



PRESIDIO POST

Characterization of the Historic Forest:

What Makes the Presidio's Forest Unique?

By Michael Boland

Landscape Architect, The Presidio Trust

Whether viewed from the Main Parade Ground or from across town, the Presidio's historic forest dominates the image of the Park, and shapes the public's perception and feelings about it. The tens of thousands of trees that comprise the forest stand were planted by the U.S. Army in order to create a forest barrier between the city and the Post,

and to serve as a wind break. Planted between 1880 and 1930, the forest contributes to the Park's designation as a national historic landmark.

However, the eucalyptus, cypress, and pine trees that dominate the forest today are not native to this area. Before the Spanish arrived, the Presidio was mostly coastal scrub and sand dunes. Only a few hardy native tree species grew on the Presidio's north-facing bluffs. The Vegetation Management

See **HISTORIC FOREST, 5**



Environmental Remediation:

Cleaning Up the Presidio

When the Army left the Presidio in 1994 after more than 150 years of occupancy, it left behind some unresolved environmental problems resulting from its use of the park. They include contamination from landfills and improper chemical disposal, lead contamination from pipes and paint, and deteriorating fuel storage tanks and underground pipelines.

In May 1999, the Presidio Trust, National Park Service and the U.S. Army signed an agreement that transferred responsibility for environmental cleanup of the Presidio to the Trust. The Trust made a commitment to complete remediation work within approximately seven

years, rather than the 30-year time frame proposed by the Army.

"The Trust has already begun assessing the environmental problems on the Presidio, and outlining priorities," said Jane Packer, community relations specialist for the Trust's environmental remediation department. "For example, we were able to expedite cleanup of the chemical release sites at Crissy Field. Once that was accomplished, the Golden Gate National Parks Association and the National Park Service completed the restoration of Crissy's natural wetland."

Cleanup of the abandoned firing ranges, including the



skeet range at Crissy Field, will begin in early May, and should be completed within two months. In addition, a fuel cleanup project is currently underway at the Commissary and Post Exchange sites, which were used as vehicle service areas by the Army prior to 1994.

Concurrently, Trust personnel are preparing a revised Feasibility Study Report covering remediation requirements for sites on the Main Post area of the Presidio. "The study will outline the cleanup procedures and technologies that will

best protect human health and the environment, while controlling costs and ensuring long-term reuse of the land," said Packer. "The plan will serve as the framework for determining a preferred action plan for each cleanup site on the Main Post," she added.

Environmental remediation issues will be addressed at the Presidio Trust Public Board of Directors Meeting on May 23, 9:00 a.m., at the Officers' Club on the Main Post. Those interested are invited to attend for an update on this issue.

See **CLEANING UP, 5**

Regulation Update: Dog Walking on the Presidio

In response to public concern about policies covering off-leash dog walking in the Presidio and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the National Park Service has announced that it will be engaging in a public process known as Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR).

Through this process, the Park Service will solicit public comments on dog walking in the park. Based on the input received, the Park Service will determine whether to proceed with the process that may lead to a legal dog management policy acceptable to all stakeholder groups, according to Superintendent Brian O'Neill.

The Park Service is currently exploring how the

See **DOG WALKING, 5**

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Contact us with news, events, comments, or questions.

Phone: (415) 561-2764 Fax: (415) 561-5435

Check out our web site: www.presidiotrust.gov

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News Briefs



Rebuild Presidio Update

As part of the ongoing "Rebuild Presidio" program, a grass-roots energy conservation effort for Park residents and tenants that is part of the U.S. Department of Energy's national Rebuild America program, the Trust's Sustainability Department and the Presidio Alliance are now preparing for "Energy Challenge 2001." A day-long kickoff event scheduled for June 5th at the Presidio Officers' Club will feature presentations by energy experts, and provide specific information on reducing energy consumption in the home and office. In addition, Presidio-based business tenants and local businesses can request a customized energy audit tailored to their office.

"The energy crisis in our state provides an opportunity for us to come together as a community, learn from each other, and create a positive response to the situation," said Danielle Blank, sustainability program coordinator for the Trust. "This is the goal of Energy Challenge 2001." For more information on Rebuild Presidio or the Energy Challenge 2001 program, call Danielle at (415) 561-4195.

Summer Camps on the Presidio

This summer, two camp organizations will welcome kids to the Presidio to enjoy the Park's many natural and recreational assets while learning new skills and having a great time.

The Presidio Community YMCA hosts a summer-long series of camp programs for kids from four to 18 years of age. The programs offer everything from sports and art to photography and com-

We're introducing a new format, and a new editorial direction, for the *Presidio Post* with this issue. In updating the newsletter, we sought public feedback in several ways. We published a survey that was mailed to many of you in the last issue, and has been posted on our website for electronic response since March. We received over 200 responses to this survey, many of which included specific suggestions on the type of news that is most useful, and the overall style in which it is presented.

We also sought ideas and input through outreach efforts and meetings with Presidio community groups and tenant organizations. We sought their opinions on the newsletter's tone, content, format, readability and graphics. Ideas from all these sources have been incorporated into the issue you see here.

Among the changes are a tighter focus on news relating



A New Look for the Presidio Post

By Jim Meadows, Executive Director

to the Presidio, a larger and more useful calendar section, and more in-depth coverage of key events and issues. We've retained our strong color visuals that convey the beauty and diversity of the Presidio's environment. And in keeping with our goal of environmental sustainability, we continue to print on recycled paper, and with soy-based inks.

With the new six-page format, we'll be able to bring you a larger calendar section that can be saved for reference throughout the month. We're also adding a regular history feature by noted author and historian Dr. Randolph Delehanty.

I hope the new *Post* does a better job bringing you the news you need about the Presidio. We would appreciate hearing your comments. Send them by email to presidio@presidiotrust.gov, or call our public affairs hotline at (415) 561-5418.

puter skills. For information, call (415) 447-9622.

Camp Kochav, operated by the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of San Francisco, will host four camp sessions running from June through August. The camp is the first JCC program to move to the center's temporary home on the Presidio, where it will remain during the expansion of its permanent facility. For information, call (415) 292-1250.

Memorial Day 2001 Celebration: A Day of Honor & Remembrance



Join our nation's veterans at a special Memorial Day Celebration. All events are located within the Presidio and are free to the public.

– **10:30 a.m.** Parade featuring the pipes and drums of the 91st Division, U.S. Park Police Horse Mounted Patrol Unit, historic military vehicles, and veterans organizations.

– **11:00 a.m.-noon** Formal ceremony in the National Cemetery ends at noon with

a 21 Gun salute and Flyby. National Park Service interpretative walks immediately following.

– **12:30-2:30 p.m.** Concert featuring 59th Army Band. Displays and artifacts on view near Main Parade Ground lawn. Bring a blanket, a picnic lunch and enjoy a military band concert.

– **1:30-2:30 p.m.** Memorial Day Service at the Presidio Interfaith Chapel. All are welcome. Open House with refreshments preceding and following service.

Presidio Trust Joins Bay Area Open Space Council

The Presidio Trust became a member of the Bay Area Open Space Council and participated in its annual conference held in March at the Golden Gate Club. The Council is a coalition of

public agencies, non-profit organizations and citizens groups that share a concern for protecting the region's open and natural spaces. Among its activities, the Council researches open space issues, prepares educational and marketing materials, fosters regional communication and advocates legislation of common interest to its more than 150 member organizations.

Presidio Restoration Advisory Board Seeks New Members

The Presidio Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) is a review board composed of community members, representatives from environmental regulatory agencies, the National Park Service and the Presidio Trust. The board needs additional community members who are

willing to attend evening meetings, review documentation, and share their ideas. For more information about the remediation effort, see the related article on page one of this *Post* issue. If you are interested in overseeing the environmental cleanup of the Presidio, please contact Jane Packer at (415) 561-4255 or at jpacker@presidiotrust.gov.

First Republic Bank To Open Presidio Branch

The First Republic Bank will open a branch office in the former guard house located on the Main Post at 210 Lincoln Blvd. on the Presidio, on October 1, 2001. The new facility will not only serve the growing live-work community in the Presidio, but will also provide greater convenience for the bank's customers in neighboring communities, according to Katherine August-deWilde, executive vice president and chief operating officer. "In First Republic tradition, the office will offer an inviting décor where customers can meet with a personal banker who can assist with all their banking needs, from personal and business banking to a variety of lending products, trust and advisory services," she said.

Make Your Event a Celebration to Remember

Plan to hold your event at the Historic Presidio Officers' Club. With unparalleled old world charm, a glorious bay view, catering facilities, stage area, and ample adjacent parking, the "O Club" is the Bay Area's newest venue for meetings, events, or other gatherings of up to 400. To tour the club or reserve a date, contact Presidio Trust Special Events at (415) 561-5444; events@presidiotrust.gov





Calendar

WEEKLY

Presidio Chapel Concert

Tuesdays, 8 p.m.
Programs and performers vary. Call (415) 362-6080 for program information. Tickets are \$10 at the door.



6 MAY

Crissy Field Grand Opening

Come celebrate the newly restored natural tidal wetlands area at Crissy Field. The festivities, all free and open to the public, include a historic flying circus, kite-flying festival, and street festival. For event schedule and information, visit www.crissyfield.org or call (415) 4-CRISSY.

8 MAY

Friends of the Urban Forest Open House/Educational Seminar

6:30 to 8 p.m.
Learn about the organization's computer mapping system and survey gathering efforts; get updates on planting, tree care, and educational programs. For directions or to RSVP, call Chris at (415) 561-6890, x108.



12-20 MAY

Spring Cleaning Week

The week-long event will include a park-wide yard sale, bulk pick-up day, a drive-through hazardous waste disposal, and opportunities to clean out old files and overfilled refrigerators. For information, see the article in the News Briefs section, or call the Presidio Trust Sustainability Department at (415) 561-4195.

13 MAY

Mother's Day Storytelling Performance

Marijo weaves stories, movement and music in her show "Folktales from the Drinking Gourd." Shows at 1:00 and 2:00 p.m., Crissy Field Center. For information call (415) 561-7690.

15 MAY

Tennessee Hollow Watershed Exploration

12 noon to 1 p.m.
Discover the little-known El Polin Spring in the heart of the Presidio, and explore the history of this unique ecosystem. Wear hiking shoes. Meet the docent at Inspiration Point off Arguello Boulevard. Reservations suggested; phone (415) 561-4323.

NOW THROUGH 15 MAY

Silent Voices Speak Exhibition and Lecture Series

This program focuses on the Holocaust and social injustice today. The exhibit features paintings by Barbara Shilo, and a photographic history curated by Eric Saul. Lectures on May 6 at 2 p.m.; May 10 at 7:30 p.m.; and May 15 at 7:30 p.m. Herbst Exhibition Hall on the Presidio. For information call (415) 928-2992 or visit www.silentvoicespeak.com.

19 MAY

The Presidio Rocks

1 to 4 p.m.
Explore 160 million years of geologic and natural history of the Presidio site on this three-mile, moderately strenuous walk. Meet Ranger Will Elder at Baker Beach parking lot by Battery Chamberlin. Reservations required; call (415) 561-4323.

19 MAY

Public Education and Exploration Walk

9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
This wildflower walk through dune habitats is co-sponsored by the National Park Service and Presidio Trust. Please meet at Building 1750, across from Baker Beach. For reservations or information, call Katrina Strathmann of the NPS at (415) 561-4457 or Beatrice Ammann of the Trust at (415) 561-5413.



19 MAY

Quail Habitat Enhancement Program

Volunteers are needed to help enhance natural feeding and shelter opportunities for nesting quail couples. For more information, call (415) 561-4449 or email nature@presidiotrust.gov

20 MAY

Ridge to Bridge Ride

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Get the big picture of the national park that straddles the Golden Gate on this cycle tour of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, a 12-mile, strenuous loop into the Headlands and back through the Presidio. Helmet is required. Meet Ranger James Osborne at the William Penn Mott Jr. Visitor Center on Montgomery Street, Presidio Main Post. Reservations are required; call (415) 561-4324.

23 MAY

Presidio Trust Public Board of Directors Meeting

9 to 11 a.m.
Presidio Officers' Club at Arguello and Moraga. All are invited to attend this second board meeting of the year. Agenda items include the Vegetation Management Plan, new shuttle service, and environmental remediation update. Call for information: (415) 561-5418.

28 MAY

Memorial Day 2001 Observances

10:30 a.m.
Join veterans and the community in a Memorial Day observance beginning at the Main Post with a parade at 10:30 a.m. Formal program in the San Francisco National Cemetery begins at 11 a.m., and will conclude with a 21-gun salute. Free cemetery walks and a concert featuring the 59th Army Guard Band will follow. For information, call (415) 561-5444.

NOW THROUGH 28 MAY

Decorator Showcase

See the historical Commandant's House on the Presidio, decorated by San Francisco's best interior designers. The event benefits University High School scholarship fund. Admission is \$20; seniors and groups of 10 or more, \$18. A free shuttle will run from the Main Post parking lot to the house. For information, call the Showcase at (415) 831-5841.

SPECIAL OFFER FOR PRESIDIO POST READERS

Complementary Audio Guide to Unseen Treasures: Imperial Russia & the New World

— a \$2 value —

Presidio Officers' Club Exhibition Hall Through June 15

This promotion is redeemable at the box office only. (Offer does not apply to group, student, or senior rates.)

NOW THROUGH 15 JUNE

Unseen Treasures: Imperial Russia and the New World



An exhibition of over 300 art objects, costumes, explorers' maps, and native artifacts from Russia's State Historical Museum and the State Archive in Moscow. The exhibition is showing at the Presidio Officers' Club Exhibition Hall daily from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. but is closed Tuesdays. Tickets with audio guide are \$12 for adults, \$8 for seniors and students. Call TicketWeb at (800) 965-4827; or visit www.atthepresidio.org

AT THE PRESIDIO

SPECIAL PROGRAMS: Wednesday Night Series with Unseen Treasures: Imperial Russia and the New World

Wednesday, May 9th, 7p.m. Untold Stories & Unseen Treasures: A conversation with Robin Joy, California State Park Interpretive Specialist at Fort Ross, our little-known closest Russian outpost.

Wednesday, May 23rd, 7p.m. Russia's Colonies in the New World. A Slide Lecture presented by Marilyn Swezey, internationally recognized curator, lecturer and guest curator of Unseen Treasures.

Wednesday, June 6th, 6:45p.m. Presidio Community Night. An encore performance by The Children's Dance Ensemble of the Presidio Performing Arts Foundation with authentic Russian dances and costumes. Russian tea party included. Bring the family.

All events are free, accessible and open to the public. Location: The Presidio Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Avenue. The Moraga Room. For more information visit our website: www.atthepresidio.org or phone (415) 561-5086



The History of the Presidio

Fort Scott Commandant's Quarters

By *Randolph Delehanty, Ph.D.*
Presidio Trust Historian

The Fort Scott Commandant's Quarters, one of the finest houses on the Presidio, projects understated elegance and solidity.

In the 1890s, the U.S. Army began the modernization of the coastal defenses of San Francisco Bay with the construction of mighty concrete batteries on the Presidio headlands. In 1907, the separate Coast Artillery Corps was created, and a sub-post was established on a commanding plateau in the northwestern corner of the Presidio reservation near the batteries. Named for Lt. Gen. Winfield Scott, one of the American heroes of the Mexican-American War of 1846, the

"Two colonial revivals

emerged at the Presidio

in the early twentieth

century, the Mission style

and the Georgian style."

the rear study mantle has simpler classic pilasters. The study has its own outside entrance so that commandants could conduct business at home after hours. To the right of the entrance hall is the dining room, butler's pantry, and kitchen. The kitchen and pantry were built in the days when senior officers had resident house staffs. Later, families placed a large table in the middle of the kitchen for informal meals.

The second floor hallway leads to the master bedroom with its sitting room and bath, three other bedrooms, and a family bathroom. The third floor servant's quarters has a bedroom lit by a dormer, a bathroom, and storage areas. Back stairs connect all four levels of the house with the kitchen.

The Pope Street house's slope faces the morning sun. Large grounds set it apart from stately officers' row along serpentine Kobbé Avenue. Formal gardens with old plants embrace the commandant's quarters on its west, south, and east sides. In 1939, a two-car garage was built behind the quarters. The commandant's quarters is surrounded by mature man-planted cypress forests.

Building 1337, the Commandant's House, is the site of the 2001 Decorator Showcase, a San Francisco tradition that raises financial aid funds for University High School. The Showcase will run through May 28. For information, call (415) 831-5841.



new post was arranged around a horseshoe-shaped parade ground that conforms to the site's topography. Around this north-facing open space, barracks and administrative buildings were constructed in the then-new Mission style. Built of stucco-covered reinforced concrete with curvilinear gables and red tile roofs, these buildings introduced a consciously Californian style to the post. By 1912 Fort Scott was essentially complete.

A second architectural revival emerged on the post during those same years: the Georgian Revival style. Both styles were colonial revivals, one recalling the English-settled East Coast and the other the Spanish-settled Southwest. The Coast Artillery Commandant's Quarters, done in the Georgian Revival style, is just south of the Mission-style core of Fort Scott. Built in 1915, this substantial red brick general's residence was designed by the Office of the Quartermaster General in Washington, D.C. The house appears symmetrical but is L-shaped in plan. It has two principal stories, a hip roof with classically detailed dormers containing third floor servant's quarters and storage, and a full basement. Built of red brick laid in American bond, the house has a pedimented entrance portico with paired Doric columns and white-painted doors, windows, eaves, and dormers.

The ground floor features a large entrance hall. To its left are two rooms separated by back-to-back fireplaces. The front living room mantle is ornamented with Doric columns;

As the Decorator Showcase House for 2001, the Fort Scott Commandant's Quarters was upgraded with new paint, carpet and floors. San Francisco's top decorators then applied their talents to the interior spaces. The house retains its historic character and old-world charm.



Above: Guest sitting room designed by Penelope Rozis.

Left: Guest bedroom designed by Elisabeth Luce and Nancy Hammonds.





Transportation Update



Bike To Work Day Thursday, May 17th

The Presidio Trust will help celebrate Bike to Work Day 2001 by sponsoring an Energizer Station for participants who leave their car at home and pedal to the Post. At the Station, which will be located near the Presidio Fire Station at the corner of Halleck and Lincoln, bikers can get free, on-the-spot

minor bike maintenance and advice provided by Pedal Power, a Presidio-based youth cycle program. In addition, they can win prizes such as feed bags and safety lights, and enter the grand prize drawing for a cycling trip to Europe.

Pull Up and Plug In...

Would low-speed, non-polluting electric cars meet the transportation needs of Presidio residents, tenants, and visitors? The Presidio Trust Transportation Department invited Dynasty Motorcar Corporation and



Ford to the park on March 29 to find out. At the event, Dynasty presented its Neighborhood Electric Vehicle, or NEV, and Ford showed its TH!NK City electric vehicle. "Non-polluting vehicles could be great alternatives for members of the Presidio's resident/employee community. They also have potential as in-park fleet vehicles," said Greg Stempson, transportation demand management coordinator for the Trust.

Public Workshop on Trails and Transportation Held April 11

The Presidio Trust and National Park Service held a public workshop on April 11 to discuss progress on major projects related to moving hikers, bikers and motorists through the Park.

The updates included:

Trails Planning: A cooperative effort between the National Park Service and the Trust, an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Presidio Trails and Bikeways Master Plan is being drafted. The plan's goals are to improve trail connections through the park, and increase access. A public comment period will follow release of the draft EA, expected later this year.

Letterman Access: The Trust is working with the city of San Francisco and CalTrans to modify key intersections on Richardson Avenue that will improve access to the Letterman site.

Parking: The Trust selected Ace Parking, a parking management company, to help manage parking in the Presidio. Implementing a

residential permit parking program will be their first project.

Shuttle: A Presidio shuttle service will be introduced this year. The public was invited to provide input on the proposed route that will be served by the busses.

Transportation Demand Management: To help achieve the Park-wide goal of sustainability, the TDM program focuses on decreasing use of cars in the Presidio by providing viable alternatives to driving. These include ridesharing programs, vanpooling, and a new Guaranteed Ride Home program for sustainable commuters.

For information on the Trust's transportation programs, call Greg Stempson at (415) 561-2739.

Historic Forest continued

Plan (VMP) now being finalized for the Park calls for the diversification of tree types within the forest as part of its preservation and enhancement.

Concerns were raised that introducing other types of trees into the Presidio's forest as proposed in the VMP might alter its historic character. But exactly what are the characteristics that make this forest unique and historical? What elements of the forest's original design are still evident today? These and other questions are being considered in a historic character study being conducted by the Trust. The study was kicked off in March, with an all-day workshop that brought landscape historians, landscape architects, and resource specialists to the Presidio.

The expert team that gathered to assess our forest and its historical characteristics included representatives from the Conservation Study Institute, Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historical Site and Penn State University's Center for the Study of Landscape History. Resource specialists from the Presidio Trust and the National Park Service also participated. Over the next few months, this group, along with other landscape history experts, will determine which characteristics of the forest are historically and functionally important. These might include characteristics like the forest's historical role as a wind break or its beauty as a green backdrop for the Presidio's historic buildings.

Once the characteristics that make the forest unique and historically significant have been identified, the expert team will work over the summer to develop management guidelines, and refine the rehabilitation ideas presented in the VMP, in order to preserve and perpetuate them. A key question to be answered is whether the tree species within the Presidio forest can be diversified without compromising its significant historic character.

Cleaning Up continued

The Trust takes its charge to preserve and protect the environment of the Presidio very seriously. "We are working within state and federal guidelines to assure that our efforts to restore the natural environment of the Presidio are as comprehensive and effective as possible," said Jim Meadows, Presidio Trust Executive Director. "We all want to create a national park that will be enjoyed for generations to come."



News Briefs continued

Spring Cleaning Week at the Presidio

May 12th begins a week-long series of sustainable spring cleaning events at the Presidio:

– *Saturday, May 12, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Residential Yard Sale*
Presidio residents will sell and swap unwanted or unused items. Leftover items will be collected at the parking lot at the corner of Lincoln and Presidio. Also at this site, environment-friendly cleaning products will be available from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

– *Monday, May 14: Bulk Item Pickup*
Salvation Army pickups for large items can be scheduled by calling 800-958-7825.

– *Tuesday, May 15: Clean Your Files Day*
All paper files cleaned out on this day will be recycled.

– *Wednesday, May 16: Hazardous Waste Drive Through*
Presidio-based residents and tenants can dispose of materials such as paint, cleaning supplies, batteries and engine oil. Drop-off times and location will be announced.

– *Friday, May 18, 12 noon to 1 p.m.: Clean Your Fridge Day*
Presidio Trust composting experts will demonstrate how to eliminate organic waste by composting in your home or workplace. The event will take place at the Thoreau Center for Sustainability.

For additional information, contact the Presidio Trust Sustainability Department at 415-561-4195.

Dog Walking continued

ANPR process will work in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, including how to best solicit the full range of views relating to dog walking in the Park. However, throughout the process, the existing NPS rules governing dog walking in national parks will remain in place.

In the near future, signs noting the on-leash regulation will be placed throughout the Presidio to remind visitors of the current regulation. "As they interact with the public, our officers will stress the importance of education, resource protection and visitor safety, which can be impacted by off-leash dogs," said O'Neill. "Any additional action that may be taken against those breaking the leash rules will be, as it has always been, left to the discretion of the officer involved."

Those interested in learning more about the ANPR process should visit the GGNRA website at www.nps.gov/goga



Tenant Profile

Desiree — A Gourmet Experience



Annie Gingrass is a master chef who has helped shape the dining experience in some of the West Coast's best restaurants. But after 15 years in the fast lane, supervising as many as 40 cooks and 150 employees, she has steered her career in a different but no less delicious direction. She now owns and operates the intimate Desiree, a café in the Presidio's Film Center Building 39.

Gingrass is pleased with her change. Her blood pressure, she says, has dropped dramatically. And now she knows the people she's cooking for.

After completing her formal training at New York's Culinary Institute, Gingrass headed west and spent five years working with Wolfgang Puck at LA's trendy Spago Restaurant. "It was a great experience working with Wolfgang," she said. "The food scene was just getting started in LA in the early 80s, and he was at the heart of it."

In 1989, Gingrass moved to San Francisco and helped Puck and a group of investors open Postrio, located in the Prescott Hotel on Post Street. There she spent five years as executive chef.

Ready to try a solo venture, she and a partner opened Hawthorne Lane Restaurant, located south of Market between 2nd and 3rd Streets. "At Hawthorne Lane, I began to feel less like a chef and more like a publicity agent," she confesses. "It became very impersonal." So Gingrass sold her interest, and began looking for a new challenge.

The chance to open a more intimate eatery came when Gingrass was asked to oversee catering for the Film Center building. "I was not sure if I wanted to take on the whole catering effort, but the chance to open a small restaurant was very appealing," she said. And so Desiree, which she named after her dog, was born.

Gingrass was involved in every aspect of the café from its inception. She designed the space, chose the fixtures and artwork, and created the menu, which changes weekly. "I really enjoy the feeling of community here. I know what my customers like, and I enjoy making it for them." She is assisted by Rosemary Swan, formerly assistant pastry chef at Postrio, and Shari Clayton, formerly sous chef at Insalata in Marin.

Gingrass begins the day early, by baking her own breads and desserts, roasting meats, and making sauces and condiments she will serve later. When Desiree opens at 8 a.m., customers can get coffee drinks, egg dishes, and fresh baked goods. The lunch menu generally includes home-made soups, salads, and sandwiches, all with a gourmet flare. "We've been here for three months now," she says. "Once things get systematized, we'll have time to be even more creative."

Desiree is open to the public Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., in Building 39 on the Presidio's Main Post.

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking for ways to support the many environmental, educational and cultural events on the Presidio? Many groups in the Park are looking for volunteers. Below is a partial list:

Cultural Exhibit Docent Presidio Trust

Docents are needed through June 15. Some training is required. Contact Lisa Hillstrom at (415) 561-2703.



Native Habitat Restoration

NPS Natural Resources and Presidio Park Stewards
Spring is a time of colorful blooms and bird migration. Volunteers are needed to assist with habitat restoration projects at sites throughout the Park including the Coastal Bluffs, Crissy Field, and Lobos Creek Valley. Activities include planting, seed collecting and weeding. Wednesday programs are

from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Meet at the Natural Resources Field Offices, located at 1539 Pershing Drive. Saturday programs are from 9:00 to noon. Meet at Crissy Field Education Center at the corner of Halleck and Mason. For information, call (415) 561-3034 X3445.

Presidio Native Plant Nursery

NPS Natural Resources and Presidio Park Stewards
Help grow the next generation of native plants for habitat restoration projects: over 150 different species! Learn about the floral heritage of San Francisco while contributing to the preservation of your local natural history. Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1:00 to 4:00. Meet at the Native Plant Nursery, Building 1244 on Schofield Road, off Park Boulevard. Call (415) 561-3034 X3445 for information.

Assist at Visitor Center

Farallones Marine Sanctuary Association
Wednesdays – Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information call (415) 561-6625.

Tree Care

Friends of the Urban Forest
Volunteers are needed to plant trees and perform general tree care for three-year old trees in specific city neighborhoods. Call (415)

561-6890, X104 or X407 for more information.

Office Support

Presidio Community Desk
Volunteers are needed to staff the Presidio Community Desk to support community activities Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Contact Marcia Smith-White at (415) 561-5386.

Serve on Presidio Disaster Planning Committee

Presidio Trust, Presidio Fire Department, National Park Service
Meeting dates to be determined. Call Lynda Sakseangvirat at (415) 561-5359 or Chief Tim Phipps at (415) 561-5169.

Celebrate Archaeology Month!

The Trust Archaeology Department seeks volunteers to help with cleaning and cataloging of artifacts found on the Presidio. To set an appointment and get details and directions, call Rosemary Healy at (415) 561-4851.

Assist with ongoing programs

San Francisco Film Society
The Film Society needs volunteers to provide support for ongoing programs. Contact Paula Buxbaum at (415) 561-5027 or John Pabst at (415) 561-5013.



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