

# Grove House is a home away from home

One of the oldest buildings on the Pitzer College campus continues to make things fresh and new for its daily visitors.

Built in 1902 and a campus staple since 1977, the Grove House is continuing its tradition of satisfying hunger, providing a place for visitors to relax and offering itself as a venue for several special events.

"Students and other members of the community like to come and get away from stress. It's a small oasis," said Zenia Gutierrez, Grove House manager. "It gets loud in here. It's like the way it would be in a house and they love it."

The California craftsman-styled Grove House, first owned by George Hamilton, was originally located on Harrison Avenue. When Mr. and Ms. Arvid Zetterberg purchased the house from Mr. Hamilton in 1930, it became known as the "Zetterberg House."

The house was slated to be demolished 47 years later but was sold to then Pitzer College professor emeritus Barry Sanders for \$1. The property was moved from Pilgrim Place to its present location on Pitzer's campus on July 16, 1977 and was dedicated in 1980.

Inside the Grove House, visitors will find round tables where groups of people can eat as well as furniture where other visitors can lounge. The kitchen is also located on the first floor. An eco-center, meeting room, art gallery room, caretaker room and guest room are all located on the 2nd floor.



COURIER photos/Steven Felschundneff  
Grove House Manager Zenia Gutierrez strives to make the restaurant's food with the best ingredients she can find which includes using locally harvested foods.

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The Grove House at Pitzer College is a 1902 craftsman style home that was moved to its current location in 1977 to save it from demolition. The home has been a popular hangout for Pitzer students ever since, serving up tasty lunches and coffees.

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The inside of the Grove House isn't the only attraction. The property includes a porch area, along with an arboretum, a citrus grove and an organic student garden. "It [Grove House] means a lot to the Pitzer community and it has been a fixture on campus," said Jim Marchant, Pitzer College vice president for student affairs. "It provides a place for people to go that's intimate and cozy. It's a diverse place with lots of activities. The faculty spends time there and the alumni come back to visit. It's a beautiful piece of architecture."

The friendly atmosphere of the Grove House is reflective of Ms. Gutierrez's personality. She has worked at Pitzer College for 4 years and has enjoyed continuing the Grove House's legacy as a unique location.

"We are a family here and this also provides a learning experience for students," Ms. Gutierrez said. "It's all about teaching them how to cook. We create marinades and make jams and jellies. There's a lot of student input for creating something new and then we'll have students come in and taste it. I want the students to leave here being able to depend on themselves rather than on restaurants or frozen foods."

Ms. Gutierrez's collaborative style has impacted Pitzer senior Bennett Cross. He has worked at the Grove House for 4 years and plans to go into the coffee business following his graduation in May.



**COURIER photos/Steven Felschundneff**  
Bennett Cross returns to the kitchen after delivering a sandwich on Monday at the Grove House at Pitzer College. The interior of the Grove House still looks like a family home providing a comfortable atmosphere for students to eat or study.

"It feels good to be here," Mr. Cross said. "I know that if I can't find my friends, 95 percent of the time they'll be here on the porch. Working here is great. Zenia [Gutierrez] is our manager and she is willing to try anything once. We do a lot of tasting in the kitchen and she is open to our ideas. We have a lot of fun being creative and more than ever, we want to be as creative as possible."

Mr. Cross has helped the Grove House become more of a café destination through his implementation of better coffee.

"Coffee is a huge passion of mine," he explained. "I studied in Italy for a while before I came back and I realized the coffee here was pretty bad. So I talked to the [Grove House] committee about changing our coffee situation and they approved. So now we have French [coffee] presses and we're looking to hopefully get an espresso machine this year. I think now that

we've gone more in the café direction and the Grove House is more accessible because now if you don't want a sandwich, you can just get coffee and a cookie."

Yet visitors continue to enjoy the sandwich meals and customizable options the Grove House also provides.

"It's a homey kind of place where they'll give you a sandwich, cookie, fruit and a pickle," sophomore Amber Neaves said. "And the cookies are great."

The Grove House also offers vegetarian and vegan alternatives for its customers. If the student garden becomes certified, the crops from the garden may also eventually be used in served meals.

"Their tofu is the best and I also like the limeade," said sophomore Kirstin Salmon. "My friends and I come here a lot and we're also getting ready to do an independent study where we're going to be in the Grove House creating sustainable foods."

The education component is one Ms. Gutierrez wants to continue to build on with students.

"I love working with the younger people," Ms. Gutierrez said. "My favorite thing is seeing students evolve to culinary cuisiniers. A lot of the students go abroad and they're bringing that experience to the kitchen so I get to learn from them as well. We're going to continue our creativity with the menus and we want to be a place where you can get something that you can't get anywhere else."

—Landus Rigsby



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