Last Gasp (in Shriner's fez cap), and (right). The poet Tony Dingman, Specs, the owner of 12 Adler Place, and columnist Warren Hinckle. Wavy Gravy, left, performed the ceremony which famous Washbag bartender Michael McCourt politically incorrectly called the "dirty deed."

The next week at Specs, next door to Tosca and across the street from City Lights Bookstore, there was a memorial

ceremony for recently deceased writer Bill Cardoso who coined the word "gonzo" for his friend Hunter S. Thompson scribblings.

Cardoso's friends from Sag Harbor and Boston flew out to Frisco for the event. Among the crowd were next-door Tosca owner Jeanette Etheridge, Specs himself in a rare public appearance in his own joint, the vivacious Mary Miles Ryan, the longtime partner of Bill Cardoso, Juan Thompson, Hunter's son, and Pam C. The event, from 3 to 5 p.m. on Memorial Day

Weekend, was closed to the general public as Specs opened early for the occasion.



# NEW ORLEANS FOOD & JAZZ!

Jumbo Shrimp Creole

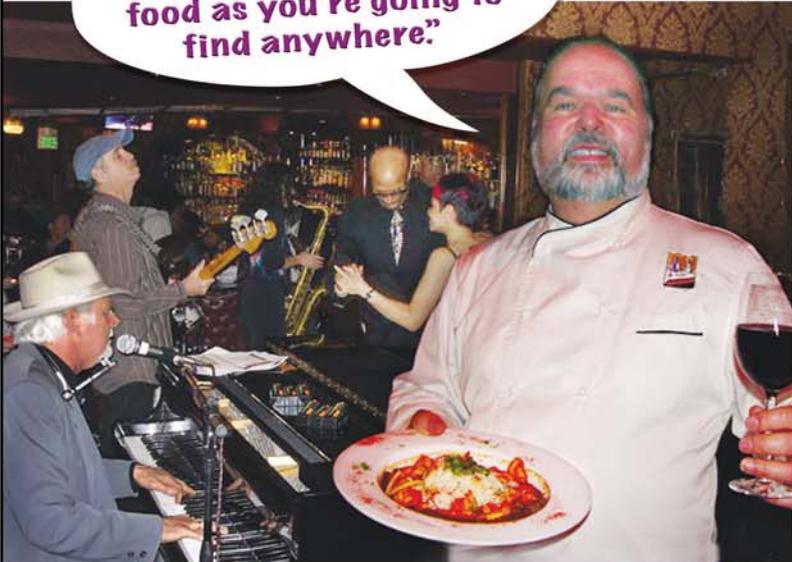
Louisiana Bouillabaisse

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Ya Mama's Gumbo

Jambalaya

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**CRAB-O-RAMA**

**\$19<sup>95</sup>**

Celebrating San Francisco's Dungeness Crab season...

Crab Louis / Crab Bisque / Crab Cakes / Artichoke Crab Salad and your choice of 3 Entrees: Half Cracked Crab Crab Cioppino or Louisiana Style BBQ Crab

**MON**  
5:30PM TO 11PM

Enjoy a Taste of New Orleans Soul, Creole & Cajun Cooking!

**FAT TUESDAY**

**\$19<sup>95</sup>**

Red Beans and Rice / Duck File Gumbo / Shrimp Remoulade Fried Chicken with Bronzed Catfish, served with Jambalaya and Soulful Greens plus ..... Hot Beignets

**5 COURSES**

**TUES**  
5:30PM TO 11PM

**STEAK & LOBSTER SPECIAL**

**\$19<sup>95</sup>**

Crab & Lobster Bisque, Tossed Italian Salad, an 8 Oz Bronzed NY Strip & a Crab-Stuffed Half Maine Lobster

**WED**  
5:30PM TO 11PM

**Phil's OYSTER-FEST**

**6 COURSES "Chef gets oyster-freaky"**

**\$19<sup>95</sup>**

**THUR**  
5:30PM TO 11PM

**STEAK & LOBSTER SPECIAL**

**\$19<sup>95</sup>**

Crab & Lobster Bisque, Tossed Italian Salad, an 8 Oz Bronzed NY Strip & a Crab-Stuffed Half Maine Lobster

Available in the Dining Room only

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10PM TO 1AM

*Sicilian Sundays*

Chef Andrew says "Feed 'em like they're at my Mama's house"

**10 COURSE "FEED ME" MENU**

**\$19<sup>95</sup>**

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