

S uite T alk

S eptember 2007

From
Tony Holder
SFSuites GM



Hello from the 'Suites'

At the Suites, we are pursuing a city permit to replace all the windows on the property with energy efficient vinyl Anlin windows. As of this time, the city would prefer us to employ a wood model which they feel would be a better fit for our building. **The Board** will keep you posted on what the final decision will be. The new beds, mattresses linen and bed skirts are in place; new monogrammed pillows are on the way. The decorating committee is exploring different duvet covers. Owners unanimously agree that the new beds and linen are an excellent upgrade. The new paint and flower pots add a European flavor and a touch of color to the roof. The outside ivy branches have been redirected to a manageable height and the walls repainted; giving our building a refurbished and confident appearance. Suites 24, 34, 44 will be appraised by our decorator for possible updates. These ideas

will be considered by the Board and the decorating committee. **Most famous** (and expensive) among San Francisco's shopping centers is **Union Square**. Bordered by Geary, Powell, Post and Stockton Streets, Union Square is actually more than just the square itself. The adjoining streets are lined with restaurants, theaters, boutiques, galleries, shops, and services. Its flagship stores include **Neiman-Marcus, Macy's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Niketown, and Tiffany's**. For those with sophisticated, urban tastes, Union Square offers unparalleled selection in apparel, jewelry, shoes, and even home furnishings. Don't miss Nordstrom, just a few blocks away on Market Street, or the wonderful boutiques on Maiden Lane. Amidst so much activity and alluring shopping opportunities, it's easy to overlook some of Union Square's history. For instance, did you know that the Westin St. Francis was the first hotel in the city to offer beds with sheets? Or that the parking garage underneath the recently renovated Union Square was the first underground parking facility in the country? With the theater district just a few blocks away, and all the other fabulous attractions, its no wonder so many of our owners

make Union Square their home base while they're in town.



Once, 125,000 Italian-Americans settled in the neighborhood known as **North Beach**. They introduced an ambience suggestive of the villages they left behind, populating it with cafés, small butchers, barbershops, cheese shops, and an envied pace.

In the 60's, poets, artists, hippies and musicians found a home in North Beach's open, laid-back atmosphere. Rents were inexpensive, so artists congregated, and the area was the focal point of the Beat generation on the West coast. Wearing torn jeans and armed with a cappuccino stained writing pad, a then unknown **Francis Coppola** co-wrote the Godfather screenplay at the Café Trieste. **Carol Doda** began the topless dance craze at the world famous Condor on Broadway. I believe that, that corner for obvious reasons should have been baptized the 'Silicone Valley'. It made my day seeing **Clint Eastwood** shooting pool at the Café Sport while filming the 'Dirty Harry' classics in North Beach. Former Mayor

Joseph Alioto could be seen proudly strolling on Columbus Avenue with his lineage on his way to St. Peter & Paul Church. A prudent **Joe Di Maggio** frequented Gino and Carlo's tavern for years, daydreaming of Marilyn while allowing others to fulfill their dream of buying a drink for the "Clipper". **Charles McCabe** of "Any clod can have the facts, but having opinions is an art" fame, for years wrote his daily Chronicle column at the same North Beach pub inspired by several adult beverages. North Beach is that rare thing -- a neighborhood that manages to be a perennial hit with tourists, and also to remain beloved by San Franciscans.

Today, though some Italian classics still remain (cafes', restaurants and a handful of Italian-owned shops), the area's boundaries are increasingly blurred as more of Chinatown has made a way into North Beach. Nightlife here includes jazz, restaurants for all tastes, and lots of bars and clubs. If you value your sanity, you won't attempt parking. Cabs and three major bus lines (#15, #30, and #45) and two Cable Car lines will deliver you to North Beach.

Even the walk from the Suites is a comfortable 15 minutes stroll. **Currently two of my favorite restaurants are 'Pres a vi'** a concept that maximizes the variety of global food and wine you can experience in one visit by offering small portions of each. Executive Chef Kelly Degala's has received glowing reviews for his global menu. Pres a Vi is located at the Letterman

Digital Arts Center, located just inside the Lombard Gate entrance to the Presidio. (415) 409-3000 ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ **'Farina Focaccia & Cucina Italiana'**. A new upscale Italian restaurant in the heart of the Mission focuses on Ligurian fare. The pesto handmade pasta is to die for; it melts in your mouth as well as Focaccia di Recco which is truly authentic. All fish offerings are exceptional. If you want to try regional Italian food at a very reasonable price, this is the place. 3560 18th St San Francisco, CA 94110 Phone: (415) 565-0360 ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Our next Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 28, 2007 11 AM. Your participation is encouraged and welcomed! Dr. Jeff Reichel, President, San Francisco Suites Board of Directors

HELP WANTED



We look forward to having some owners offer their expertise and play a part with our fall and holiday season decoration at the Suites. Here is our tentative schedule:

Fall decoration, Thursday, November 1, 2007

Holiday decoration Saturday, December 1, 2007

Interested parties should call Tony at (415) 433-9700, ext 151.

From Ric Alfrey,



Concierge

Ric mans the Concierge Desk every Sunday and Monday during the day, and every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during the evening. It is highly recommended that you pull up a comfortable chair at the desk when you visit the Suites during his working hours; this way you will receive your own *personal* version of Ric's updates as you sip a glass of wine or enjoy your sherry after dinner!

Dear Fellow Owners,

The end of the year is approaching and your board must make decisions regarding current and future projects at The Suites; we need and appreciate your input. There are several projects that have been suggested or that have been already considered. We would like to replace the old aluminum windows with modern windows that will be better insulating and able to be washed from the inside of the building.

Unfortunately, the city wants us to use wood windows which would be more expensive, less insulating, impossible to clean from the rooms, and which would require painting (needing an exterior scaffold). We are appealing this decision.

Other major projects include; toilet replacement, repairing of the flooring in the ground floor bathroom, restoring our valuable antiques, and redecorating the three parlor suites in the rear of the building. These last two items are big, and require some careful evaluation and budgeting. Estimates to restore the antiques exceeded \$70,000.00. Do we start a slow process (some of the pieces need work now)? Do we choose to just restore some of the pieces? Clearly owner input is needed. The three rear parlor suites are poorly designed and do not leave adequate space for the guests to be comfortable. We have several ideas to help these rooms function better, and again need to have a discussion with all owners. One idea is to replace the wall beds with conventional

double beds which are over 30 inches shorter and would free up a lot of room. We could reduce or remove the kitchen "bar" as well.

We are holding the next board meeting on Sunday, October 28th at 11:00.

We will have a light lunch service, and hopefully we can have a good turnout and discussion. Please come if possible and if not, please send a note or email to the Suites. I would be especially interested in everyone's opinion on the antique restoration. I have heard a range of opinions covering the entire spectrum from "forget the old stuff" to "our antique furniture is central to the identity of The Suites and must be restored". We will keep owners informed, but the more feedback the better, even though we know that there are a lot of different opinions. We are starting our budget process and one our goals is to be as accurate as possible in placing future necessary projects into our budget or into the reserve study so we do not find things that have to be done and have no funding available or planned.

As always, thank you for your interest and support.

***Jeff Reichel,
Board President***

WINERIES TOURS



NAPA VALLEY

This rich and fertile stretch of valley, a little over 35 miles in length, is home to almost 300 wineries, most of which line **Highway 29**. Many of the large wineries offer guided tours of their facilities including the underground limestone caves and storage casks.

There is typically a nominal tasting fee at most wineries (\$5-\$20 per person). This fee often includes a souvenir glass and the opportunity to taste three to six wines. A good strategy is to research wineries before visiting to ensure they are open to the public and their hours of operation. Most visitors will find wine tasting is both enjoyable and educational. **SONOMA** Sonoma is regarded as the birthplace of California viticulture. The history of the Sonoma wine industry is closely tied to the early Spanish missionaries. In 1823, Franciscan fathers founded Mission San Francisco Solano, the last mission in the El Camino Real chain which runs the length of the state. Sonoma is known as having the ideal conditions for **Chardonnay** and **Pinot Noir** production. With its mild sunny climate and fertile soil, Sonoma was the perfect setting for the missionaries to plant the first crops of grapes used in making wine for the Holy Eucharist.

Later, **Count Agoston Haraszthy** imported cuttings from Europe and produced the first European varieties in America. Literary legend and one-time Bay Area resident, Jack London created one of the most memorable images of the Sonoma Valley from an Indian fable. He called it the Valley of the Moons as the moon appears to rise several times over succeeding peaks in the Valley.

Some of the best-known wineries include:

Calistoga
Schramsberg Vineyard

(707) 942-2414

Sterling Vineyards

(707) 942-3344

Napa

Stag's Leap Wine Cellars

(707) 944-2020

Oakville

La Famiglia Di Robert

Mondavi Winery

(707) 944-2811

Silver Oak Cellars

(707) 944-8808

Rutherford

Niebaum-Coppola Estate

(707) 968-1100

Mumm Napa Valley

(707) 942-3434

St. Helena

Beringer Vineyards

(707) 963-7115

Conn Creek Winery

(707) 963-9100

Yountville

Domaine Chandon

(707) 944-2280

SONOMA WINERIES

Guerneville

Korbel Champagne Cellars

(707) 887-2294

Healdsburg

Piper Sonoma Cellars

(707) 433-8843

Clos Du Bois Winery

(707) 433-5576

Some interesting

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 1-23

(Weekends) **San Francisco**

Shakespeare Festival. Free

Shakespeare in the Park. Main

Post Parade Ground in the

Presidio, (415) 865-4434

September 2

40th Anniversary Summer of

Love Concert. Speedway

Meadow, Golden Gate Park.

September 8

2007 California State Yo-Yo

Championships.

Exploratorium, (415) 561-0360

September 8-9

12th Annual Ghirardelli Square

Chocolate Festival. The

weekend will feature a variety of

chocolate delicacies from some

of the best Bay Area restaurants

and bakeries. Throughout both

days families will enjoy activities,

including chef demonstrations,

children's entertainment and live

music. 775-5500

September 15

Vivas Las Americas. Showcases

music and dance of Mexico,

Central and South America.

PIER 39, (415) 705-5500

September 22

Tugboat Festival. Festival

celebrates the 100th birthday of

the steam tug Hercules. San

Francisco Maritime National

Historical Park, (415) 561-7000

September 28

San Francisco Opera and San

Francisco Giants Present Free

Opera at AT&T Park. The

event features an outdoor

performance of Saint-Saëns's

Samson and Delilah.

(415) 777-7120

September 22-23

17th Annual Autumn Moon

Festival. Chinatown's historic

Grant Avenue will become a

pedestrian-only bazaar with food,

arts, demonstrations and live

entertainment. Chinatown,

(415) 982-6306

September 23

Now and Zen

Concert/Festival. Sharon

Meadow Golden Gate Park.

September 28-30

35th Anniversary San

Francisco Blues Festival.

Great Meadow, Fort Mason,

(415) 979-5588

September 30

Folsom Street Fair. Kinky

leather adults-only event.

www.folsomstreetfair.com,

(415) 777-3247

September 30

Free Comedy Day In the Park.

Sharon Meadows, Golden Gate

Park, (415) 987-3663

September 30
31st Annual Glide Floss
Bridge to Bridge Run.

12K/7K Race, San Francisco Ferry Building to the Golden Gate Bridge. (415) 995-6899

October 4-9
Fleet Week San Francisco

2007. San Francisco salutes the Navy. The Blue Angels will be zooming through the skies of San Francisco (Oct.6-7); Parade of U.S. Navy Ships (Oct. 6); Ships open to the public for touring (Oct. 8-9). PIER 39 to the Municipal Pier, (415) 705-5500

October 7
Castro Street Fair. Food, arts, crafts. Castro Street, San Francisco's gay district, (415) 841-1824

October 7
San Francisco Italian Heritage Parade and Festival. 12:30pm, Fisherman's Wharf to North Beach, (415) 703-9888

October 11-14
Oktoberfest By the Bay. German food, drink, music, dancing, arts and crafts. Fort Mason, Festival Pavilion, (888) 746-7522

October 13-14
Half Moon Bay Pumpkin Festival. Main Street, Half Moon Bay. (650) 726-9652

October 13-14
Grand National Bike Show
The best of the best in bikes, vendors, and manufacturers

selling their hottest new products. Cow Palace, (415) 404-4111

October 14
Old Timers Car Show.
Speedway Meadow, Golden Gate Park, (415) 386-2572

October 21
Nike Women's Marathon.
Race is sold out. Union Square to Golden Gate Park.
www.nike.com/nikemarathon

October 24-28
San Francisco Fall Antiques Show. Fort Mason, Festival Pavilion, (415) 989-9019

October 27
Exotic Erotic Ball. An evening of entertainment and dancing, with revelers wearing outrageous costumes. Adults only. Cow Palace, (888) EXOTIC-6

October 28
PIER 39 Pumpkin Pandemonium. Kids in costume trick or treat at the shops, restaurants and attractions to **AIR TOURS Above the West Ballooning** A unique way to see the Napa Valley is from a hot air balloon. Sunrise flights with champagne breakfast. Transportation from SF. (800) 627-2759. **San Francisco Seaplane Tours**
Take off on the water and fly over Alcatraz, San Francisco, Golden Gate Bridge. Departures from PIER 39 and Sausalito. 332-4843, 1-888-SEAPLANE.

Alcatraz
The only walking tour of Alcatraz. Home to Al "Scarface"

Capone, "Machine Gun" Kelly. Daily tours depart Pier 33. Alcatraz Cruises, 981-7625 *Note: During peak travel times, reservations must be made well in advance. Advance tickets may be charged to a credit card by telephone.*

BAY CRUISES
Adventure Cat

Relax on a two-hour catamaran cruise. Enjoy views of the City skyline, Bay Bridge, Alcatraz, Golden Gate Bridge. Departs from

PIER 39, J Dock (800) 498-4228

Blue & Gold Fleet

Spectacular 1-hour narrated tour of the San Francisco Bay. Cruise under the Golden Gate Bridge and around Alcatraz.

PIER 39 773-1188

Ferry Building Line

90-minute bay cruise with three audio tours: Natural History, Native American, Architecture. See three bridges, three islands. Ferry Building, Gate E. 901-5253

Red & White Fleet

Golden Gate Bridge cruise under the Bridge, along the Wharf, Sausalito, Tiburon, Angel Island & Alcatraz. Narrated in six languages.

Pier 43 1/2 or call 447-0597

BICYCLE RENTALS

Bay City Bike Rentals

Ride across the GG Bridge to Sausalito/Tiburon and return via ferry. Tour the coast to GG Park.

2661 Taylor/North Point
346-2453

Bike and Roll Bike Rentals

Cycle across the Pacific Ocean... on the G.G. Bridge! Ride to

Sausalito, Tiburon and more.

Return by ferry.

899 Columbus/Lombard

229-2000

Blazing Saddles

Ride the bike path over the GG Bridge to Sausalito/Tiburon and return via ferry. Best bikes, best rates, longest hours.

Pier 43 1/2 at Red & White Fleet

202-8888

Golden Gate Park Bike & Skate

Scenic ride from GG Park to Ocean Beach along Sea Cliff trail to GG Bridge. \$5 off daily rate.

Disc golf rental and sales. 3038

Fulton/6th Ave. 668-1117

Everybody wish Chris a very happy and well deserved vacation on his upcoming trip to England. We love you Chris. hurry back.



Hello from Henry Potter Concierge



How lucky am I to have found San Francisco Suites? I am absolutely thrilled for an opportunity to, first; work with some of the most passionate and sincere people I have worked with in my long career to date. Secondly, to be able to share my love of our magical isle of San Francisco! I am deeply touched by the warm and open armed reception I have received by all on the Suite owners I have met so far, and the numbers keep growing. I can not wait to have the opportunity to meet the entire San Francisco Suites Family, and hope you all know how truly special you all are. I would never have dreamed that I would have a once in a lifetime opportunity like I have here with you all. I am honored to be here, and hope to be able to rise to the occasion to share what I have learned about the extraordinary possibilities San Francisco has to offer, and to be able to help each and every one of your visits special and memorable ones. A long journey from Jacksonville Florida, with a layover in Houston, Texas I arrived in San Francisco in May of 1981 and knew I would never leave. I awake each day and feel as if I just arrived! I could go on and

on, but look forward to many conversations with you all, and will expound as time goes by. Some delightful new finds and favorites on my list to share are:

RISTORANTE MILANO just off the Hyde street cable car line on Pacific Av. The owner, Aldo started there as a waiter, and after 2 years took over, and has owned this jewel for 20 years. The menu and wine list are not expansive, but no morsel of the melt in your mouth house made Pastas, buttery risotto, or melt in your mouth veal dishes every found after dinner is finished. I most always allow Aldo choose my meal, and have never been disappointed. The deserts are as wonderful, but a port and dish of the passion fruit sorbetti usually do me in. The Zabaione Caldo or Cream puffs are also heavenly. A favorite place to immerse in culture and "only in S.F". Esthetics is San Francisco Art Institute 800 Chestnut Street Campus. Entering thru two massive red doors to what seems like a monastery, opening to the likes of an ancient palazzo that house the current students' works. The Diego Rivera Gallery boasts a 30' D. Rivera mural that is exquisite. However, upon entering, you realize you are juxtaposed between old and new, teetering on the edge of Russian Hill and overlooking Fisherman's Wharf. This is all my impression...actually from 1871 to 1925 the Art Institute occupied four buildings on Nob Hill (one was the Mark Hopkins Mansion) before moving to the

Russian Hill locale. In 1916 architectural firm Bakewell and Brown built the current building, and in 1963 architect Paffard Keatinge Clay designed the stunning modern segment. The design is highly acclaimed, with a stepped roof lecture hall that forms an outdoor amphitheatre as the uppermost level of the roof plaza. All in all, a fabulous outing for a sunny afternoon. You may stop in and have a snack at the café located on the same level! When was the last time you took a trip to Alcatraz "THE ROCK" Island? It is springtime on **Alcatraz**, and for the first time in years the flowers are blooming in a garden once tended by some of the most dangerous prisoners in the country. This spring the island has gotten new exhibits and a new bookstore, and the prison gardens have been replanted. There is also a new audio tour where ex-inmates and former guards and their families offer sometimes chilling descriptions of life and death on **Alcatraz**. "We wanted to tell the human story of **Alcatraz**," said Ricardo Perez, supervising ranger at the island, a unit of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. He said the park service wanted to show visitors what prison was like, "so they could learn the difference between rights and privileges that could be taken away, between incarceration and freedom." To do this, the new path to the main cell house leads up a long concrete road to a shower room where new inmates were stripped, searched, issued numbers and given uniforms and

a book of rules. There were 53 rules in all, and the only way out was to obey every one of them. This exhibit is all new: Lockers hold the prison uniform jackets, caps and shirts, sheets and pillowcases issued to the inmates. Some of the material had been locked away in storage for years and is on public display for the first time. Well, guess it's time to revisit. Please let us know as far in advance (especially during the high season) as tickets sell out **fas!!!** WOW! It's April 28, 2007, and it's a real thrill when I get "WOW'ED" !! 2 of our owners, Phil & Eileen Taulbee just returned this lovely spring evening with great news of a real find....a 21st century Speak Easy, Bourbon and Branch. A step back to the 1920's, with the music and ambience of the era in an actual 1920's speakeasy that was shutdown due to prohibition, our name comes from **Branch Water** a term first used in the 1800's referring to pure, clean water from a tiny stream called a "branch" An order for "bourbon and branch" is a nostalgic request for bourbon and water. Located at 501 Jones St. @ Leavenworth, reservations are suggested, so please let one of your concierges know in advance and we will be delighted to make reservations for you. A great place for a nip pre or post theatre, or just a top notch cocktail with friends by an expert mixologist. Being a baker in a prior life, I was pleasantly surprised to find Beard Papas. One of 13 stores so far in the United States, this Japanese company has the secret to some

of the most divine cream puffs that have ever melted in my mouth. Located on the concourse of the Westfield San Francisco Center, and 99 Yerba Buena Lane, *they are truly sinful*. The **Presidio** will get 24 miles of new trails, six scenic overlooks and renovations to San Francisco's only campground thanks to a \$15 million donation Central to the trail project is a plan to finish the Presidio Promenade, which will allow visitors to walk from the Lombard Gate to the Golden Gate Bridge. The trail, popular with joggers and noontime walkers, now ends at the Main Post in the center of the Presidio. When you are down that way, try and find the *WAVE ORGAN*. At the eastern edge of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in San Francisco, a tiny spit of land juts into the bay. If you walk out to the end, you can see San Francisco's skyline on one side and the Golden Gate Bridge on the other. The view alone is worth a journey, but the little peninsula offers more than scenery. It's also the home of a San Francisco wonder, the Wave Organ. The Wave Organ is at the end of Yacht Road, past the Golden Gate Yacht Club. A true wonder, the Wave Organ is a work of environmental art created by Peter Richards and George Gonzales in 1986. Peter is Artist-In-Residence at the Exploratorium. I love to bike down around sunset on a clear evening, especially when the tide is almost at its high point. The sounds thru the tubing is

extraordinary, almost haunting. Almost spiritual experience, unique to our wonderful San Francisco. Had a wonderful day with the NCCA May monthly meeting held on Angel Island. What a wonderful place! The new Segway guided tours are another fabulous way to see the island, not to mention loads of fun during the ride. Bikes are available, new hiking trails, soon to offer kayak rentals, and new camp ground facilities. The current camp sites are so popular they require a 7 month advance reservation!!! I hope to share more in the next newsletter, as the list continues to grow and grow. Thank you all for sharing your special experiences as you have, and I hope you will try some of the suggestions here. I am very interested in your feedback!!!!

UNTIL THE NEXT
NEWSLETTER STAY HAPPY,
HEALTHY AND
ADVENTEROUS!

Henry Potter