



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

New Pet Store Raises Hackles on 24th Street

L.A.-Based Company Seeks to Take Over Radio Shack Spot

By Matthew S. Bajko

A campaign is under way to prevent a chain of pet stores based in Los Angeles County from opening its first northern California outlet on 24th Street, where the former Radio Shack had been.

Healthy Spot announced last fall that it wanted to move into the vacant storefront at 4049 24th St. But at a community meeting it held in the space in late November, the company was largely met with howls of protest from the owners of local pet stores and their customers. The opposition mobilized 40 people within hours of learning about the meeting in order to raise a string of objections.

"The only people there in favor of it were from Healthy Spot," said Rick French, who with his wife co-owns the Animal Company on Castro Street not far from where Healthy Spot wants to open.

Added Ellen French, "They were sur-



Signing Up Support: Animal Company co-owner Rick French tallies the signatures lining up against a "big box" retail competitor in Noe Valley. Photo by Pamela Gerard

prised at the response."

Since then, a petition opposing the chain store has netted more than 1,000 signatures, and businesses throughout Noe Valley have posted signs seeking help to keep Healthy Spot from securing the permits it needs to open its doors.

According to the company's website, it has a dozen locations in southern California; thus, it falls under San Francisco's formula retail ordinance. Any business with 11 or more locations in the United

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Noe Valley May Be Key for Successor To Ed Lee

District 8 Supervisor Race Heats Up June Election

By Matthew S. Bajko

The fates of candidates running to be the city's District 8 supervisor and the next mayor could be decided by Noe Valley voters this June.

The neighborhood consistently has some of the highest voter turnout in the city and could play a spoiler role in the two special elections for the local offices on the June 5 primary ballot. The two high-profile supervisor candidates have been campaigning in Noe Valley for months, while a prominent resident is a leading contender for Room 200 at City Hall.

The sudden death in December of former Mayor Ed Lee triggered the special election to serve out the remainder of his term. Former District 8 Supervisor Mark Leno, who has also served in both the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Rock Journalist Rides the Radio Waves

From Shelling Shrimp to *Rolling Stone* Stardom

By Tim Simmers

After a screening last month of the new Grateful Dead documentary *Long Strange Trip*, rock journalist and author Ben Fong-Torres kicked off a Q&A with filmmaker Amir Bar-Lev and Grateful Dead guitarist Bob Weir.

The impact of psychedelic drugs on the Dead's music and how the band reflected the zeitgeist of the 1960s became prime topics.

It was familiar territory for Noe Valley resident Fong-Torres, the longtime *Rolling Stone* magazine journalist and editor. He's frequently asked to moderate such panels, or deliver a keynote speech at happenings involving music.

As one of the first staff writers at the pioneering magazine, Fong-Torres penned some 400 articles about rock and its legends, and is revered around the '60s and '70s music scene. It was at the once-counter culture bible that his articles appeared alongside those of legendary writers such as Hunter S. Thompson and Tom Wolfe.

"I never had a hankering to be a rock journalist," said Fong-Torres, 73, who has lived near the top of Castro Street for 32 years. "There was no such thing as a rock journalist then," he laughed.

In a new film documentary on *Rolling Stone*, Fong-Torres appears as a young reporter banging on an ancient black typewriter, attending meetings, and talking on the phone at the office of the magazine launched in 1967 in San Francisco.



Ben Fong-Torres, in his home studio on Castro Street, still leans toward rock music after a long strange trip through its intimate beginnings. Photo by Art Bodner

For more than a decade, Fong-Torres conducted interviews and wrote cover stories running many thousands of words. His personal favorites included articles on Bob Dylan, Ray Charles, Marvin Gaye, and Tina Turner.

The experience inspired books like his memoir *The Rice Room, Not Fade Away: A Backstage Pass to 20 Years of Rock & Roll*, and *Hickory Wind*, his gripping tale of country rock legend Gram Parsons. As a DJ at iconic KSAN radio during the '70s, he occupied another front-row seat—for the soaring rock scene in San

Francisco and elsewhere around the country.

Fong-Torres grew up in Oakland in a family that owned a Chinese restaurant. He waited tables and worked in the kitchen, where he cut his teeth wrapping won tons, shelling prawns, and peeling snow peas. Though he was in his mid-20s, he didn't tell his parents he worked for a rock magazine. They heard about it from the parents of his friends, and weren't pleased.

"As a younger person, I felt inept, partly because I was raised in a Chinese

restaurant family," he said. "I was working all the time, didn't go out with friends, didn't stay after school for activities, and didn't have a regular American social life." Sometimes he asked his friends questions just so he didn't have to talk. He learned to listen, and that led him to reporting.

Rock assignments soon took him on the road. He traveled to Reno to write about Creedence Clearwater Revival, and interviewed young Joni Mitchell at her

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



Early Way to San Jose: A photographer named Manning captured this image of a man jogging south on the largely abandoned Southern Pacific Railroad trestle spanning Dolores Street near 27th Street circa 1937. At that time, only freight trains were traveling on the Noe Valley/Mission segment of the line. In its heyday, the SF&SJ Railroad, built 1860-63, provided the fastest commute from San Francisco to San Jose. According to San Francisco history buff Burrito Justice, "You could step on a train at the Valencia Street station at 25th Street and be in Palo Alto in 45 minutes." Justice also noted that the neighborhood grew up around the tracks, not vice versa.

Photo courtesy OpenSFHistory.org/Western Neighborhoods Project/David Gallagher

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Single Family Homes	130	\$2,200,000	\$2,300,000	+5%	14	\$2,300,000 vs \$1,995,000	\$1,481.96	\$6,500,000
Condos and Lofts	93	\$1,190,000	\$1,420,000	+19%	14	\$1,420,000 vs \$1,285,000	\$1,121.64	\$4,025,000

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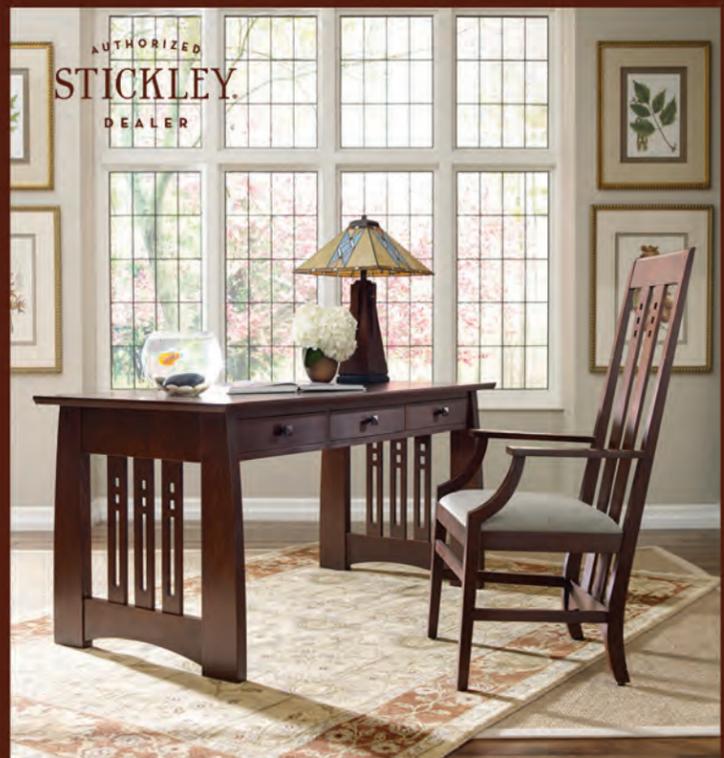
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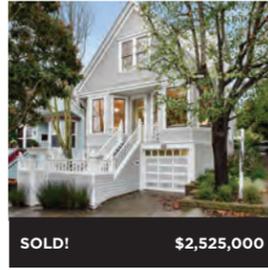
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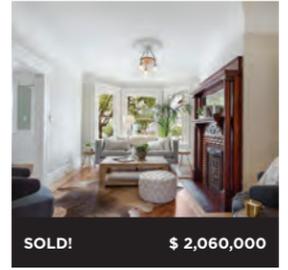


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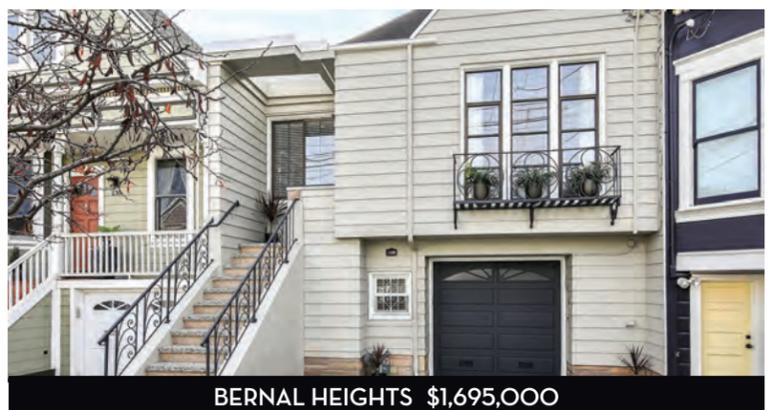
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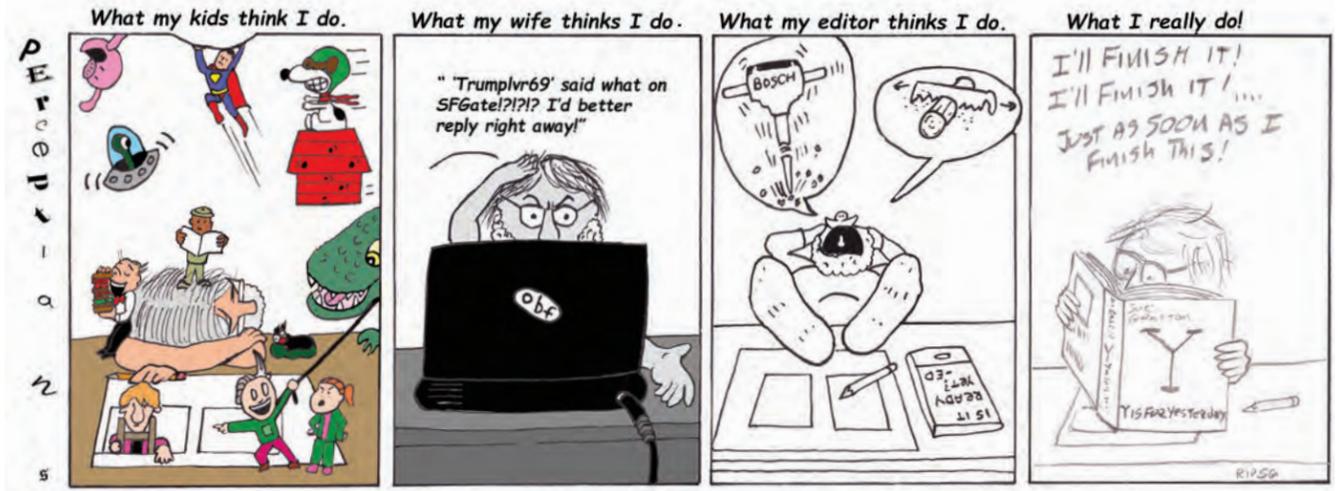
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LETTERS

Meditation Thursday

Editor:

Your good article in the January issue on the emergence of the Noe Valley Town Square did leave out one important activity: the Thursday morning meditations from 8 to 9 a.m., guided by Shrawan Nepali. The meditations greet the rising sun and are open to all without regard to past experience. Bring a cushion and dress warmly.

Peter Gabel
 Elizabeth Street

Signs of Dedication

Editor:

I should have brought a *Noe Valley Voice* to hold up as well, but here I was in Washington, D.C., on Martin Luther King Day, Jan. 15, with my niece Flora! (See photo at right.)

It is so interesting that in San Francisco you need a table and at least two dozen folks in the Noe Valley Town Square to have an effect.

But in D.C., you just get the right location and two folks count!

We had great conversations with D.C. visitors to the White House, about half of whom



Noe Valley resident Charlie Spiegel and niece Flora (left) braved frigid temperatures to make their views known on Martin Luther King Day. Photo courtesy Charlie Spiegel

wanted to take pictures with us or even hold our signs, which we gladly allowed!

We spent two hours in 15-degree temperatures, but luckily no wind, no wind chill, and

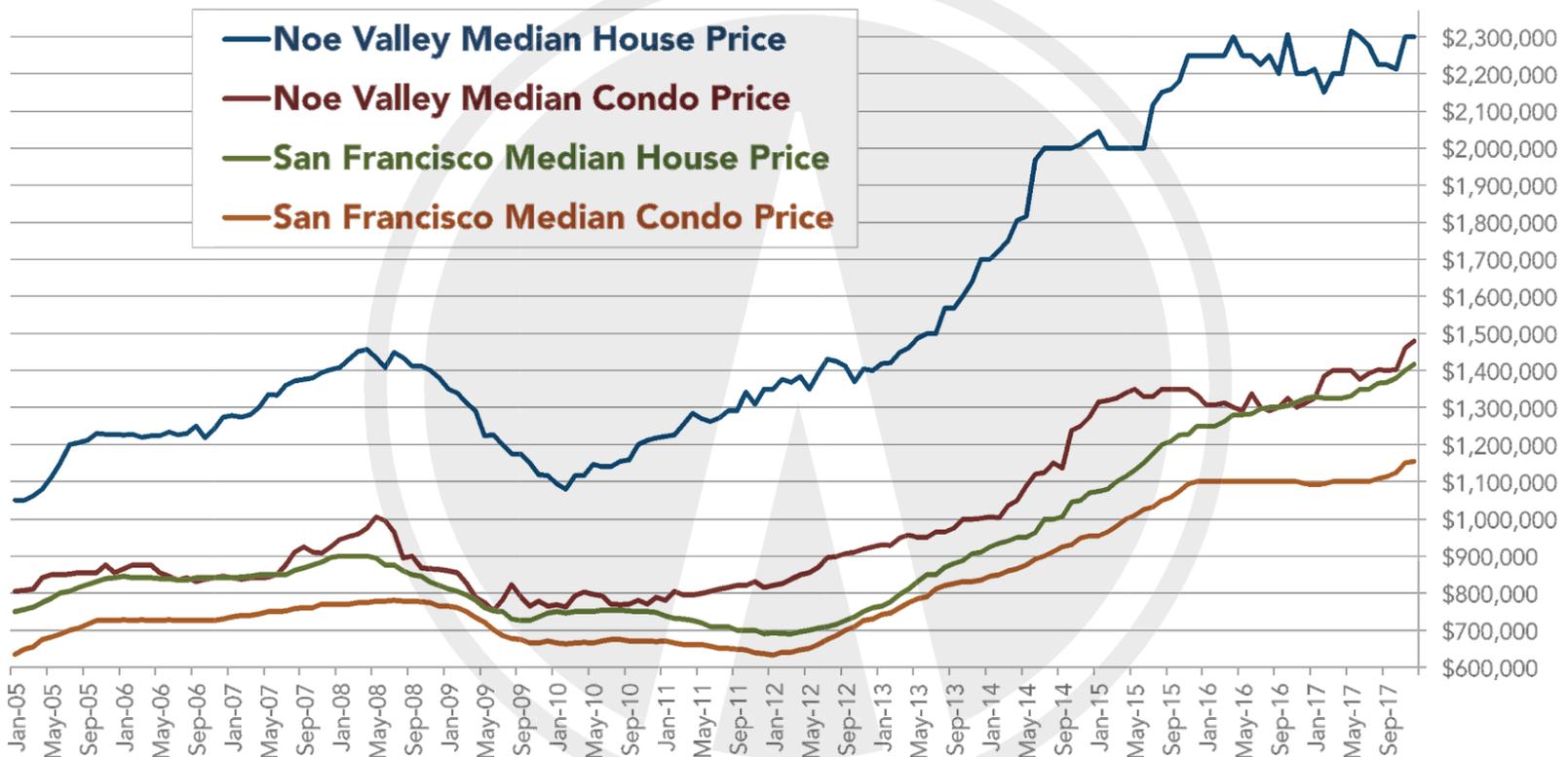
no rain! But cold.

Charlie Spiegel, Sanchez Street

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New Pet Store Faces Opposition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

States is considered a “formula” retailer by the city and must seek approval from the city’s planning commission in order to open.

Although there are no restrictions against a chain store opening along Noe Valley’s main business corridor, as evidenced by the Whole Foods grocery store and a number of national bank branches, residents and business leaders have vocally opposed other formula retailers along 24th Street. The concerns range from preserving the commercial area’s unique appeal to the negative impact such businesses could have on mom-and-pop shops, which are already struggling to afford high lease prices while competing against the growth of online retailing.

In the case of Healthy Spot, the owners of four pet-based businesses in Noe Valley are concerned that the chain will undercut them on prices and force them out of business.

Pet Supplies Abundant

“There is no need” for Healthy Spot to open in Noe Valley, said Animal Company co-owner Ellen French, as “nothing they sell we don’t already provide.”

Added her husband, Rick French, “It spoils Noe Valley’s uniqueness of having a small business community.”

The Frenches have owned their business for 17 years, having purchased it from the original owner, who had operated the store for 25 years. Ellen French estimated that 95 percent of the other local merchants she has approached support their position opposing Healthy Spot.

“No one wants a chain store here,” she said, adding that most people would prefer to see a hardware store go into the vacant storefront.

The couple have a sign posted by their store’s cash register about the fight over the proposed pet store with a headline that reads “Keep Noe Valley Businesses LOCAL.” They said they first learned about Healthy Spot’s plans from customers a few days prior to the community meeting.

“They are trying to weasel their way in,” said Rick French about the lack of outreach Healthy Spot representatives did with local merchants.

Longtime dog groomer Lancy Woo—who owns VIP Grooming on 24th Street a few blocks away from where Healthy Spot wants to open, and her fiancée, Sage Cotton, who co-owns with her VIP Scrub Club on Church Street—also only learned about the proposed chain store a day prior to the meeting. They too argue that there is no need for another pet business in the



Healthy Spot CEO Andrew Kim fields questions from neighbors and merchants at a community meeting at the Radio Shack space in late November. Photo courtesy Dave Emanuel

area, noting that within one mile of the proposed store are nearly a dozen pet stores and grooming businesses.

“Another pet store or grooming shop, we don’t need that,” said Cotton.

Added Woo, “It is hard enough to make a living as a small business owner as it is” in San Francisco, without having to directly compete against a chain store.

Petition Launched

For the last two decades, Woo has owned the pet grooming business at the corner of 24th Street and Douglass, which first opened 35 years ago. Two years ago, the couple took over the other location, vacated by a previous pet-washing business.

“I think people, particularly in Noe Valley, support small businesses. Our customers get angry when they learn a chain store wants to come in,” said Cotton. “When that happens, the lease prices go up and the quality of service goes down. It makes it harder for small businesses to exist, and when they pull out it means even more vacancies.”

That sentiment is born out by the petition Cotton created on Change.org opposing Healthy Spot <https://www.change.org/p/keep-noe-valley-businesses-local-break-the-chain>.

In it she wrote, “It appears they picked this location in order to drive out our independent, small businesses with unfair advantages and pricing in order to encroach on the customer bases we’ve spent years building and supporting.”

The petition had 981 signatures as of mid-January, with many adding notes of their own explaining why they believed the city’s planning commission should deny Healthy Spot’s permit.

“I do support our neighborhood commercial mix that prioritizes local and individual businesses—AND we already have adequate services for our pets in the neighborhood,” wrote Helen Loeser.

Stephanie Levin wrote, “Box stores do not belong in our neighborhood. If you want a neighborhood, you need small, independent locally owned businesses, not big box stores. Keep big box stores OUT of the neighborhoods, including Noe Valley. Put a small hardware store, shoe repair, something people need.”

Customers of the Noe Valley Pet Company on Church Street have also been expressing their opposition to Healthy Spot, according to an employee of the store. Owners Celia Sack and Paula Harris, who were out of town and did not respond to an emailed interview request by the *Voice*’s press deadline, have hung paper copies of the petition opposing the chain store by the front door of their shop for people to sign.

Healthy Spot Touts Nutrition

The *Voice* contacted Sierra Enticknap, the community marketing manager for Healthy Spot, seeking to interview Andrew Kim and Mark Boonark, who co-founded the company in 2008. After an initial reply that she would find someone within the company for the interview, Enticknap did not respond to follow-up emails by press time.

According to the company’s bio it posted on its website, the business partners launched Healthy Spot 10 years ago in response to a pet food recall. In doing so, they contend they “removed the guesswork” on the part of the pet owners “by assuring that every stocked product meets a stringent pre-selection criteria for premium quality of ingredients, and quality in procurement and manufacturing.”

The company claims to carry only pet products that are “organic, natural, raw and or eco-friendly and made with responsible manufactured practices.” In addition to its retail offerings and the full-service grooming it provides at all of its locations, Healthy Spot also offers day-care services at several of its stores.

“Healthy Spot is committed to inspire healthy pet lifestyles by creating authentic experiences and fostering community, one pet at a time,” claims the company.

Taylor Jordan, a consultant with Light-house Public Affairs who is working with Healthy Spot on its permit request and public relations, told the *Voice* that since the company filed its application with the planning department in mid-December, it probably would not have its hearing scheduled before the planning commission until sometime around May or June.

Opponents in Noe Valley expressed confidence that they would be able to convince the planning commissioners to vote against granting a permit to Healthy Spot. But they also stressed they weren’t viewing such an outcome as guaranteed.

“I am pretty confident they will vote no, but it is not something I am being complacent about,” noted Rick French.

Cotton also believes Noe Valley’s pet businesses have a good argument to make before the oversight body.

“But I am not taking anything for granted. They have a lot of money as a big-box store owner, as evidenced by the lobbying group they have employed,” she said. “I feel confident our city officials won’t be swayed by those tactics. I plan to make sure the community knows what is going on and the planning commission knows what the community wants.”

Despite their opposition to Healthy Spot in Noe Valley, both couples noted they are not against seeing the company open elsewhere in the city where there aren’t already established pet stores, such as in the newer residential districts in Mission Bay, the Dogpatch, and along central Market Street.

“There are plenty of places for them to go in the city,” said Rick French. ■



A sign posted near the Animal Company’s cash register pleads “Keep Noe Valley Businesses LOCAL.” Photo by Pamela Gerard

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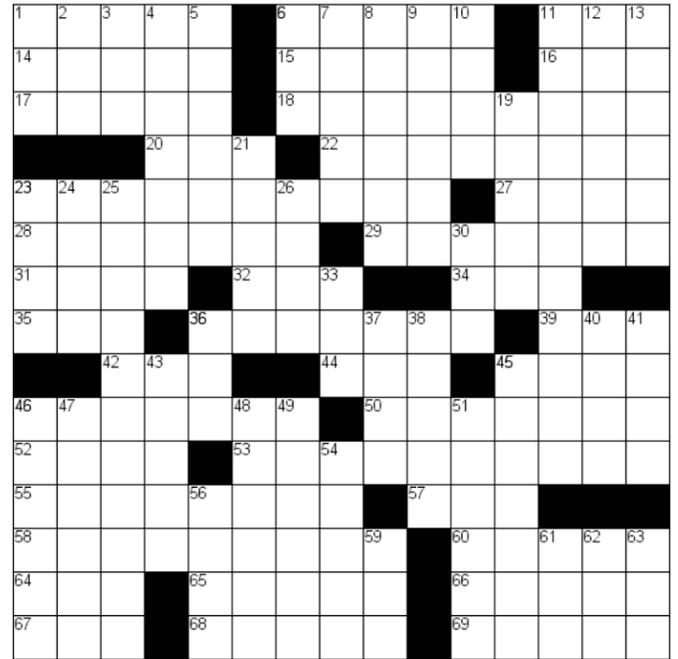
THE CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

The Initial Game

Note: This puzzle is inspired by an old word game, in which the first letters of some words in the description are the same in the clue as in the answer. In this puzzle, all the answers are local establishments. For example, if a clue reads "Floral Treasures," the answer is French Tulip.

ACROSS

1. What might be found in a 50-lb. bag at Noe Valley Bakery
6. Like a gem not yet part of a ring
11. Agcy. that helps mom-and-pops
14. Durante's "Inka ___ Doo"
15. ___ German Specialties on Church Street
16. "My country ___ of thee"
17. Decorate
18. **Takeout Pizza**
20. Nabokov novel
22. Promgoer's neckwear
23. **Favorite of Bibliophiles**
27. "Oak goes to Oakland; ___ goes to the Pacific" (one-way street mnemonic)
28. Kind of triathlete
29. Doesn't fold, in poker
31. "___ with Kelly and Ryan"
32. Just for ___ on 24th Street
34. What begins 3/11/18: Abbr.
35. Ripen, as wine
36. **Sacramental Place**
39. Boise's state: Abbr.
42. Sch. in Baton Rouge
44. No longer amateur
45. Clickable PC image
46. Side-to-side measurement
50. What a WWII siren warned Londoners of
52. Slat that gets plastered over



53. **Home Resellers**
 55. In its ___; leaving nothing out
 57. "Velvet" or "hallow" ending
 58. **Nosher's Breakfast**
 60. Serpent or Dodge model
 64. Hard: Fr.
 65. Billionaire Bill
 66. Two-under-par score
 67. Sanchez and Castro: Abbr.
 68. "What if..." informally
 69. Serpent, but not a Dodge model
- #### DOWN
1. Org. that okays new medicines
 2. Tupperware topper
 3. Yoko of music
 4. Home of Crimea, until 2014
 5. Like lottery drawings
 6. Farthest or highest: Abbr.
 7. What one may walk out of Green Twig Salon with
 8. Avoids, as duty
 9. Hemingway or Borgnine
 10. Parts of a tbsp.
 11. ___ significance: measure of probable accuracy
 12. Two-piece swimsuit
 13. "___ on TV"
 19. Cable-TV sports awards
 21. Nautical term like "astern"
 23. Adidas rival
 24. What might be left in a copier: Abbr.
 25. "Sealed with a Kiss" mailed items
 26. "Movin' ___" (*The Jeffersons*' theme song)
 30. Class ___ (Voice section)
 33. Siesta
 36. Direction opposite nord
 37. River to the Caspian Sea
 38. River to the Bay of Biscay
 40. "Just ___" (Nike motto)
 41. Artist Warhol
 43. "Sir" in colonial India
 45. Tehran native
 46. Mixes (together)
 47. Had none left
 48. SF-based clothing giant
 49. "I ___ break up a set"
 51. Keanu of "Speed"
 54. Singer Lovett and others
 56. Cleaning cloths
 59. U-turn from NNW
 61. Only major tournament Palmer never won
 62. "Benevolent" lodge member
 63. "Riddle-me-___"

Solution on Page 28

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Noe Valley Votes May Sway Election

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

state Assembly and Senate in Sacramento, is seen as a frontrunner in the race, despite its arriving more than a year ahead of schedule.

Leno already had spent much of last year campaigning to become the city's first gay mayor and had raised more than \$420,000 for the slated mayoral contest in November 2019. Within days of Lee's passing on Dec. 12, Leno announced he would run in the special election this summer.

Addressing the media and a large crowd of backers at City Hall the morning of Jan. 8, when he officially entered the mayoral race, Leno vowed to "shake things up" as mayor. Positioned as a progressive candidate, Leno said the time was long overdue for a change in leadership at City Hall, which has been led by five moderate mayors over the last 22 years.

"I am running for mayor because I believe it is time for a new direction at City Hall," said Leno, who lives on Clipper Street and owns a small sign-making business. "On June 5, voters will have a real choice between fundamental change and the status quo."

A Crowded Field

District 6 Supervisor Jane Kim, 40, a progressive member of the board who two years ago lost her bid for Leno's state Senate seat, is also vowing a change in the city's direction should she win the mayor's race. After filing her paperwork the morning of Jan. 9, the deadline to do so, Kim noted during a brief press conference that Lee largely kept in place the policies of his predecessors, Gavin Newsom and Willie Brown.

"For the last 20 years, City Hall has been run by the same administration," said Kim, who is Korean-American and would be the city's first female Asian mayor. "It has not worked for all of us."

Also running is District 5 Supervisor London Breed, 43, who automatically became the city's acting mayor upon Lee's death due to her position as president of the Board of Supervisors.

But the progressive members of the board had other ideas. Citing the need to ensure a "level playing field" for all of the mayoral candidates, as well as continued separation of powers between the city's mayor and board president, they engineered Breed's ouster as acting mayor last month. Instead, they moved to elect Mark Farrell, who had opted not to enter the mayoral race, as the city's interim mayor until the results of the June election are certified. One of the board's most conservative members, Farrell resigned from his District 2 supervisor seat (representing the Marina District) upon being sworn in as mayor on Jan. 23.

Breed and 'Angela' Too

Breed, a moderate, will remain board president as she seeks to be the first black woman elected mayor of the city. She is backed by former Mayor Brown, women's advocates, and prominent African American community leaders.

"I'm not a partisan. I'm not an ideologue. I believe in a San Francisco where we succeed as one. Together, there is no problem we can't solve," wrote Breed in announcing her decision to run via Twitter. She grew up in San Francisco and once lived in public housing not far from City Hall.

Also in the running is former Supervisor Angela Alioto, 68, a lawyer whose father served as mayor and who twice before has lost her bids to become only the



A Sunny Day in September: After reading a story to the kids at Charlie's Corner, Mayor Ed Lee (second from left) posed for a photo with local leaders Debra Niemann, Rachel Swann, Jeff Sheehy, and Leslie Crawford.

Photo by Corrie M. Anders

Mayor Ed Lee Remembered

San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee, 65, died Dec. 12, 2017, after suffering a heart attack. Lee was known for his congenial and unassuming nature. A resident of Glen Park, he occasionally visited Noe Valley to grab an ice cream cone at 24th and Castro streets or to tour the business district for informal chats with residents and merchants. Here is how some community leaders remembered him:

It was an honor and a privilege to work with Mayor Ed Lee. He was funny and curious and one of the most approachable politicians I have ever met. The mayor was always supportive of small business, and he regularly attended our San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations Gala, and founded (and funded) the Shop Dine 49 campaign, as well as Legacy Business SF, which recognizes small businesses and nonprofits as historic assets. My favorite personal experience with Mayor Lee was at a San Francisco Chamber of Commerce event held at the Mint building where we had a display booth showcasing Cliché Noe's selection of unique San Francisco-themed gifts. Mayor Lee liked the SF Giants money clip we had and bought it, paying cash.

*Dani Sheehan-Meyer
Owner, Cliché Noe
Board Member, San Francisco Council of
District Merchants Associations*

I thought Ed Lee was a great public servant and not a politician, which made him a caring mayor about neighborhoods. He held press conferences purposefully in Noe Valley to highlight the neighborhood. He was a good man who knew his strengths and weaknesses. Rare for a politician.

*Debra Niemann
Executive Director, Noe Valley Association*

Mayor Ed Lee viewed himself as part of the extended Noe Valley family. Although he lived in Glen Park, he often spoke about the Noe Valley Farmers Market and the Town Square fondly. Ed was committed to making San Francisco a city where everyone was welcomed. He supported creating more housing at all levels of affordability. Ed truly gave his life in service to the city. I will remember Ed as a decent man and committed public servant.

*Todd David
President, Friends of Noe Valley
President, Noe Valley Democratic Club*

Unfortunately, Ed Lee was mayor during a time in the city when we saw a huge increase in people living on the streets in neighborhoods like the Castro and the Mission and when we saw a huge spike in break-ins and other property crimes that affected Noe Valley. His passion for increasing housing stock by making the process of building new housing [easier] was not able to be fully implemented due to his unexpected death.

*Carol Yenne
Owner, Small Frys
Former President and Board Member,
Noe Valley Merchants & Professionals
Association*

I had a brief conversation with Mayor Lee last year, and he commented on how impressed he was with the longevity of Upper Noe Neighbors when I mentioned that we were going to turn 30 years old in 2018. He said, "It's neighborhood associations like UNN that make a big city like San Francisco a special place to live."

*Olga Milan-Howells
President, Upper Noe Neighbors*

second woman elected mayor. A former homeless czar for Newsom, she has vowed to make addressing the city's homeless crisis a major focus of her administration.

"I have a passion and love for this city that literally runs through my veins. I have given my life to serving the city I love so much," stated Alioto in announcing her decision to run. "I feel I'm the most qualified person to take on the vast

number of problems facing our city, and I know I'm the candidate that can bring all the stakeholders together to truly address the issues in front of us, as well as the resources and plans to solve these critical problems."

The lesser-known mayoral hopefuls in the race are Republican Richie Greenberg, pro-affordable housing development advocate Amy Farah Weiss, social worker Ellen Lee Zhou, and massage

therapist Michelle Bravo.

Whoever is elected mayor will serve out the remainder of Lee's term through Jan. 8, 2020, and will need to run for a full four-year term on the November 2019 ballot. The winner is likely to be determined by the city's ranked-choice voting system, where voters can rank their top three choices. As the candidates with the least votes are eliminated, their voters' second and third choices for mayor are tabulated until someone receives 50 percent plus one of the vote.

Sheehy vs. Mandelman—Twice

Leno could see an advantage over his mayoral opponents due to the fact that the race for his former seat on the Board of Supervisors is on the same ballot this year.

In that contest, Rafael Mandelman, an attorney who serves on the City College board, is running against District 8 Supervisor Jeff Sheehy, who was appointed last January by Lee to the seat, which includes Noe Valley, the Castro, Diamond Heights, Glen Park, Corona Heights, and Buena Vista Park. The two well-known gay leaders are running to serve out the remainder of former Supervisor Scott Wiener's term, which expires in early January 2019. Wiener resigned as supervisor after being elected to the state Senate in November 2016.

No matter the outcome of the June race, Sheehy and Mandelman are also expected to compete for a full four-year term on the board in the November election. A third contender also qualified for the ballot, Lawrence Dagesse, though he has no apparent campaign presence.

Mandelman secured Leno's endorsement last fall and is backing him for mayor.

"I am looking forward to being on the same ballot with him and supporting him and having his support," said Mandelman, who lives along the Valencia corridor between the Castro and Mission districts. "Yes, he is enormously popular in District 8 and he will make a great mayor."

Sheehy, who has been fundraising for his electoral bid but has yet to hold an official campaign kick-off event, is confident he will maintain the supervisor seat, as he can point to having a "productive legislative year" during his first 12 months at City Hall. Among his accomplishments was enacting first-in-the-nation legislation to require meat producers to report the antibiotics they use, securing millions of dollars in city funding to tackle youth homelessness, and pushing through regulations to allow for the sale of marijuana for recreational use.

"It has been a very unusual year, and I have been focused on what people are paying me to do. At the same time, I have been campaigning," said Sheehy, who lives in Glen Park with his husband and their daughter. "But it would not have been fair to ask voters for their support if I had not been productive."

While former District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty, who is endorsing Leno for mayor, sees the timing of the mayoral contest in conjunction with the special election for their old board seat as advantageous for Leno, he said Leno nonetheless must reach out to voters in every neighborhood.

"It's got to be won in a number of areas in the city, though District 8 is important for Mark," said Dufty, who now serves on the board that oversees the regional BART transit agency. "He has been on the ballot citywide and that is important. No one can match his electoral experience."

As for Leno, he said he plans "to campaign citywide of course" and that "only June 5 will tell" whether the mayoral and District 8 combo will provide him with a winning bump in votes. ■

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Large Turnout for NERT Training

Recent Quake Provides a Wakeup Call

By Heidi Anderson

On a Wednesday night in mid-January, a line of people snaked down the walkway outside the Upper Noe Recreation Center on Day Street, and waited to sign up for the city's Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT).

While no one would be turned away that night, the January training program was full (89 spots), and the wait list was long (154).

Longtime Noe Valley NERT volunteer and leader Carole Roberts, who lives on Cesar Chavez Street, arrived early to welcome the newbies.

She said the Bay Area's magnitude 4.4 earthquake on Jan. 4 most likely brought out the crowds.

Roberts was quick to add that all manner of disasters—such as the wine country and Southern California wildfires, the Santa Barbara mudslides, and even the bitter storms back east—could cause a significant rise in Noe NERT volunteers.

"People here understand that emergencies happen to everyone, big and small, and being in NERT helps us back each other up," Roberts said.

Peace of Mind

The majority of those signing up were Noe Valley residents.

"I was introduced to NERT in L.A.," said 24th Street resident Karen Hu, 26. "I'm here to get a sense of what's different here to be ready for an emergency."

Waiting next to her was Julian Brown, who lives on Noe Street, also 26. "I'm



Residents signed up as NERT volunteers Jan. 17 at Upper Noe Rec Center. The six-week training in personal preparedness is conducted by the San Francisco Fire Department. Photo by Heidi Anderson

here because she told me to," he laughed. Brown added that he hoped the training would bring him peace of mind.

As the meeting started, firefighter Dan Sankey addressed the packed room. "You are here tonight to start learning how to first take care of yourself during an emergency."

Sankey was referring to one of the biggest reasons San Francisco provides and supports the NERT trainings: city resources are precious during a large emergency, so the more citizens trained to help themselves (and those nearby) during the first few hours, the better.

"When you finish this training, make sure you keep up with it," he added.

NERT classes start with some basics, such as how to check if your fire extinguisher has expired. Over the course of the program, volunteers also tackle

weightier subjects, including search-and-rescue techniques and something called "disaster/team psychology."

A Thousand NERTs

Another longtime NERT volunteer and leader, Maxine Fasulis, who lives on Alvarado Street, praised the program.

"There's really no down side to taking this training," said Fasulis. "You meet some incredible people."

She said about a thousand Noe Valley residents had been certified and added to the NERT roster over the last 20 years.

And Fasulis should know. She recently was given a Neighborhood Empowerment Network Award at City Hall, for her two decades of coordinating and mentoring the local NERT team.

She thanked her fellow volunteers for the recognition. "This award really belongs to the team, because the 'Noes' really are a great team."

How NERT Works

Created by the San Francisco Fire Department in 1990, NERT is a community-based training program that uses a neighbor-helping-neighbor approach.

Not only does NERT train citizens to be first responders who can help save lives, it connects them with a network of volunteers who know how to work together to respond to an emergency.

The six-week training NERT members undergo ends with a hands-on drill, complete with "victims" injured in a mock disaster.

Captain Erica Arteseros, who leads the program, says NERT is going strong.

"We have 28,500 NERT volunteers trained to date." She echoed the urging of firefighter Sankey. "Most likely you will use these skills on yourself or someone you know."

Roughly 5,000 team members have

taken the time to re-certify and keep their skills sharp in the last two years.

NERT is free, and open to individuals, neighborhood groups, and community-based organizations in the city. The next sessions are listed at www.sf-fire.org.

More Than One Way to Be Ready

Another city agency invested in emergency preparedness, the San Francisco Department of Emergency Management, has an online list of tips to help residents get ready for the next big one. The department's website, www.sf72.org, guides citizens through a set of must-haves (flashlight, batteries, water, food, first aid) and good-to-haves (cash, shoes, duct tape).

It also encourages San Franciscans to sign up to receive text messages from the city during an emergency. Getting on the list can be done from the sf72 website as well.

The website strikes a very human tone. "Actual emergencies look more like a city coming together, not falling apart," it reads. There are also short videos made by and about survivors of other disasters, such as the Tokyo earthquake and Hurricane Sandy.

Just like NERT, the site encourages people to connect with others in their neighborhood, as a great way to get prepared.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Noe Valley Voice welcomes your Correspondence. Email editor@noevalleyvoice.com or write Noe Valley Voice Letters, P. O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include your name, address, or other contact information. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Please note that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Clover Organic Milk
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Tcho Chocolate
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Clover Organic Yogurt
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Development Decides When a House Is No Longer a Home

Longtime Renters Reject Buyout In Favor of Staying Put

By Matthew S. Bajko

The residence at 79 28th St. sits on a tranquil block in outer Noe Valley, where hidden from street view residents enjoy tree-filled back yards. It is where an elderly married couple has enjoyed being tenants for close to three decades.

Unbeknownst to passersby, the property is also the focus of a years-long development dispute that encapsulates the myriad housing issues transfixing not just the neighborhood but also the city at large. It has drawn in the next-door neighbors, tenants advocates, and land use attorneys. Unless the parties involved can reach a resolution through mediation, it is likely the planning commission will decide the issue later this year.

The dispute was sparked by the death several years ago of the longtime former property owner. When the house they have called home for the last 28 years went on the market, Michael and Connie Juarez did not have the resources to buy it.

Instead, Gene Kristul, president of Saxe Mortgage Company, bought it with plans to move his family into the house. He offered a buyout to the Juarezes to induce them to move out and filed plans with the city's planning department to build a three-story extension of the house into a portion of its back yard.

The couple, who are both senior citizens and continue to work, decided to reject the buyout offer and fight to maintain their affordable housing. Not only do they prefer to remain in their home, they feared they would be unable to afford a new apartment in the city if they did move out.

"We were thinking there are more important things than the money he was offering us," Michael Juarez, 75, told the *Voice*. "Affordable housing is very important to us, and we want to protect it. If we leave this place, in good conscience we can't do that. The number of affordable housing units in San Francisco is diminishing rapidly; we don't want to contribute to that."

The main concern for them is making sure their rent-controlled apartment is not lost, added Connie Juarez, who declined to give her exact age but said she was older than 65.

"It is not about the house itself. San Francisco is so short of affordable housing, and this is rent controlled. That is



The house at 79 28th St. is at the center of a housing battle that is emblematic of clashes between new homeowners and longtime tenants all over the city. Photo by Beverly Tharp

what we need; I want to see people care about housing," said Juarez, who with her husband owns Consulting Link 2000, which helps groups seek nonprofit status and which has a contract with the city's Public Utilities Commission to certify small businesses. "Even if we drop dead tomorrow, we still need affordable housing."

Remodel or Demolition?

The neighbors on both sides also objected to Kristul's proposed renovation plans, which they argued would result in a total demolition of the existing house except for two of its walls. The expanded rooms to be added to the back of the property would block sunlight to the rooms in their own homes and result in the loss of green space in the neighborhood.

"They are calling it a remodel because it is easier to get approval," said Tom Ruiz, who lives next door. "There is no way a modern house can be supported by walls built in 1906. It is getting around the whole issue of demolition by these pseudo-remodelings."

The neighbors also have come to the aid of the Juarezes and have been pushing Kristul to agree to allow the couple to move into the property's second, smaller unit as his tenants.

After the Juarezes refused his buyout offer, Kristul moved to evict them using the Ellis Act, a 1985 state law named after former state Senator Jim Ellis (R-San Diego) that allows landlords to evict tenants if the owners "go out of the business" of renting.

"We are committed to each other's needs," said Ken Hoegger, who with his wife, Kathy, owns the other adjacent property, where his daughter now lives with her family. "We are not going to settle independently with Kristul until everybody's needs are satisfied. My priority is Michael and Connie."

In December, Hoegger filed a request

for a discretionary review (DR) of Kristul's remodel plans with the planning department, as its staff approved his neighbor's application last year. Hoegger said he would prefer to see Kristul expand the front of the house, as it is currently set back from the sidewalk, to be aligned with the adjacent homes in order to lessen the impact the proposed rear expansion would have on his property.

"I would like to see it flush with our buildings, as it would allow him to get a little more square footage and not allow him to go so deep in the back," said Hoegger. "What we could accept is if he shortens his third story to a depth of no more than 47 feet. It would still allow him to have a ground-level build-out which goes 31 feet into the yard and still allow a second-story build-out."

Hoegger hired an attorney to assist him with the matter, because he is no longer in direct communication with Kristul, he said.

"As a result of my attorney's comments, they have to go back and redo some plans," Hoegger told the *Voice* in mid-January. "There are a lot of inconsistencies and errors in their plans that do not comply with the city planning guidelines."

Project Compliant, Owner Says

Kristul disputed that notion in an interview with the *Voice*, arguing that the plans he filed last year with the city did meet all of the required zoning rules.

"The plans came back approved, so we have a fully compliant project in the eyes of the planning department," said Kristul, adding that his plan to move into the house with his family hasn't changed.

He said he remains hopeful the issues concerning his tenants and the objections of his neighbors can be worked out in the coming weeks so he can proceed with his plans for the property. Because the issue remains in mediation, Kristul declined to

go into detail about what he had offered the Juarezes but did say he was willing to keep them on as tenants in the smaller unit.

"My intention is to get the project completed and move into the house, yes, once it is built," said Kristul. "I think that we have a very good offer to them which will satisfy essentially what it is they have wanted all along, not to move out of the property. I am hoping that we are successful in our mediation and our negotiation."

Tenants in Limbo

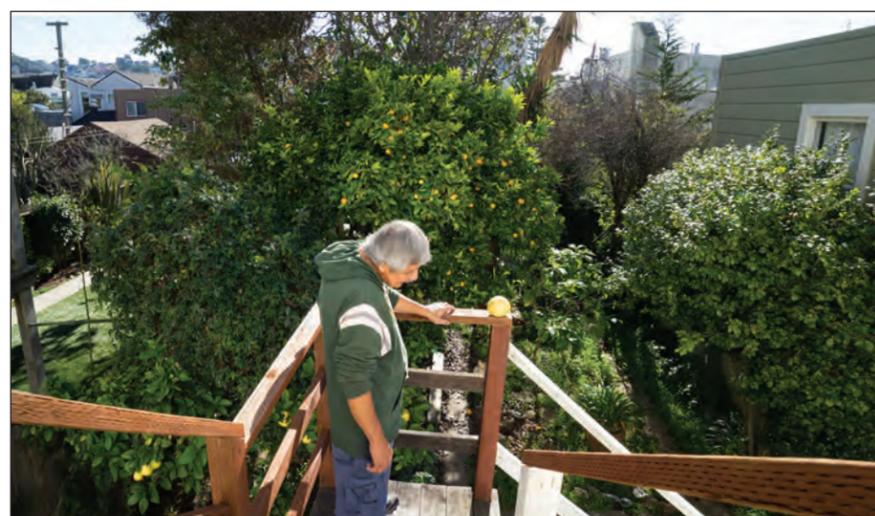
In the meantime, the Juarezes are facing an eviction deadline of April 28. As for Hoegger, he doesn't expect to have a hearing on his objection to the project before the planning commission until May at the earliest. The San Francisco Tenants Union has filed its own DR with city planning in protest of the project.

Paul Bernier, who lives nearby on Valley Street, said the issues his neighbors are confronting are a microcosm of the larger development concerns impacting the city.

"The broader issue is there is so much development going on in Noe Valley right now, and so much affordable housing is being lost," said Bernier. "It is housing for the elite of the elite. No one is going to be able to live in Noe Valley because developers want to build as big as they can and are taking the affordable units away." ■



Neighbors Ken and Kathy Hoegger, shown here with their granddaughter Giuliana Lichtenstein, are opposing the 28th Street project, not only because of the potential eviction of the Juarez family but because the new development's rear build-out would diminish the greenbelt behind the residents' houses. Photo by Beverly Tharp



A gloom has descended on Michael Juarez since he learned he and his wife might have to leave their home of 29 years on 28th Street. Still, he is determined to save his remnant of rent-controlled housing. Photo by Beverly Tharp



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Ben Fong-Torres Still Riding the Radio Waves

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

home in L.A.'s Laurel Canyon. He went on tour with Sly and the Family Stone, Joe Cocker, and Bonnie Raitt. He wrote a 10,000-word story on Santana.

"With Bonnie Raitt, it was just a non-stop party. She was a fun-loving gal," he said. "In Memphis she took me to a bar to see Muddy Waters, and it was great to meet a blues legend."

Best Byline in the World

He fought some battles along the way, too. In the '60s and '70s, a Chinese American wasn't supposed to be in print or on the air, Fong-Torres noted. "Asian American bylines and broadcasters were few and far between," he said.

Before he got his first byline for a feature story at *Rolling Stone*, he had to weather a challenge from the magazine's founder, Jann Wenner. Wenner went to John Burks, *Rolling Stone's* managing editor, and asked: "So what's with his name? Is it like a pen name? Should we have him pick one or the other?"

"It's the real deal," Burks said he told Wenner. Burks knew Fong-Torres from the San Francisco State *Daily Gator*, where Burks was the editor and later a journalism professor. He had heard the story behind Ben's name. Ben's father, named Fong, had bought the name Torres in the 1920s, when Chinese weren't being allowed into the United States. That way, he could slip through as a Filipino.

"It was the greatest byline in the world," said Burks, who came to *Rolling Stone* from a *Newsweek* correspondent

job. Burks thought "people would be lured in" to read his stories. Wenner offered Fong-Torres a full-time job in 1969.

Chimes of Freedom

There were early signs that music would be important for the working-class kid from the East Bay. As a youngster, he discovered Elvis, and he knew that was something special—both for him and his generation.

He went crazy over radio, and loved Top 40 music. It became an escape from the family business. Still, he worked hard at his parents New Eastern Cafe in Oakland's Chinatown, and later the family's Bamboo Hut in Hayward. He marveled at his father, whom he watched put in the greens just at the right moment in each dish as he cooked many meals at a time. He called him a maestro.

But the freedom he found in music pulled him to the *Rolling Stone* gig.

Artists back then "were more accessible, more open and more vulnerable," Fong-Torres said. "The marketing arm of management and agents was not there. Interviews were less formal. Artists weren't schooled to be media savvy. They gave you what you wanted."

In the spirit of the times, the music was often experimental. It wasn't always technically clean, he said, but he felt the music transcended the musicianship. "It was the attitude," he added.

Last fall, Fong-Torres knew a documentary on *Rolling Stone* was coming out (HBO's *Rolling Stone: Stories From the Edge*). But he was surprised by his presence in it when he saw the premiere at the Castro Theatre.

"Wow!" he said. "I was suddenly thrown back into that time, and it was very emotional."

He had been asked by the filmmakers to borrow his *Rolling Stone* interview

tapes with Tina Turner, and at one point the documentary zoomed in on Fong-Torres' article about her. It showed Ike and Tina Turner's house in Inglewood and went into Tina's breakup with Ike. Fong-Torres appeared riding in a car, and later going to the Jefferson Airplane house in San Francisco on Fulton Street.

In Tune With Radio

Times have changed. *Rolling Stone* is past its peak. The staff size and advertising volume are slipping, amid a tremendous decline of the magazine business. Unable to right the ship, Wenner has put his controlling interest in the magazine up for sale.

However, Fong-Torres keeps on trucking—writing a "Radio Waves" column for the *San Francisco Chronicle* that he started back in the '80s. He covers everything from drug lyrics and FCC battles to radio personalities, music trends, and sta-

(((It's fashionable to say
kids have deserted radio
and are going online.
But radio is still strong.
Many good stations are still
live and local.)))

—Ben Fong-Torres

tion bankruptcies. And he attracts avid readers for all of it.

The power of radio remains one of his greatest passions. A lifelong fan of popular music and baseball broadcasts, he found his niche. "Music, announcers, sportscasters, information, crime serials, game shows. I thought it was fascinating," he said.

He believes many people like the surprise of radio and choose to tune in rather than screen music or build playlists on a phone.

"It's fashionable to say kids have deserted radio and are going online," he said. "But radio is still strong. Many good stations are still live and local."

Fong-Torres' love for radio resonates in his book *The Hits Just Keep on Coming*, where he spotlights his early DJ heroes like Bay Area icons Gary Owens of KEWB in Oakland, Tommy Saunders of KYA, and Russ "The Moose" Syracuse of KYA and KSFO, who sometimes used a bombing sound for records he didn't like.

Fong-Torres was on KSAN Radio throughout the '70s, mainly on a Sunday afternoon DJ show. On KFRC-FM beginning in 2007, he had a weekend show called "Backstage," in which he recounted past interviews, including sound bites from the likes of Paul McCartney and Jim Morrison.

He also hosted "Fog City Radio," a variety and talk show in the early '90s on KQED-FM, where he interviewed another hero, Steve Allen. Today, he programs for an online station, Moonalice Radio, for jam band Moonalice.

A film documentary about Fong-Torres is due out in the spring, produced and directed by Suzanne Joe Kai. For years, he's been co-anchor with Julie Haener of the San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade broadcast on KTVU.

Rainy Day Tuesday

In addition, Fong-Torres for the past 10 years has been performing a short satire song on the second Tuesday of the month at El Rio bar on Mission Street. Between sets of a jam, he sings his own version of Bob Dylan's "Rainy Day Women #12 & 35," changing some of the words to humorously reflect the latest news.

"Let's find out what's happening in the news," he calls out in his smooth radio voice to the crowd. Backed by the band Los Train Wreck, Fong-Torres, dressed in black, sneers like Dylan: "They'll stone you if you rage like a loose cannon, like that Deadhead turned nationalist Steve Bannon." Or he gets a laugh squeezing in a line about Trump being "a smart, stable genius" in another verse.

He's joined on stage by the "Bad Mom-mies" female backup singers, who wore leopard-skin dresses last month. When Fong-Torres kicks in with the chorus "But I would not feel so all alone, everybody must get stoned," the regulars at the club sing along with a loud, lusty roar, just like on the record.

"Ben's been doing it for years," said Sam Barry, who plays keyboards and harmonica in Los Train Wreck. "He always comes in with new, topical lyrics to fit the moment, and they're always really timely and great."

In his more than three decades in Noe Valley, Fong-Torres has enjoyed the neighborhood's good access to everything in town, as well as the nice views, restaurants, and weather. He lives with his wife, Dianne, who found the house, he says, and got them out of a foggy part of the Haight-Ashbury. ■

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Tale of Two Businesses

Cliché Noe and Noe Valley Cyclery—Bid Them Adieu

By Richard May

As long as there have been businesses in Noe Valley, stores have opened and stores have closed. Sometimes it's about a rent increase, sometimes it's about retirement, and sometimes it's about not enough revenue to stay open.

We've all heard plenty of instances of businesses closing due to commercial rent increases. The well-lamented See Jane Run is one example. But what about individual business owners who put their time, money, sweat, and love into one store and—at some point, for whatever reason—have to close?

Retirement Is a Reason

Noe Valley has seen the retirements of numerous long-term business owners of late. People who opened shops in the late 1970s are definitely of a certain age. Larry Kline is one of those people. He's the owner of Noe Valley Cyclery at 4193 24th St. Kline opened his shop in 1976 and plans to close "definitely by the end of April, but probably sooner."

In 1976, Kline was a pharmacist, with a degree from the most prestigious pharmacy school in the country—U.C.S.F.—and a job in a drugstore South of Market. But he found dispensing drugs to be boring, he says. He was into riding bikes and taking long tours on them. He decided to make his avocation his vocation.

Kline Opens a Bike Shop

Kline lived in Noe Valley at the time and opened Noe Valley Cyclery in its first incarnation at 1414 Castro, where Blue Ova Health & Acupuncture is now. It was quite a change in clientele. "Bike riders are healthy people and mostly happy," he says. Another change was, he says, "I didn't have a boss!"

He moved the store to its current location on 24th Street in 1979 and for the next 37 years offered full service, from purchase to repair and maintenance to accessories. Kline feels that good service was his strong point.

He reminisced that selling bikes then wasn't as complex as it is now. "Mountain bikes didn't even exist," he says with a laugh. He stocked one kind of bike—10-speeds—from two countries, Italy and Japan. The only American brand at the time, which Kline did not stock, was Schwinn. It was "low quality," he explains. Eventually, he stocked more kinds

of bikes and more brands to meet customer demand.

In 1999, Kline married and he and his wife, Linda, left the neighborhood to buy a house in Pacifica, where they live to this day. He kept the shop in Noe Valley, and customers kept him in business.

To them, he says, "Thank you so much for all the years." He also says, "Come in and get some good deals!" He's in the midst of his closing sale and is offering deep discounts on bicycles, parts, and accessories.

After closing the store, Larry and Linda Kline plan to do some traveling. Who knows? It may even be by bicycle.

A Different Kind of Store

There's a different tale a few yards down the street at 4175 24th St.

Dani Sheehan-Meyer opened Cliché Noe Gifts + Home just after Thanksgiving Day 2011 and closed it Jan. 4 of this year. The location was downstairs from her home and owned by her husband Fred's family, so it was an easy commute and cheap rent.

She wanted to open her own store because, she says jokingly, "I love to shop!" And shop she got to do, twice over: buying the goods and then helping customers buy them from her. She asked whom the item was for, what they liked, what colors they favored. She chose young, outgoing women as workers who could do the same. "I really enjoyed training my staff," she says, "watching young people grow into the job."

Growing the Business

She searched carefully for unique products for the store. She traveled to New York, Las Vegas, and other gift show locales, looking for special items that would be "more difficult to find online." She would discover, she says, that online purchasing would make business success much more difficult, even with a business plan, careful accounting, and good business practices.

Dani Sheehan-Meyer tried to counter the convenience of online shopping by creating a "unique shopping experience," forging close ties with day-to-day customers and one-time visitors. Stock could be ordered online. She shipped and, in some cases, even delivered.

She stocked special products like Waterford crystal, neighborhood gifts like "Noe Valley" signs, Pandora jewelry, Minnetonka moccasins for toddlers, and bread-and-butter items like greeting cards. It was single sales of cards, in fact, she says, that kept her in business.

She participated in the neighborhood and the city, using her marketing skills and love of people. She served on the



With 42 years under his belt, Larry Kline is getting ready to take his last spin in Noe Valley. He plans to sell off his inventory and close Noe Valley Cyclery by May. Photo by Pamela Gerard

boards of the Noe Valley Merchants & Professionals Association and the city-wide Council of District Merchants Associations. She worked with the mayor's office on Shop Dine49 and nationally with the Small Business Administration's Small Business Saturday. She supported neighborhood activities like the annual Garden Tour, Word Week, Wine Walks, and Noe Valley Chamber Music.

Learning From Failure

Still, the business failed. Ultimately, it was not enough foot traffic that did Cliché Noe in, Sheehan-Meyer says. Not enough foot traffic translated into not enough customers, which resulted in not enough revenue. "Going to work every day isn't

just about money," she says. "But you have to make enough money to stay in business."

Now that the store is gone, she and husband Fred Meyer, a retired San Francisco Fire Department lieutenant, have several trips planned in the United States and abroad, but she'll be back to help with Word Week in March.

Two events are being held in her former store space. Then, about May, she "will think about what's next for work. I've never not worked. I don't have retail out of my blood yet."

"What do consumers want?" she asks. "What kinds of businesses?" You have a feeling if anyone can figure it out, it will be Dani Sheehan-Meyer. ■



The windows at Cliché Noe were papered over in early January after owner Dani Sheehan-Meyer sadly closed her six-year-old gift store, perhaps a casualty of internet commerce or the lack of foot traffic on 24th Street above Castro. Photo by Pamela Gerard



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Barbara Ann May A Life of Creativity

By Laura McHale Holland

With her sister Kathleen Rice and several devoted friends at her side, Fair Oaks Street resident, artist, and community activist Barbara Ann May succumbed to thyroid cancer on Oct. 2, 2017. Her death rocked not only the neighborhood where she'd lived for more than 40 years, but also other pockets of a city that had captured her heart long ago.

"She had so many groups of friends in different walks of life," Rice said. "The girls living downstairs would say, 'Oh, there was a Barbara May sighting' because they'd run into her all over the city, and she'd be with people they'd never seen her with before."

"Barbara was interested in anyone and anything," said Tebby George, who met May in the early 1970s when they were both street artists displaying their work at Justin Herman Plaza. "She was as comfortable investigating the mind and spirit as she was designing and building a bookshelf from scratch or cooking an old-fashioned meal."

Molly Nixon, who met May as a high school student in the 1980s, agreed. "She saw life as a workshop. Everything that



Barbara May was a teacher, artist, and organizer for many years of the Fair Oaks Street Fair.

Photo courtesy Tebby George

came along was something to work through and learn from."

Born on Sept. 23, 1939, May was raised in the Chicago area until her family moved in 1947 to Anaheim, Calif., where she and her six siblings attended Catholic schools.

Kevin Brickley, who moved next door to May on Fair Oaks Street in 1988, said May's parents, both artists, ran summer art camps that "became a way for them to nurture their children through teaching art and letting them absorb it."

May received a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Seattle University and a master's degree in psychology from Duquesne University. "She was inspired by the peace movement and cultural change of the 1960s, and began to devote herself to making the world a more peaceful, just, open and humane place," her family posted in a Facebook group dedicated to her memory.

She also traveled extensively and

worked a variety of jobs, including waitressing at Haystack Pizza. She ultimately landed a position teaching art at Discovery Center School, which she held for more than 20 years. Recently, she tutored students at St. Paul's School.

May also nurtured children's creativity outside the classroom. Brickley, for example, believes May's influence was evident when his daughter, Monica, auditioned for the dance program at the city's Ruth Asawa School of the Arts. "Barbara's message was that you want to do something that's a little bit of a surprise,

that will advance people's understanding of art and being an artist," he said. Monica worked Russian Cossack dance steps into her audition and won a spot in the highly competitive program.

One of May's favorite larks was Sunset Piano's Piano in the Park, an event that places pianos in Golden Gate Park for visitors to find and play. She was also first on her block to create a sidewalk container garden. Another innovation was her Art Wall in Ames Alley, which is on display between 22nd and 23rd streets. It is an outdoor cornucopia of collages, cartoons, drawings, poetry, and political commentary created over decades to delight, challenge, and inspire.

May is especially remembered as a thoughtful friend and eager helper at the annual Fair Oaks Street Fair. "Every year, she was key in organizing the potluck and always made the poster for the event," Nixon said. "And whenever I would pick her up to go grocery shopping, she always had a bag of goodies for me—each item something she had figured out I needed materially or spiritually—a cassette tape by Caroline Myss on illness and spirituality, a cartoon about teaching, a down jacket. Always with the caveat: 'I didn't pay a dime for it.'"

George recalls May as a true adventurer. "More than anything Barbara May showed up.... She gave us her complete and genuine attention and was willing to engage in whatever we presented her with. And always, with the twinkle in her sweet blue eyes, there was the laughter."

A memorial service will be held for May on March 10, 2018, 11 a.m., at the Carmelite Monastery of Cristo Rey, 721 Parker Ave., San Francisco. Following the service, friends and family will gather for a reception on Fair Oaks Street and Ames Alley. For details, please email wildrice08@gmail.com. ■



A smiling figure is the centerpiece of Barbara May's Art Wall in Ames Alley.

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Photos by Jack Tipple

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The Cost of Living in Noe

A Rush to Buy Homes

By Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley home shoppers closed out 2017 on a roll, purchasing 31 single-family detached properties during the last two months of the year.

The number of sales was considerably higher than that posted (19) during the same period in 2016—and was the busiest 60-day winter stretch in more than a decade.

Buyers also purchased five two- to four-unit buildings during November and December, compared to zero during the same two months in 2016, according to sales data provided to the *Noe Valley Voice* by Zephyr Real Estate.

“We haven’t had those kinds of numbers in the past,” Zephyr President Randall Kostick said about the single-family home sales. November-December sales over the previous 10 years were at their lowest in 2007, the year the Great Recession kicked in. They hit 25 in 2012, as the recovery got under way.

A larger supply of homes for sale was partly behind the upsurge in 2017, Kostick said. Some buyers also may have expedited purchases in anticipation of a tax reform bill—which President Trump signed in January—that could curb their property tax and mortgage interest deductions in the future.

Despite the heightened activity, buyers didn’t go overboard.

“Instead of having 10 offers [for a



Buyers in November paid \$4,995,000—5.2 percent more than the asking price—to acquire this luxury home in the 1100 block of Diamond Street. The house has a designer kitchen, open living and dining spaces, glass-walled stairs, and terraces with sweeping views of downtown.

property], we were having three offers. And for a number of properties, there was only one offer,” Kostick said.

In November, for example, he said eight of the 21 properties sold at or below the asking price. And though buyers paid an average 5 percent above asking, the premium was a far cry from three years ago, when shoppers typically anted up 10 percent.

Kostick said the more moderate bids showed that Noe Valley’s residential sales market was continuing to calm.

Nonetheless, Noe Valley remained a very expensive place to put down roots.

According to the Zephyr data, the average price paid in November for a house in Noe Valley was \$2,722,762—27 percent more than in November of 2016. December’s average sales price was 2.4 percent higher year to year.

The most expensive home in November sold for \$4,995,000. Buyers paid 5.2 percent more than the asking price for the modern showpiece in the 1100 block of Diamond Street between 26th and Clipper streets. The five-bedroom, four-bath dwelling, with 3,982 square feet of living space, offered floor-to-ceiling glass walls, a top-of-the-line kitchen, high-tech wiring, four decks/terraces, expansive views, and a one-car garage.

At \$4,937,000, a five-bedroom, 4.5-bath home was the top seller in December. The property was on the market for 108 days before it sold at 17.6 percent below the seller’s asking price (\$5,995,000). Located in the 4300 block of 26th Street between Diamond and Douglass streets, the newly built 4,816-square-foot home boasted smart features, solar panels, radiant heating, skylights, an



A brown-shingled condominium, built in 1980 but artfully renovated, lured buyers into paying 6.1 percent above the seller’s asking price. The \$1.8 million townhome, in the 700 block of Clipper Street, featured numerous skylights, a chef’s kitchen, and access to a spacious view deck.

Photos by Corrie M. Anders

Unit	No. in Sample	Range January 2018	Average January 2018	Average November 2017	Average January 2017
Studio	5	\$1,700 - \$2,800	\$2,299 / mo.	\$2,446 / mo.	\$2,220 / mo.
1-bdrm	33	\$2,000 - \$4,900	\$3,108 / mo.	\$3,186 / mo.	\$3,205 / mo.
2-bdrm	30	\$3,000 - \$5,500	\$4,641 / mo.	\$4,521 / mo.	\$4,557 / mo.
3-bdrm	14	\$3,800 - \$8,595	\$5,788 / mo.	\$6,526 / mo.	\$6,380 / mo.
4+-bdrm	7	\$5,500 - \$24,000	\$12,906 / mo.	\$11,822 / mo.	\$8,818 / mo.

** This survey is based on a sample of 89 Noe Valley apartment listings appearing on Craigslist.org from Jan. 1 to 8, 2018. NVV2/2018

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Single-family homes						
December 2017	10	\$1,299,000	\$4,937,000	\$2,735,100	38	101%
November 2017	21	\$1,427,500	\$4,995,000	\$2,722,762	30	105%
December 2016	7	\$1,800,917	\$4,100,000	\$2,669,417	43	101%
November 2016	12	\$1,300,000	\$4,187,625	\$2,140,635	52	104%
Condominiums						
December 2017	5	\$710,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,247,000	34	112%
November 2017	8	\$1,325,000	\$2,400,000	\$1,863,125	23	109%
December 2016	5	\$852,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,329,000	22	111%
November 2016	10	\$280,000	\$1,725,000	\$1,046,800	48	108%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
December 2017	1	\$1,675,000	\$1,675,000	\$1,675,000	49	105%
November 2017	4	\$1,463,500	\$2,700,000	\$2,012,125	17	103%
December 2016	0	—	—	—	—	—
November 2016	0	—	—	—	—	—
5+-unit buildings						
December 2017	2	\$1,590,000	\$3,900,000	\$2,745,000	51	95%
November 2017	0	—	—	—	—	—
December 2016	0	—	—	—	—	—
November 2016	1	\$1,670,000	\$1,670,000	\$1,670,000	62	88%

* Survey includes all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley for purposes of this survey is loosely defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The Voice thanks Zephyr Real Estate (zephyrre.com) for providing sales data. NVV2/2018

outdoor spa, two-car garage, a yard with a fireplace, and views from Twin Peaks to the Bay.

The top-selling condominium in November was a three-bedroom, three-bath unit in the 100 block of Chattanooga Street between 22nd and 23rd streets. It sold for \$2.4 million, or 11.1 percent below the list price. Built in 2004 in a two-unit building, the home was on the market for 42 days before the buyer and seller struck a deal. With 2,153 square feet of living space spread over four levels, the

home featured a chef’s kitchen with Carrera cabinetry, a fireplace, deck, and a two-car garage.

December’s most expensive condo was a two-level townhouse in the 700 block of Clipper Street between Douglass Street and Grand View Avenue. The new owner paid \$1.8 million, or 6.1 percent above the asking price. The overbid rewarded the buyers with three bedrooms, 2.5 baths, a fireplace, skylights, one-car parking, and a deck with panoramic views. ■

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SHORT TAKES

Walking History

Is what passes for winter weather in San Francisco making you a little stir-crazy? Maybe it's time to take a good long walk—and learn a little history while you're at it.

San Francisco City Guides has regular tours of Noe Valley twice a month. The February walks are Sundays, Feb. 4 and 18, starting at 1:30 p.m. outside the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St.

Neighborhood resident Susan Walsh will lead the two-hour jaunts, looking at Victorians and Edwardians and discussing the people who built and lived in them. City Guides' tours are free, but donations are gladly accepted.

City Guides also leads tours all over the rest of the city. Given that the Academy Awards presentation is this month, maybe you'd like to learn about Alfred Hitchcock's San Francisco. That tour and many others can be found at www.sfcityguides.org.

Tours of some of our neighbors to the south are led by Evelyn Rose, a Glen Park historian. On Saturday, Feb. 17, starting at 9 a.m., she is leading a walk, "A Trestle Ran Through It," about the early days of Glen Park Village. A week later, Feb. 24, 10 a.m. to noon, you can take a hike focusing on the development of Red Rock and Gold Mine hills, in Diamond Heights. To sign up for the tours, which cost \$10, contact Rose at GlenParkHistory@gmail.com.

If you'd rather sit to learn about San Francisco, John Blackburn is making a presentation called "Shaken, But Not Stirred: The History of San Francisco's Earthquake Shacks and Cottages," at the next meeting of the Glen Park Neighborhoods History Project, Saturday, Feb. 10, 2:30 p.m., at the Glen Canyon Park Recreation Center. \$10 is the suggested donation for that, too.

James Lick Smiles

Smile is an online charitable donation program launched by Amazon in 2013. If you make your Amazon purchases through Smile, the company will donate 0.05% of eligible purchases to the charity you designate.

In Noe Valley, James Lick Middle School is a Smile charity. You can make your purchases via the James Lick home page by clicking on the Amazon Smile logo there, which takes you to the Amazon online catalog. You can also sign up to support Lick Middle School—or any other charity on the list—at smile.amazon.com. Thereafter, when you go to Amazon online, you'll be asked whether you want to purchase through Smile.

If you'd rather cut to the chase, you can set your Amazon icon on pads and phones to go automatically to Smile—if you have Chrome or Firefox. Find out more at org.amazon.com.

I Heart Libraries

The Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library is having its annual open house and celebration of libraries Saturday, Feb. 10, 2 to 5 p.m. Come get to know your library—or visit it again—while you munch on heart-shaped cookies and candy kisses and kick back some pink lemonade.

All afternoon long, you can take a selfie against a themed backdrop in the Teen Section. Patrons can choose among different backdrops what's important to them at the library. Possible choices may include a giant library card or the wifi hashtag or a big magazine.

At 2 p.m., Rachel Fleischman will lead the willing in "Heartful Healing Through Creativity, Mindfulness, and Motion" and at 4 p.m. West African acoustic guitarist Jesse Sahbi will play some tunes.

Our branch library is located at 451 Jersey St. For hours, go to the *Voice* Books to Read, on page 28.

Children's Authors Visit

Children's authors L.B. Schulman, Tamara Ireland Stone, and Elaine Bond Miller will make appearances at our neighborhood bookstores this month.

Sunday, Feb. 4, Schulman leads local teenage scribes in fiction-writing about a family secret, as she did in her second young adult novel, *Stolen Secrets*. Sign up for the workshop at kids@foliosf.com and bring pen and paper to Folio Books, 3957 24th St., for the one-hour class, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. On Friday, Feb. 16, 6 to 7 p.m., join best-selling author Tamara Ireland Stone for literary coding based on her middle-grade novel *Click'd*. Sign up at www.ffoliosf.com or call 821-3477. This event costs \$5 per person.

On Friday, Feb. 23, author Miller Bond will visit Charlie's Corner children's bookstore at 12 noon to read from her new book, *Living Wild*, about what home means to animals. Charlie's Corner is at 4102 24th St. The event is free.

Gardens and Books, Oh My!

Friends of Noe Valley has put out the call for residents to volunteer their gardens for public view in the annual Noe Valley Garden Tour. The neighborhood association is also on the lookout for authors who'd like to sell their books at the annual Authors Festival.

The Authors Festival is set for Saturday, March 10, as the culmination of the 12th annual Word Week Noe Valley. Published authors from Noe Valley and nearby neighborhoods are invited to reserve a space by Feb. 28.

A shared six-foot table costs \$25. Send your request for an application to wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com.

The garden tour is in May, when the neighborhood blooms are at their peak. If you want to nominate your garden—or that of a neighbor or friend—for the tour, contact Garden Tour chair Linda Lockyer at lindalockyer3@gmail.com. All sorts of gardens are welcome. Proceeds from the tour are donated to a neighborhood beautification project. If you have a green project to suggest, email the details to Linda Lockyer also.

Movie at St. Philip's

Lent starts with a movie this year in Noe Valley—two screenings, in fact. St. Philip the Apostle Church shows *The Shack* at noon and 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 15. The 2017 two-hour film stars Academy Award winner Octavia Spencer and Australian actor Sam Worthington.

The film "deals with forgiveness and answers the question: why do bad things happen to good people?" according to Sandra Kearney, pastoral associate at St. Philip's. Themes from the film will be discussed in the four-week Lenten discussion series at the church. The movie is free, and signing up for the four-week discussion is not required. St. Philip Church is located at 725 Diamond St.

Randall Museum Reopens

San Francisco's art and science education facility, the Randall Museum, will reopen Feb. 11 after being closed since June 2015 for a \$9 million renovation and seismic and ADA upgrades. The public is invited to the 10 a.m. ceremony at 199 Museum Way, off Roosevelt Way, in Corona Heights.

New features include geology and zoology exhibits, a STEM lab (science, technology, engineering, and math), a



Welcome to Germany, a film that tackles immigration issues, screens Feb. 9 at the Castro as part of this year's Berlin & Beyond Film Festival. Photo courtesy Berlin & Beyond

Four Film Festivals

San Francisco's 2018 film festival season gets under way this month with four festivals in neighborhoods close to Noe Valley.

First up is the **SF Independent Film Festival**, which is celebrating its 20th year. It runs Feb. 1–15 and will screen 33 features and 51 short productions. In addition, an outstanding film from each of the last 20 years will screen during the event, which will be held at the Roxie and Victoria theaters, as well as at the 518 Valencia Gallery. The festival centerpiece is *Cruise*, a world premiere starring Emily Ratajkowski. Set in Queens, N.Y., in the summer of 1987, the film "is a tender relationship drama of co-ed meets guy from the other side of the tracks." It screens Feb. 9, 7 p.m., at the Roxie Theater.

The indie lineup also includes works by several local area talents, including Bernal Heights resident Beth Custer, who composed the music for *The Manhattan Front*, about a German saboteur who co-opted progressive labor politics in New York during the buildup to World War I (Feb. 14), and Mission District resident Sarah Flores, who directed *When I Wake*, a short film about the election of a treacherous president and his effect on women's independence (Feb. 9 and 13). Both will screen at the Roxie.

Festival prices range from \$10 for individual films to \$250 for all screenings and parties. For more information, go to sfindie.com.

The **Berlin & Beyond Film Festival**, now in its 22nd year, will showcase 18 films Feb. 9–15. The opening night film is *Welcome to Germany*, a feature about a family in Munich and the Nigerian refugee they invited to come live with them. The screening starts at 6:30 p.m., Feb. 9, at the Castro Theatre.

Show venues also include the Goethe-Institut Auditorium in San Francisco and the Landmark's Shattuck Cinemas in Berkeley. Tickets for individual screenings start at \$12. Go to berlinbeyond.com for more information about the fest, which is sponsored by the Goethe-Institut, Germany's official cultural center.

With the lights barely dimming at the Berlin festival, the curtain will rise for the **Mostly British Film Festival**. Now in its 10th year, the festival runs Feb. 15–22 at the Vogue Theatre on Sacramento Street. On the program are 25 new and classic films from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, India, and Canada. For tickets, which are \$12.50 to \$225 for a festival pass, see <http://mostlybritish.org/>.

Ten feature films are on tap for the Jewish Film Institute's **WinterFest**, playing Feb. 10–11 at the Vogue Theatre and Alamo Drafthouse in San Francisco. The program includes a mix of films about music, literature, comedy, politics, and culture. Tickets range from \$12 to \$90. You can get more information about the fifth annual WinterFest at www.jfi.org/winterfest.

—Corrie M. Anders

cafe, and an elevator. Updates have been made to the live animal exhibit, science and ceramics studios, classrooms, and the first-floor lobby. A new monumental mobile by local artist Ben Trautman has been placed in the renovated lobby.

Once the doors are open, the museum hours will be 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. Admission is always free. Funding for the renovation and additions came from grants from the state and city, as well as donations raised by the Randall Museum Friends organization. The Trautman mobile was paid for by city Art Enrichment dollars.

For more information, go to www.randallmuseum.org.

Three Concerts and a Party

Three classical concerts have been scheduled for Noe Valley this month. First up is a concert in the Second Sundays series at Bethany United Methodist Church on Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. Bethany music director Ray Capiral will play Bach, Chopin, Debussy, and Ravel on the new Steinway piano at the church, 1270 Sanchez St. (Actually, the piano dates from 1892.) This is a free concert, but any donations will go to charities feeding the

hungry or housing the homeless.

Saturday, Feb. 24, the San Francisco Civic Symphony offers An Afternoon of Chamber Music at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Included in the 90-minute program will be Stravinsky's *Octet for Wind Instruments* and Brahms' *Clarinet Quintet in B Minor*. The concert starts at 3 p.m., and \$10 is the suggested donation.

Finally, on Sunday, Feb. 25, Noe Valley Chamber Music will present tenor Brian Thorsett, performing with John Churchwell (piano), Emil Miland (cello), and Kevin Rivard (French horn). The eclectic program includes pieces by Franz Schubert and Shinji Eshima, and the West Coast premiere of Ian Venables' *Venetian Songs*. Start time is 4 p.m. Tickets are \$25 online at www.nvcm.org.

And if classical music is not your thing, how about some New Orleans jazz? Fat Tuesday is Feb. 13, so the Noe Valley Ministry has booked the Barrelhouse Jazz Band for a Mardi Gras style service, Sunday, Feb. 14. The event is free and starts at 10:30 a.m.

The Short Takes column is compiled and written by Richard May.



Padre's Shooting Star (*Primula clevelandii* var. *patula*) is one of the first wildflowers to bloom in the spring.

February is for miracles. In January, the first greens flourish, and the first blossoms of the season emerge with yellowmats and bladder parsnip. In February, every other plant in the city seems to either flower or grow enough to be identifiable. I could use this entire column listing February wildflowers blooming nearby.

A few of the early bloomers are bird's eye speedwell, corn spurrey, lupines, marigold, beach strawberry, checker-bloom, and milkmaids. Then there's yellow pansy, iris, manroot, purple sanicle, California figwort, and blue-eyed grass. Those species you'll find just galumphing around the slopes of Diamond Heights.

My favorite denizens of February are Padre's Shooting Star (*Primula clevelandii* var. *patula*) and Fremont's Star Lily (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*). Both live almost exclusively on Bernal Hill. I have not seen the shooting stars anywhere else in the city. Fremont's Star Lily has been reported only from Bernal Hill and from the Presidio. Lucky for us, both of these species appear on Bernal at the same time, often within inches of one another.

Both plants are small enough that you'll get a better look at them on your hands and knees. For people of my vin-

NOW APPEARING

local wildflowers • the noe valley voice

Stars of Spring

By Joe O'Connor

tage, that's problematic, so I always carry a walking stick; it keeps me upright, helps with balance, and I can use it as a lever when standing up after kneeling down to get the exact photo I need! (Hint: Carry binoculars!)

Padre's Shooting Star is abundant on the northwest- and north-facing grassland of Bernal Hill, in broken chert soil. Each plant has a rosette of small, oval leaves on short stems that is about 2 to 3 inches across. From the rosette arises a flower stalk supporting one to six delicate lavender flowers 2 to 3 inches off the ground. The flower cluster may be no more than 2 inches across. Look for white flashes



Padre's Shooting Star thrives in grassy areas and in the broken chert soil on Bernal Hill.

amidst the green grass.

Each tiny flower (5/8 inch long, 1/2 inch wide) looks like it has been turned inside out. The petals sweep backward, away from the stamens and pistils. Patterns of purple, pink, and white, with occasional spots of yellow, occur on exposed parts. The appearance could easily be a "shooting star." A full display of hundreds of them can be breathtaking.

You'll find Fremont's Star Lily growing right along with the shooting stars, especially beside the path from the Esmeralda Steps uphill toward the Bernal summit. (The stairway starts on Coleridge Street about one block east of Mission and 29th streets.) The star lily has narrow curving leaves, 5 to 7 inches long, with a central flower stalk that supports a spike of one to 20 small yellow-and-white lily-like flowers. The flower stalks



What Fremont's Star Lily lacks in edibility it makes up for in beauty.



Fremont's Star Lily (*Toxicoscordion fremontii*) is named after explorer John C. Fremont. Photos by Joe O'Connor

on Bernal Hill are short, 2 to 6 inches tall, stunted possibly by the hardscrabble soil at their location. Each flower is about a half-inch wide, with bright white petals, yellow anthers, and a central pistil, and an avocado-green spot at the base of each petal. Actually, it's three petals and three sepals, but who's counting?

Fremont's Star Lily is toxic, fresh or dry, and could harm small children, pets, and animals. So exercise caution. Besides, there's never really a good reason to do anything with a wildflower other than photograph it, right?!

Enjoy the return of our wondrous wildflowers, version 2018.

Joe O'Connor is a retired professor of ecology with an avid interest in local plants, mushrooms, and natural history. He's also a docent at the California Academy of Sciences. A longtime resident of 26th Street, O'Connor will web-publish his guide to San Francisco wildflowers in early 2018.

For information on native plants, he recommends Calflora.org.



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STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular Voice column introducing new shops and businesses in the neighborhood. This month, we profile a restaurant that in less than five months has created an ardent following.

ARDIANA

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For Sharon Ardiana, her third restaurant—the one she named after herself and opened last summer in Noe Valley—is a bet that has paid off.

Over a year ago, the landlord at her Glen Park restaurant, Gialina, had given her only a one-year lease renewal. It raised doubts about the longevity of the business she had opened 11 years ago and turned into a popular dining destination.

So when La Ciccia owners Massimiliano Conti and Lorella Degan suggested she take over the space that had housed their more casual offshoot La Nebbia, which they shuttered last February, Ardiana jumped at the chance. Not only had the vacant restaurant been recently rebuilt, it could also provide a solution should she need to close down Gialina.

“I wasn’t really sure what was going to happen,” Ardiana recalled. “When the La Ciccia owners approached me, I thought it was a great space and far enough from Gialina that it made sense. I just felt it was a great opportunity.”

As Ardiana was developing the concept for the new eatery, which she co-owns with Greg Hinds, whom she had hired to manage her restaurant Ragazza on Divisadero Street, chef Jesse Scott Moore happened to stop into Gialina for dinner last May. The two had become good friends, as he formerly was the sous chef at Heirloom Cafe, which is a few blocks from where Ardiana and her wife, Alisha, live in the Mission District.

“He mentioned that night that he was leaving Heirloom and looking for a new job,” said Ardiana. It wasn’t long before she asked Moore to come on board at her new restaurant. “He has been with us since before opening day. He is fantastic.”

The restaurant, with seating for 49, welcomed its first customers on Aug. 8. It features dishes influenced by Italian and Mediterranean recipes. While pizzas are a mainstay, the menu can change by the day, depending on what vegetables are in season and what fish and meat can be locally sourced. The goal is for customers “to choose your own adventure,” said Ardiana.

In mid-January, house-made appetizers and dips, paired with pita bread cooked on site, included roasted Italian squash with arugula-cashew pesto; Muhammara, a



Though “weekends are always crazy,” diners can often find seating and enjoyable company at the bar, says Sharon Ardiana about her popular new restaurant on Church Street. Still, she recommends making a reservation.

Photo by Art Bodner

roasted pepper-walnut dip with lemon oil and Greek yogurt; and a carrot hummus featuring black tahini, watermelon radish, and sumac. Small plates are \$7 each, \$19 for three, \$31 for five, or \$37 for all six.

Pizzas range from a simple New York-style cheese and marinara (\$14) or a lamb sausage with spring onions, mozzarella, and herb yogurt (\$19) to a funghi—trumpet mushrooms, caramelized onions, thyme, and cheeses (\$18). You can also find Prosciutto di Parma, with tomato sauce and wild arugula (\$22), and the spicy Puttanesca, featuring olives, anchovies, chilies, and provolone (\$16).

Like the pizza and appetizers, the salads and larger entrees are dependent on what is seasonally available, though there is almost always a chicken dish on the menu. Last month, the chicken entree was a pan-roasted chicken breast with herbed couscous, chickpeas, olives, and roasted carrots (\$25). Also featured in January was a pan-seared rock cod in a saffron-tomato tagine (\$21) and braised pork shoulder with crispy polenta cakes (\$27). “We change it up to keep people interested,” said Ardiana of the menu. “We keep some favorites, like with the pizzas, but the entrees are good to shift things around.”

Ardiana is open Tuesday through Thursday, 5 to 10 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 5 to 10:30 p.m. While the restaurant does accept reservations, walk-ins can usually secure a table right when Ardiana opens or after 8:30 p.m. Most items on the menu can also be ordered for takeout.

“Weekends are always crazy, and 7 p.m.

is the Noe Valley witching hour,” said Ardiana. “We always do have some seats at the bar, but Fridays and Saturdays fill up quick. When it stops raining, and we have nice weather again, we will have 12 seats outside.”

Since opening, the neighborhood has embraced the Church Street restaurant, she said. Customers in Noe Valley particularly appreciate being able to make a reservation, added Ardiana, which until recently they couldn’t do at Gialina.

“It has been a really positive experi-

ence,” she said. “It is a big love fest.”

As for the fate of Gialina, which is named for Ardiana’s grandmother, she now has a new, five-year lease at the location (2842 Diamond St.). And she has a 20-year lease at Ragazza. For the foreseeable future, she will split her time between the three restaurants, which are all equidistant from her Mission home.

Asked how she operates three bustling eateries, Ardiana joked, “Sometimes I wonder about that myself!”

—Matthew S. Bajko

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Feb. 1: James Syhabout and John Birdsall discuss Hawker Fare: Stories and Recipes from a REFUGEE CHEF's Isan Thai and Lao Roots. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 1, 8, 15 & 22: Miss Catherine tells TODDLER TALES with books, rhymes, music, and movement. 10:15 & 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 1, 8, 15 & 22: Shrawan Nepali leads Thursday Morning MEDITATION in the Noe Valley Town Square; bring a pillow. 3861 24th. 8-9 am.

Feb. 1, 8, 15 & 22: The AL-ANON Literature Discussion meets Thursdays at Bethany UMC, from 7:15 to 8:30 pm. 1270 Sanchez.

Feb. 1, 8, 15 & 22: Bring your storehouse of knowledge to TRIVIA NIGHT on Thursdays at the Dubliner, 3838 24th. 8 pm. 285-0674; brainstormer.com.

Feb. 1-28: Noe Valley OVEREATERS Anonymous meets Monday through Saturday, 7 am, at St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine. oasf.org.

Feb. 1-28: BootCampSF conducts FITNESS training Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8:30 am. SF Rec Center Basketball Court, 30th and Whitney. 567-9009; sfbootcamp.com.

Feb. 1-28: Charlie's Corner offers children's STORY TIMES every day. Mon.-Fri., 10 am, noon, 3 & 5 pm; Sat. & Sun., 10:30 am, 12:30 & 3:30 pm. 4102 24th; 641-1104.

Feb. 1-28: The On Lok 30th Street SENIOR CENTER serves lunches for people over 60, weekdays and Saturdays. Noon & 1 pm. 225 30th. 550-2211.

Feb. 1 & March 1: Regulars Liz Stone, Ruby Gill, and Drew Harmon, and guests perform COMEDY GOLD on the first Thursday of the month. 9:30 pm. Valley Tavern, 4054 24th. 285-0674; lizziestone@gmail.com.

Feb. 1-March 10: "Beyond the Howl" is a display of COYOTE photos by Janet Kessler, "the Coyote Lady," at the Sausalito Public Library, City Hall, 420 Litho. 289-4121.coyoteyipps.com.

Feb. 2-23: Chris Sequeira leads a free Friday KARAOKE for adults at Upper Noe Rec Center. 6:30-8:30 pm. 295 Day. 970-8061.

Feb. 2-25: JAZZ nights continue at Bird & Beckett bookstore. Fri., 5:30-8 pm.; Sat., 7:30-10 pm.; Sun., 7:30-10 pm. 653 Chenery. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

Feb. 2-27: Dylan Phillipy leads BOOTCAMP on the Square, Tuesdays, 6 pm, and Thursdays, 11 am. Noe Valley Town Square, 24th & Vicksburg.

Feb. 3: Learn to knit or crochet at the Noe Valley Library's KNITTING CIRCLE. 10:30 am-12:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 3: The Noe Valley Library hosts a class, "Build a Budget with EXCEL." 3:30 to 4:30 pm. 451 Jersey. Register at 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 3: The Chamber Music Society of San Francisco performs themes of "LOVE and Loss." 7:30 pm. Holy Innocents Church, 455 Fair Oaks. 824-5142; holyinsf.org.

Feb. 3-24: Each Saturday, the Noe Valley FARMERS MARKET brings you fresh produce and live music from 8 am to 1 pm. 3861 24th. 248-1332; noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

Feb. 3-24: Upper Noe Rec Center offers free YOGA CLASSES Saturdays, 9:15-10:15 am. Day & Sanchez. 970-8061; noevalleyreccenter.com.

Feb. 3-27: Meet under the rainbow flag at Harvey Milk Plaza (Castro and Market) for a City Guides walking tour of the CASTRO. Sat., Sun. & Tues., 11 am. 557-4266; sfcityguides.org.

Feb. 4: Folio Books hosts a TEEN WRITING Workshop (12+) led by Lisa Schulman. 3:30-4:30 pm. 3957 24th. 821-3477; RSVP to kids@foliosf.com.

Feb. 4 & 18: SF City Guides leads a free WALKING TOUR of Noe Valley on first and third Sundays at 1:30-3:30 pm. Meet at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 557-4266; sfcityguides.org.

Feb. 4-25: Meet at the gold fire hydrant at 20th and Church at 11 am Sundays for a City Guides walking tour of the area around MISSION DOLORES. 557-4266; sfcityguides.org.

Feb. 4-25: MARIPOSA STUDIO is open Sundays, 12:30 to 4 pm. 2808 Mariposa, at Project Artaud. 861-4330; mariposastudio.org.

Feb. 4 & March 4: The Asian Art Museum is FREE on the first Sunday of the month, courtesy of Target. 200 Larkin. 581-3500; asianart.org.

Feb. 5: ODD MONDAYS hosts readings by fairy-tale writer Edith Hartnett and poet Charles Patterson. 7 pm at Folio Books, 3957 24th. No-host supper, 5 pm, Haystack Pizza, 3881 24th (rsvp jlsender@webtv.net). Call 821-2090 to confirm; oddmondays.com.

Feb. 5, 12 & 26: The ACC Conversation Club meets from 4:30 to 5:30 pm at the Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. For details, email krismoser@aol.com.

Feb. 6: The Noe Valley Library holds a "drop-in" ONLINE RESOURCE workshop from 10:30 to 11:30 am. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 6 & 20: Bethany United Methodist Church offers free KNITTING AND CROCHET lessons on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. 6:30-8:30 pm. 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org.

Feb. 6-27: The Eureka Valley Library tells TODDLER TALES on Tuesdays, 10:30 am. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616; sfpl.org.

Feb. 6-27: John McClean Wolf leads SACRED YOGA Tuesdays at Holy Innocents Church. 7-8:15 pm. 455 Fair Oaks. 824-5142; holyinsf.org.

Feb. 7: Create a pop-up flower Valentine card at adult CRAFT NIGHT at the Noe Valley Library. 7-8:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 7 & 21: Children 4 and up can read to Oliver the dog at PUPPY DOG TALES. 6:30-7:30 pm. Eureka Valley Library, 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616; sfpl.org.

Feb. 7-28: Folio Books hosts STORYTIME for toddlers Wednesdays at 10 am. 3957 24th. 821-3477; foliosf.com.

Feb. 7-28: Chris Sequeira leads free senior QIGONG classes Wednesdays, 1 to 3 pm, at Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. 773-8185; livingtaichi@yahoo.com

Feb. 7-28: The Eureka Valley Library offers BABY RHYME and play time on Wednesdays, 1:30 to 2:15 pm. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616; sfpl.org.

Feb. 7-28: Holy Innocents Church hosts Candlesong, a TAIZE-style service followed by a potluck on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm. 455 Fair Oaks. 824-5142.

Feb. 7-28: History group Shaping San Francisco offers free PUBLIC TALKS on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Eric Quezada Center, 518 Valencia. shapingsf.org.

Feb. 7-28: AL-ANON meets Wednesdays 8 to 9:30 pm at St. Philip Church. 725 Diamond. 834-9940; al-anonsf.org.

Feb. 7 & March 7: The GLBT HISTORY Museum has a free day on first Wednesdays. 11 am-7 pm. 4127 18th. 621-1107; GLBThistory.org.

Feb. 8: Liza Gershman introduces CUBAN Flavor: Exploring the Island's Unique Places, People, and Cuisine. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 8: The DIAMOND HEIGHTS Community Association meets on the second Thursday of the month, at 7 pm. Call 867-5774 for location.

Feb. 9: Dancers' Group's free Rotunda DANCE performance at SF City Hall features Carnaval San Francisco with Fogo Na Roupá Performing Company. Noon. 920-9181.

Feb. 9: The Noe Valley Library screens the 1950 FILM Father of the Bride, starring Elizabeth Taylor and Spencer Tracy. 2-4 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 10: LADYBUG GARDENERS work on the Upper Noe Rec Center park grounds on second Saturdays. 9 am-noon. Day & Sanchez. www.noevalleyreccenter.com.

Feb. 10: Natural Resources offers an ongoing opportunity to meet doulas (2-4 pm) and home-birth MIDWIVES (4-6 pm). 1367 Valencia. 550-2611; naturalresources-sf.com.

Feb. 10: Johnny Harper and Carnival perform a Mardi Gras concert celebration at 8 pm. SF LIVE ARTS (formerly the Noe Valley Music Series) at St. Cyprian's, 2097 Turk. 454-5238; noevalleymusicseries.com.

Feb. 10-March 3: SF WOMEN ARTISTS exhibit "Eye of the Beholder," a juried all-media group exhibit. Reception Feb. 8, 5:30-8 pm; Tues.-Sat., 10 am-6 pm, Sun., noon-4 pm. 647 Irving. 566-8550.

Feb. 11: The Randall Museum's Grand REOPENING features a 10 am ribbon-cutting and free activities through 2 pm. 199 Museum Way. 554-9605.



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CALENDAR

Feb. 11: The PISCO Society hosts a pisco cocktail tasting from 4 to 5 pm at Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 11-13: The 2018 RUSSIAN FESTIVAL features food, dance, music, and art. Feb. 11, 5:30-9:30 pm; Feb. 12, 11 am-10 pm; Feb. 13, 11 am-7 pm. Russian Center, 2450 Sutter. 921-7631.

Feb. 12 & 26: Noe Valley political group ACTION SF meets from 3 to 4:30 pm at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. actionsolidarity@gmail.com.

Feb. 13: Charlie's Corner Bookstore hosts a MARDI GRAS Masquerade Party with music and stories. 10 am and 5 pm. 4102 24th. 641-1104; charliescorner.com.

Feb. 13: Carrie Tillie discusses OYSTER: A Global History. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 13: PFLAG meets at the Women's Building, 3543 18th, on the second Tuesday of the month, 7 to 9 pm. 921-8850; pflagsf.org.

Feb. 13: Hear about Walt Disney's Connections to San Francisco at the SF HISTORY Museum's monthly meeting. 7:30-9 pm. Roosevelt Middle School, 460 Arguello. Reserve a seat at 537-1105; sfhistory.org.

Feb. 14: The GREAT BOOKS discussion group meets 6:15 to 8:15 pm at the Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 16: The Randall Museum offers a walk around Corona Heights Park, "BIRDING the Hill." 8-9 am. Meet in the parking lot, 199 Museum Way. 554-9605.

Feb. 16: Charlie's Corner Bookstore hosts a CHINESE New Year celebration at noon, 3 and 5 pm. 4102 24th. 641-1104; charliescorner.com.

Feb. 16: Tamara Ireland Stone, author of Click'd, leads a coding activity at the BOOKWORMS club at Folio Books. 6-7 pm. 3957 24th. RSVP required: 821-3477.



An estimated 75 people lined up at Church and 24th Streets on January 20 for the ride downtown on the J-Church streetcar to attend The Women's March. Photo by Tom Ruiz

Feb. 17: Hannah Kaminsky introduces Real Food, Really Fast: PLANT-BASED Recipes Ready in 10 Minutes or Less. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 17: Iranian vocalist Mahsa Vahdat joins composer Atabak Elyasi in a concert of Persian music. 8 pm. SF LIVE ARTS (formerly the Noe Valley Music Series) at St. Cyprian's, 2097 Turk. 454-5238; noevalleymusicseries.com.

Feb. 19: ODD MONDAYS hosts readings by a potpourri of writers. 7 pm. Folio Books, 3957 24th. No-host supper, 5 pm. Haystack Pizza, 3881 24th (rsvp jlsender@webtv.net). Call 821-2090 to confirm; oddmondays.com.

Feb. 19: Letizia Mattiacci discusses A Kitchen with a View: SEASONAL RECIPES from Alla Madonna del Piatto Cooking School in Umbria. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

Feb. 21: Tweens and teens can make African BEAD JEWELRY with Chelsea Robinson; space is limited to 20 participants. 3:30-5 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 21: The Noe Valley BOOK DISCUSSION Group talks about The Invention of Nature by Andrea Wulf. 7-8:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 23: HERCHURCH offers a Women's Drumming Circle the fourth Friday of the month. 6-7:30 pm. 678 Portola. 731-2953; herchurch.org.

Feb. 24: The Glen Park Neighborhoods HISTORY Project hosts a walk, "Modern Diamond Heights." 10 am-noon. Meet at George Christopher Playground Amphitheatre, 5210 Diamond Heights. RSVP: glenparkhistory@gmail.com.

Feb. 24: The SF Civic Music Association performs "An Afternoon of CHAMBER MUSIC" at the Noe Valley Ministry. 3-4:30 pm. 1021 Sanchez. sfcivicmusic.org.

Feb. 24: The Noe Valley Town Square hosts SQUARE DANCING with instruction and live music by Skillet Licorice. 3-6 pm. 3861 24th.

Feb. 25: Tenor Brian Thorsett and friends perform at Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC. 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. nvcm.org.

Feb. 25: Community Music Center hosts the 28th annual Pursuit of Excellence CONCERT, featuring outstanding students. 4 pm. 544 Capp. 647-6015; sfcmc.org.

Feb. 25: A NEON WALKING TOUR of the "Market-Mission-Castro" runs from 5:45 to 7:45 pm; start location is given with reservation at neonbook.xyz.

Feb. 27: A discussion of the warning signs of ALZHEIMER'S Disease is presented at the Noe Valley Library from 1:30 to 3 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

Feb. 27: Noe Valley DEMOCRATIC Club meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Social hour 6 pm; program 6:30 pm. 1021 Sanchez. ToddsDavid@gmail.com.

Feb. 27: Vanessa Garcia discusses "Stories from the Bay Area's Last Original Mile House," at the SF HISTORY Association. 7 pm. Congregation Sherith Israel, 2800 California. 881-7342; sanfranciscohistory.org.

Feb. 28: The RESILIENT Diamond Heights work group meets the fourth Wednesday of the month from 3:30 to 5 pm. St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine. 867-5774.

March 1: Ken Albala introduces NOODLE SOUP: Recipes, Techniques, Obsession. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

On the March

The next *Noe Valley Voice* Calendar will appear in the **March 2018** issue, distributed the first week of March. The deadline for items is Feb. 15. Please email calendar@noevalleyvoice.com. Events in Noe Valley receive priority. Thank you.



FEBRUARY EVENTS AT OMNIVORE BOOKS

THU FEB 1	JAMES SYHABOUT & JOHN BIRDSALL • HAWKER FARE: STORIES & RECIPES FROM A REFUGEE CHEF'S ISAN THAI & LAO ROOTS • 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE From chef James Syhabout, an Asian-American cookbook like no other—simple recipes for cooking home-style Thai and Lao dishes.
SAT FEB 3	KYNDRA HOLLEY AND SUZANNE RYAN • CRAVEABLE KETO AND SIMPLY KETO • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • It's a keto-palooza, with two highly respected keto authors taking the stage together at Omnivore.
THR FEB 8	LIZA GERSHMAN • CUBAN FLAVOR: EXPLORING THE ISLAND'S UNIQUE PLACES, PEOPLE, AND CUISINE • 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE, WITH CUBAN SNACKS FROM MEDIA NOCHE! Much more than a cookbook, <i>Cuban Flavor</i> is an introduction to a revolutionary era of Cuban cuisine.
FRI FEB 9	DENISE CLIFTON • TABLES FROM THE RUBBLE: HOW THE RESTAURANTS THAT AROSE AFTER THE GREAT QUAKE OF 1906 STILL FEED SAN FRANCISCO TODAY. 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE • <i>Tables from the Rubble</i> transports readers to San Francisco in the years just after the Great Earthquake of 1906.
SAT FEB 10	DAVID WONDRIK • IMBIBE! AND PUNCH: THE DELIGHTS (AND DANGERS) OF THE FLOWING BOWL • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE, WITH PUNCH! Essential texts for bartenders and cocktail geeks alike.
SUN FEB 11	NICO VERA • PISCO SOCIETY POP-UP AT OMNIVORE BOOKS! 4:00-5:00 P.M. FREE • Learn about the history of Pisco from Peru to San Francisco. Pisco will flow while quantities last.
TUE FEB 13	CARRIE TILLIE • OYSTER: A GLOBAL HISTORY • 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE • Carolyn Tillie delves into the culinary, artistic, sexual, historical, and scientific history of the humble bivalve.
SAT FEB 17	HANNAH KAMINSKY • REAL FOOD, REALLY FAST: DELICIOUS PLANT-BASED RECIPES READY IN 10 MINUTES OR LESS • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • An indispensable guide for hungry cooks of all stripes.
SUN FEB 18	ASHA SHIVAKUMAR • MASALA & MEATBALLS: INCREDIBLE INDIAN DISHES WITH AN AMERICAN TWIST • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • Packed with surprising recipes that are bursting with flavor, and heartfelt stories of growing up in India and then raising a family in the US.
MON FEB 19	LETIZIA MATTIACCI • A KITCHEN WITH A VIEW SEASONAL RECIPES FROM ALLA MADONNA DEL PIATTO COOKING SCHOOL IN UMBRIA • 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE • A collection of over 60 family-friendly recipes from her farmhouse kitchen in the Umbrian mountains above Assisi.

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★ ★ ★ WINTER/SPRING 2018 ★ ★ ★

CITY ARTS & LECTURES

ALL PROGRAMS 7:30PM AT THE NOURSE THEATER, 275 HAYES ST

FEB 8	HILTON ALS <i>WHITE GIRLS • THE NEW YORKER</i>
FEB 21	GEORGE SAUNDERS <i>LINCOLN IN THE BARDO • TENTH OF DECEMBER</i>
FEB 27	JOAN HALIFAX & REBECCA SOLNIT
MAR 8	ROBERT REICH <i>THE COMMON GOOD • SAVING CAPITALISM</i>
MAR 14	ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE with REGINA MCCARTHY
MAR 27	STAND-UP COMEDY & CONVERSATION JIMMY O. YANG <i>SILICON VALLEY (HBO) • HOW TO AMERICAN</i>
MAR 29	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE with KATE CRAWFORD
APR 6	MOHSIN HAMID <i>EXIT WEST • THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST</i>
APR 16	KIM GORDON & CHRIS KRAUS
APR 30	JANET MOCK <i>TRANSGENDER RIGHTS ACTIVIST</i>
MAY 29	THE OPIOID CRISIS with CARL HART & LEANA WEN
MAY 30	MICHAEL ONDAATJE <i>WARLIGHT • THE ENGLISH PATIENT</i>
JUN 4	NIKOLE HANNAH-JONES <i>INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER COVERING RACIAL INJUSTICE</i>
JUN 13	THE GENDER CREATIVE CHILD with DIANE EHRENSAFT

415-392-4400 or CITYARTS.NET



No. 9 cuts outside and looks to pass to a teammate at a soccer match at Upper Noe. *Chris Faust*

Work Off That Holiday Weight

Upper Noe Recreation Center offers exercise for all ages. Many Winter Session classes have plenty of room and are offered on a drop-in basis. Take advantage of fun and free activities to meet up with friends and get back in shape. Looking forward to spring, tee-ball signups are still available at Upper Noe for kids 4 to 6 years old. Visit sfrecpark.org and register for Course #13176.

Spring Session registration begins March 3; summer day camp registration March 17. To get updates on classes, check out the park's newsletter at www.noevalleyrecenter.com. You can also call 415-970-8061 or drop by the rec center office at 295 Day St. The office is open Monday through Saturday.

—Chris Faust, Chair, Friends of the Noe Valley Recreation Center

UPPER NOE REC CENTER WINTER SESSION DEC. 16, 2017 – MARCH 11, 2018
Check www.noevalleyrecenter.com for updates.

MONDAY (Center closed; outside activities only)

TUESDAY (Center open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.)

- Open Gym 6:30-8:30 p.m.*
- Auditorium Free Play 2:30-5 p.m.*
- Petite Bakers (ages 3-6) Drop in or register 10-11 a.m.
- Rec-N-Tot Soccer 10-11 a.m.
- Simply Fun for All 10-11:30 a.m.
- Feldenkrais 1-2 p.m. FREE introduction
- Pickleball (all ages) 1-3 p.m. FREE
- Soccer (ages 5-6) 4-5 p.m.
- QuickStart Tennis (ages 9-11) 5-6 p.m.
- Soccer (ages 9-12) 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Tennis Intermediate/Advanced (18+) 6-7 p.m.
- Yoga - Vinyasa (18+ all levels) 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- Adult Boot Camp 7:45-8:45 p.m.

WEDNESDAY (Center open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.)

- Open Gym 12-3:30 p.m.*
- Auditorium Free Play 3-4 p.m.*
- Pilates intermediate (18+) 9:30-10:30 a.m.
- Pilates beginner (18+) 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Qi Gong for Seniors (55+) 1-3 p.m.
- Coed Flag Football Pee-Wee Division (ages 8-10) 3:30-4:30 p.m.
- Volleyball Girls Beginner (ages 7-9) 4-5:30 p.m.
- Coed Flag Football Senior Division (ages 11-13) 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- Little Kickers (ages 4-7) 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- Karate Kids (ages 6-12) 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Tennis beginner/intermediate (18+) 6-7 p.m.
- Drop-in Volleyball (18+) 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE

THURSDAY (Center open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.)

- Open Gym 6-8:30 p.m.*
- Auditorium Free Play 9:30 a.m.-11 a.m.*
- Petite Bakers (ages 3-6) Drop in or register 10:15-11:15 a.m.
- Pickleball (all ages) 1-3 p.m. FREE
- Argentine Tango, advanced (55+) 1-4 p.m. Drop-ins welcome. FREE
- Theater Mini Players (ages 5-6) 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- Zumba (family) 5:30-6:30 p.m. Drop-in only. FREE
- Yoga - Gentle Hatha (18+) 6:45-7:45 p.m.

FRIDAY (Center open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.)

- Open Gym 12-3:30 p.m.*
- Auditorium Free Play 1-4 p.m.*
- Pilates intermediate (18+) 9:30-10:30 a.m.
- Pilates all levels (18+) 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Volleyball League Girls Intermediate (ages 10-14) 4-5:30 p.m.
- Shred N Butter (ages 6-13) 4:30-6 p.m.
- Karaoke for Adults (18+) 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Drop-in Volleyball (18+) 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE

SATURDAY (Center open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

- Open Gym None
- Auditorium Free Play 12-4:30 p.m.*
- Yoga Vinyasa (18+ all levels) 9:15-10:15 a.m.
- Rec-N-Tot Soccer (ages 2-3) 10-11 a.m.
- Zumba (family) Drop-in only 10:30-11:30 a.m. FREE

SUNDAY (Center closed; outside activities only)

*Hours are subject to change.



C L A S S A D S

Sangetsu Flower Arranging Class: Named for the beautiful Sangetsu-an Teahouse in Hakone, Japan, Sangetsu is one of the newest schools of Ikebana, Japanese flower arranging; its name means "Mountain Moon." Our goal is to arrange flowers joyfully, in a spirit of harmony with nature. Students meet downstairs at the SF Johrei Center, 1322 Portola Drive (just up the hill from West Portal Muni Station). The class is on-going, and meets the first Saturday of each month, 1-3 p.m. There is a sliding scale donation for flowers; no one is turned away for lack of funds. For info and to reserve a place, please call the teacher, Jill Owen at 415-472-0825 or leave a message.

Noe Valley Voice writer needs new home: High rents are squeezing me out, but I want to stay in the Noe Valley area with my gardener wife. Looking for a miracle, a two bedroom home, flat or apartment rental. Thank you! Tim 415-801-5220.

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Creative Cleaning: House or apartment. Call Marlene Sherman 415-375-2980.

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Over 15 Years Pet-Sit Experience: Cats and small animals. 13 years shelter background assisting with medical and behavior support. Dependable, responsible and caring. Noe Valley resident. Kathleen Marie 415-374-0813.

How to Place A Class Ad

Type or print the text of your ad, multiply the number of words by **40¢ per word**, and send us a check for the total. (A phone number, including area code, counts as one word.) Then mail your ad text and payment, made out to the *Noe Valley Voice*, so that we receive it by the **15th of the month** before the month in which you'd like to advertise. The address is *Noe Valley Voice* Class Ads, P.O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. (Sorry, we don't accept Class Ads by phone or email.)

10 for 10 discount: The *Noe Valley Voice* publishes 10 months a year. (We're on vacation in January and August.) If you place the same class ad in 10 issues, you get a 10 percent discount. To figure your cost, deduct 10 percent from the total due for 10 issues. The next *Voice* Class Ads will appear in the **March 2018** issue, distributed in Noe Valley the first week of March. **The deadline for Class Ads is February 15.**

The Class Ads are also displayed at www.noevalleyvoice.com.

Only the first few words of the ad will be set in bold. Also, receipts and tear sheets are provided only if your order is accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Refunds are not granted unless we have made an error.



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Church Street Views

Photos by Art Bodner

Noe Valley is more than downtown 24th Street. Many a sunny and serene destination can be found in the blocks from 24th to 30th Streets where the merchants are relaxed and friendly.

Top: Barons Quality Meats occupies the historic butcher shop location at 1706 Church Street.

Left: Flavorful fruits beckon at Church Produce at the corner of 30th Street at 1798 Church Street.

Above Right: Chuck's Sun Valley Grocery is one of the best "corner stores" in San Francisco and cheers 1601 Church Street.

ADULTS/TEENS

Noe Valley Knitting Circle: Learn how to knit or crochet or improve your skills the first Saturday of every month; the library has supplies to practice on but bring your own if you have a special project in mind. Saturday, Feb. 3; 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Build a Budget with Excel: Microsoft Excel can create budgets, reports, schedules, mailing lists, and more; learn the basics by creating a personal budget. To register for this class, call 415-355-5707. Saturday, Feb. 3; 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

AAC Conversation Club: Alternative and Augmentative Communication devices include Dynavox, QuickTalker, Tobii Sono Flex, Talk Bar, smart phones, and tablet applications. AAC users of all levels can practice the use of the devices by exploring topics and themes. For more information contact Kris Moser at krismoser@aol.com. Mondays, Feb. 5, 12, and 26; 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

eReader and Online Resource “Drop-In”: Bring your mobile device or laptop, your library card and PIN, and any passwords you might need for downloading apps, to an informal workshop on using the SFPL’s digital resources, including the library catalog and databases, Kanopy for streaming films, Flipster and RBDigital Magazines (formerly Zinio) for magazines, OverDrive and Axis360 for eBooks, and Hoopla for movies, music, and audiobooks. Tuesday, Feb. 6; 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Adult Craft Night: Learn how to make a flower bouquet pop-up Valentine’s Day card. Sign up by calling 415-355-5707 or asking at the info desk. Wednesday, Feb. 7; 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Friday Matinee: The library screens the film *Father of the Bride* (1950), starring Spencer Tracy and Elizabeth Taylor. Friday, Feb. 9; 2 to 4 p.m.

I Heart the Noe Valley Library Open House! Share your love for the Noe Valley Library at an open house featuring “Heartfelt Healing Through Creativity, Mindfulness & Motion” with Rachel Fleischman (2 p.m.); music by West African guitarist Jesse Sahbi (4 p.m.); a Self-Serve Selfie Station; a crafts table where you can make a heart pin; and refreshments including heart-shaped cookies, Hershey’s kisses, and pink lemonade. Saturday, Feb. 10, 2 to 5 p.m.

Great Books Discussion Group: Sponsored by the Great Books Council of San Francisco, this group discusses and learns from outstanding works of writing. For more information, contact Elena at eschmid@sonic.net. Wednesday, Feb. 14; 6:15 to 8:15 p.m.

Noe Valley Book Discussion Group: This book group reads a variety of contemporary fiction and nonfiction. Call for this month’s selection; copies of the book are held at the circulation desk for checkout. Wednesday, Feb. 21; 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Alzheimer’s Disease Education: This workshop explains the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer’s disease, the risks associated with the disease, the benefits of early detection, and common procedures after diagnosis. Tuesday, Feb. 27; 1:30 to 3 p.m.

All events take place at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St. between Castro and Diamond streets. For information, call 415-355-5707 or visit www.sfpl.org.

MORE BOOKS TO READ

Why We Love the Library

For more than four decades, librarians from the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library have graciously offered the *Noe Valley Voice* lists of new books, CDs, DVDs, and you-name-it at the branch. This month, librarians Denise Sanderson and Catherine Starr steer us to 28 new arrivals, including a book on cat images in art, an animated film about Van Gogh’s last days, and a story about a horse that became a hero in the Korean War. (See the entire list of books and films below.)

February also brings an opportunity to meet and thank the librarians in person. On Saturday, Feb. 10, from 2 to 5 p.m., the Noe Valley Library will host an open house, “I Heart the Noe Valley Library.” The event will feature crafts and refreshments—cookies, Hershey’s kisses, and pink lemonade. There will also be a free mindfulness session with psychotherapist Rachel Fleischman (2 p.m.), music by West African guitarist Jesse Sahbi (4 p.m.), and a “Self-Serve Selfie Station” open all afternoon. Most importantly, you can tour the 101-year-old Andrew Carnegie building and deck and garden out back.

The branch is at 451 Jersey St.; phone 415-355-5707. The staff says remember to ask about Kanopy, the library’s new streaming service. To visit the San Francisco Public Library online, go to www.sfpl.org. All libraries will be closed on Presidents’ Day, Monday, Feb. 12.

Adult Fiction

• Emily Dickinson, Dorothy from Oz, Peter Pan’s Wendy, and the bride of Edgar Allan Poe appear in stories in *The Emerald Circus* by Jane Yolen.

• In *The Music Shop* by Rachel Joyce, a mysterious woman “with eyes as black as vinyl” changes the life of a music shop’s owner.

• *Scones and Scoundrels* is the second book of the Highland Bookshop mystery series by Molly MacRae.

• An agoraphobic woman believes she has witnessed a crime in a neighbor’s house in *The Woman in the Window* by A.J. Finn.

Adult Nonfiction

• *Cats in Art* by Desmond Morris includes figures and cartoons from pre-historic to present times.

• Amy and Dave Freeman describe life in northern Minnesota in *A Year in the Wilderness: Bearing Witness in the Boundary Waters*.

• *Around the World in 80 Wines: Exploring Wine One Country at a Time*, by Michael Veseth, follows Jules Verne’s itinerary, starting in London.

• DK Publishing’s *Natural Wonders of the World* includes spectacular landmarks from around the globe.

DVDs

• A young man investigates Van Gogh’s last days in the 2017 film *Loving Vincent*, an oil-painted animation.

• *Christopher Kimball’s Milk Street* includes 13 episodes of the PBS series featuring Boston chef and cooking school owner Christopher Kimball.

• The 2017 film *Battle of the Sexes* tells the true story of the 1973 tennis match between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs.

• The 2016 biopic *Jeremiah Tower: The Last Magnificent*, examines the career and influence of the celebrity chef.

eBooks

• Martin Puchner examines literature and storytelling in *The Written World: The Power of Stories to Shape People, History, Civilization*.

• *The Newcomers: Finding Refuge, Friendship, and Hope in an American Classroom*, by Helen Thorpe, follows the lives of immigrant teenagers in a Denver high school.

• In *Spring Garden*, a novella by Tomoka Shibasaki, a woman tells the strange tale of the sky-blue house next door.

• The stories of two families who have lived in the same house intertwine in *A Hundred Small Lessons* by Ashley Hay.

Children’s Fiction

• A family living in an apartment packs to go on a trip in *Fergus Barnaby Goes on Vacation*, written and illustrated by David Barrow. Ages 3 to 5.

• In *Pigeon P.I.*, written and illustrated by Meg McLaren, the feathered detective tracks a kidnapper. Ages 3 to 8.

• A little boy’s shadow pops free and leads other shadows in a day of excitement in *Smoot: A Rebellious Shadow*, written by Michelle Cuevas and illustrated by Sydney Smith. Ages 4 to 7.

• The sequel to *Time for (Earth) School, Dewey Dew, How Do You Say I Love You, Dewey Dew?* is written by Leslie Staub, with illustrations by Jeff Jack. Ages 4 to 8.

• *Thunder Underground*, featuring poems by Jane Yolen illustrated by Josee Masse, explores ancient cities, subways, animal burrows, caves, and tectonic plates. Ages 6 to 10.

CHILDREN’S EVENTS

Artist **Chelsee Robinson** demonstrates how to make **African Bead Jewelry** using real African beads, stones, and tools. For tweens and teens, 20 participants maximum (come early, no pre-registration). All materials provided. Wednesday, Feb. 21; 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Join Miss Catherine for **Toddler Tales**, featuring books, rhymes, music, and movement. For children 16 months through 2 years, with parent or caregiver. Thursdays, Feb. 1, 8, 15, and 22; 10:15 to 10:45 a.m. and 11 to 11:30 a.m.

All events take place at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St. between Castro and Diamond streets. For information, call 415-355-5707 or visit www.sfpl.org.

• *The Dam Keeper*, based on an Oscar-nominated animated film, is a graphic novel written by Robert Kondo and Dice Tsutsumi. Ages 7 to 11.

• Best friends defend their city against monsters from otherworldly planes in *The Adventurers Guild*, written by Zack Loran Clark and illustrated by Nick Eliopoulos. Ages 8 to 12.

• Told entirely through illustrations, *Letters to a Prisoner*, by Jacques Golds-tyn, tells the story of a man arrested during a peaceful protest. Ages 8 to 12.

• Thirteen-year-old Milo spends the winter holidays with strange guests in *Ghosts of Greenglass House*, written by Kate Milford, illustrated by Jaime Zollars. Ages 10 to 14.

Children’s Nonfiction

• Creatures in their infinite variety are examined in *Many: The Diversity of Life on Earth*, by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Emily Sutton. Ages 5 to 8.

• In *Sergeant Reckless: The True Story of the Little Horse Who Became a Hero*, written by Patrick McCormick, illustrated by Iacopo Bruno, a brave mare helps the U.S. Marines during the Korean War. Ages 6 to 10.

• Kari Jones delves into the history of global trade in *A Fair Deal: Shopping for Social Justice*. Ages 8 to 12.

Annotations were penned by Voice bookworm Karol Barske.

BRANCH HOURS

Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library 451 Jersey St., 355-5707						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1-5	12-6	10-9	1-9	10-6	1-6	10-6
Mission Branch Library 300 Bartlett St., 355-2800						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1-5	1-6	10-9	10-9	10-9	1-6	10-6

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By Michael Blake

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N	O	E	B	A	G	E	L	S		V	I	P
D	U	R		G	A	T	E	S		E	A	G
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 Email: actionsfsolidarity@gmail.com
 Meetings: Second and fourth Sunday, 3 p.m., at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St.

Al-Anon Noe Valley
 Contact: 834-9940
 Website: www.al-anonsf.org
 Meetings: Wednesdays, 7:30-9 p.m. St. Philip Church, 725 Diamond St. (park on Elizabeth Street side; enter on 24th Street through parking lot)

Castro/Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association
 Website: www.evna.org
 Address: P.O. Box 14137, SF, CA 94114
 Meetings: See website calendar. Castro Meeting Room, 501 Castro St., 7 p.m.

Diamond Heights Community Association
 Contact: Betsy Eddy, 867-5774
 Address: P.O. Box 31529, SF, CA 94131
 Website: www.dhcasf.org
 Meetings: Second Thursday, 7 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club
 Email: info@doloresheights.org
 Website: www.doloresheights.org
 Meetings: Third Thursday of every second month. Bank of America, 18th and Castro.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)
 Contacts: Deanna Mooney, 821-4045; Diane McCarney, 824-0303; or Sally Chew, 821-6235
 Address: 560 Duncan St., SF, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

Fair Oaks Neighbors
 Email: hello@fairoaksneighbors.org
 Address: 200 Fair Oaks St., SF, CA 94110
 Street fair is the day before Mother's Day.

Fairmount Heights Association
 Contact: Kathy Keller, 912-9365
 Email: Kathy.Keller44@gmail.com
<http://fairmount-heights.org>
 Meetings: Monthly social mixer and discussion, 350 Amber Drive

Friends of Billy Goat Hill
 Contact: Lisa and Mo Ghotbi, 821-0122
 Website: www.billygoathill.net

Friends of Dolores Park Playground
 Contact: Nancy Gonzalez Madynski, 828-5772
 Email: friendsofdolorespark@gmail.com
 Website: www.friendsofdolorespark.org
 Meetings: See website.

Friends of Glen Canyon Park
 Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862, or Jean Connor, 584-8576
 Address: 140 Turquoise Way, SF, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

Friends of Noe Courts Playground
 Contact: Laura Norman
 Email: lauranor@yahoo.com
 Address: P.O. Box 460953, SF, CA 94146
 Meetings: Email for dates and times.

Friends of Noe Valley (FNV)
 Contact: Todd David, 401-0625
 Email: info@friendsofnoevalley.com
 Website: www.friendsofnoevalley.com
 Meetings: Two or three annually; held at St. Philip's Church or James Lick School

Friends of the Noe Valley Recreation Center (Upper Noe Rec Center)
 Contact: Chris Faust
 Email: info@noevalleyrecenter.com
 Website: www.noevalleyrecenter.com
 Meetings: Email or check website.

Friends of 30th Street Senior Center
 Contact: Marianne Hampton, 601-7845
 Address: 225 30th St., SF, CA 94131
 Meetings: Occasional. Call for details.

Friends of Upper Noe Dog Owners Group (FUNDOG)
 Contacts: Chris Faust, David Emanuel
 Email: info@fundogsf.org
 Website: www.fundogsf.org

Glen Park Association
 Contact: info@glenparkassociation.org
 Website: glenparkassociation.org
 Address: P.O. Box 31292, SF, CA 94131

Juri Commoners
 Contact: Dave Schweisguth, M17-6290
 Email: dave@schweisguth.org
 Website: www.meetup.com/Juri-Commoners
 Meetings: Most last Saturdays, 9-noon.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association
 Contact: Dr. Lisa Fromer, president
 Email: efromer3@gmail.com
 Meetings: Quarterly. Email for details.

Merchants of Upper Market and Castro
 Contact: 835-8720
 Email: info@castromerchants.com
 Address: 584 Castro St. #333, SF, CA 94114
 Meetings: Call for details.

Noe Neighborhood Council
 Contact: Ozzie Rohm or Matt McCabe, Co-founders
 Email: info@noeneighborhoodcouncil.com
www.noeneighborhoodcouncil.com
 Meetings: Quarterly at Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St., with date publicized on website and Nextdoor.com.

Noe Valley Association—24th Street Community Benefit District
 Contact: Debra Niemann, 519-0093
 Dispatch: To report spills, debris, or garbage on 24th Street, call Ron Vanini, 596-7089.
 Email: info@noevalleyassociation.org
 Website: www.noevalleyassociation.org
 Board meetings: Quarterly. See website.

Noe Valley Democratic Club
 Contact: Hunter Stern, 282-9042; hls5@ibew1245.com
 Website: noevalleydems.com
 Meetings: Fourth Tuesdays, Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 6:30 p.m.

Noe Valley Farmers Market
 Open Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., 3861 24th St. between Vicksburg and Sanchez.
 Contact: Leslie Crawford, 248-1332
 Email: info@noevalleyfarmersmarket.com

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)
 Contact: Rachel Swann, 225-7743
 Meetings: Last Thursdays, Old Republic, 4045A 24th St., 9 a.m. Call to confirm.
 Website: www.NoevalleyMerchants.com

Noe Valley Parent Network
 An e-mail resource network for parents
 Contact: Mina Kenvin
 Email: minaken@gmail.com

Noe Valley Parents, San Francisco
 Listserv contact: noevalleyparent-owner@yahoo.com. Subscribe: noevalleyparentssubscribe@yahoo.com

Outer Noe Valley Merchants
 Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
 Address: 294 29th St., SF, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

Progress Noe Valley
 Facebook: facebook.com/ProgressNoeValley
 Email: progressnoe@gmail.com
 Website: progressnoe.com
 Meetings: Check Facebook page for current meeting and event schedule.

Residents for Noe Valley Town Square
 Contact: Todd David, 401-0625
 Email: noevalleytownsquare@gmail.com
 Website: www.noevalleytownsquare.com
 Meetings: Call for details.

San Francisco NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Team)
 Contact: Noe Valley NERT Neighborhood Team co-coordinators Maxine Fasulis, mfasulis@yahoo.com; Carole Roberts, carole_roberts@faludi.com
<http://www.sf-fire.org/index.aspx?page=879>
 Meetings: See website for training schedules.

San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets
 Contact: Don Oshiro, 285-8188
 Email: contact@sanjoseguerrero.com
 Website: www.sanjoseguerrero.com
 Meetings: See website.

Stand Up San Francisco
 Contacts: Laura Shapiro, Phyllis Ball, Paul Silverman
 Email: info@standupsf.net
 Website: www.standupsf.net
 Meetings: At offices of members of Congress, weekly. All-group meetings at Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., once a month

Upper Noe Neighbors
 Contact: Olga Milan-Howells, 756-4455
 Email: President@UpperNoeNeighbors.com
 Meetings: Bi-monthly on the third Wednesday of the month. Upper Noe Recreation Center, 295 Day St. Next meeting July 19, 7 p.m.

*All phone numbers are in the 415 area code.

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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

In the Land of Brick and Mortar

By Mazook

CHASING OUR RETAIL: The Noe Valley Merchants & Professionals Association (NVMPA) seems to be at a critical juncture as we enter the new year. Many of the merchant members feel that the group has become more of a “professionals” association, and they point to the dwindling number of retail shops in the commercial corridor along 24th Street from Diamond to Church streets.

It's true. Over the past two decades, there has been an influx of professional businesses, ranging from banks and real estate offices to health care and nail boutiques, offering services from head to toe.

And each year, there have been fewer stores.

Three stores at the top of 24th Street have or will be closed soon, after long runs here in the Valley. Cliché Noe and PastaGina are history, and Noe Valley Cyclery is holding a “Store Closing” sale. The shop will end its 42-year ride in April. (See story on page 15.)

You will note that the rather large new development next door to Cliché Noe (24th near Diamond) will have a commercial unit at street level that will be around 500 square feet. Retail? I doubt it.

If you take a stroll down our Main Street, you will see 14 vacant stores, including the Real Food storefront (empty for 14 years... but who's counting?). You'll also see 11 nail salons and eight real estate offices, though one just departed along with the mortgage lender Opes, on 24th across from Whole Foods. (The landlord is asking a monthly rent of \$8,000.) Noe Valley also has five banks, with a new First Republic opening soon on the corner of Castro and Jersey.

Commercial rents being sought by the property owners for space in our quaint little urban village range from \$4,000 to \$12,000 a month these days, with most shopkeepers paying \$5,000 to \$8,000. The asking rent at PastaGina is \$6,000 a month, I'm told.

The popular Navarrete's Black Belt Academy, which has been occupying the old See Jane Run space (3910 24th) while a seismic retrofit is done at its space at the corner of 24th and Church, has been paying \$7,500 a month. When it moves back the first week of February, See Jane Run will be vacant again and apparently for short-term rental only, because of a seismic retrofit rumored to be in that building's future.

Departing soon (Feb. 13) from the corner of 24th and Chattanooga is the women's boutique The Mill. It is moving to 18th Street near Hartford in the Castro.

The business corridor has many professional offices, some old, some new, including a number of healthcare providers, dentists, and law firms. Among the newer ones is primary care Medical One, which has leased Tuggey's Hardware space and, it seems, closed its office on Sanchez and 23rd. There's also a large GoHealth Urgent Care facility that's being built (after an endless permitting process) in the commercial space on 24th near Church across from Shufat Market. (Shufat and Happy Donuts next door seem to be the only permanent survivors!)

As for retail, longtime merchant Veronica Ruedrich, of Astrid's Rabat Shoes on 24th near Sanchez, thinks 24th Street is losing too many stores. Whatever happened to “See Jane Run, Common Scents, Streetlight Records, the Ark, Joshua Simon, Global Exchange, Ladybug Ladybug, Phoenix Books, or Urban Nest, to name a few,” she asks. “It seems as if small retail stores are being pushed out of the neighborhood, and there are fewer shoppers on the street. I am lucky because I pay a reasonable rent and have a lot of customers who have come here over the years, so I am able to make a living.”

Ruedrich has watched the four retail store spaces across the street from her store be-

come a bank and orthodontics offices, and several storefronts toward Church turn into real estate offices. Two of the former stores across from Rabat—Aveda and GNC vitamin store—were “formula” retail stores (code word for chain). But the two other spots were occupied by Noe Valley Video and a women's boutique called Lisa Violetto.

Sure, I too remember the thrilling days of Herb's Fine Foods, Star Magic, Books Plus, and the Philosopher's Stone, a bookstore that used to have séances in the back on Tuesdays. One day, a few years back, folk legend Pete Seeger stopped by Phoenix Books. Why, I can even remember the days when Chet Helms, founder of Big Brother and the Holding Company, lived in Noe Valley, and when there was a line, rain or shine, at Bud's Ice Cream on the corner of 24th and Castro. But I digress.

Times change. And all that change has created friction—between the merchants, who want more retail stores in the corridor, and the professionals, who are slowly filling the storefronts along 24th Street.



FRICION TURNED TO FIRE when some merchants received a letter from Rachel Swann, a realtor and very popular “doer” in the neighborhood and current president of the NVMPA. (See “Swann Swings Store Association Helm Forward; Energetic Noe Resident Adept at Multitasking,” in the September 2017 *Voice*.)

Swann's letter was addressed to “Friends, Colleagues and Neighbors.” It informed the F, C and N that “in order to occupy our office located in Noe Valley at 3848 24th St., we need to apply for a Conditional Use Permit.... The SF Department of Planning is conducting a pre-application meeting at our office on Thursday, January 11th at 6:00 p.m.” She was seeking their support.

However, many merchants say they did not receive the letter, nor was it shared on the NVMPA's group website.

As you may or may not know, when you are changing the use of a commercial space, you must apply for a permit with the San Francisco Planning Department. The permit process is slow and arduous and usually needs the services of an “expediter.” In this case, Cradle of the Sun was the former occupant of Swann's space—now called The Agency—and the former use was retail.

The Planning Department's file shows that Swann applied for a permit on June 23 of last year to “permit change of use from an existing retail store to a retail store and office,” and then on Dec. 21 she amended her application to change the use “from an existing retail store to a Service, Retail Professional, Retail, and Design Professional.”

Shortly after Swann's letter was distributed, anonymous fliers were posted in Downtown Noe Valley, asking “Have an Opinion? Do you care if another real estate office is on 24th Street? And how many are enough?” The post gave the date and time of the meeting at Swann's office and the Planning Department's phone number.

A sign-in sheet later filed with the Planning Department showed 44 folks were present at the January meeting.

No one from the department attended, but Henry Karnilowicz, president of the San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations, was there and introduced himself as a “volunteer expediter” on Swann's behalf.

Well, as one attendee described it, the meeting quickly “got ugly.” Another said she “was shocked by people's behavior.” Several merchants who attended voiced objections to the proceedings.

Longtime Noe Valley merchant Bill Hoover—Gallery of Jewels owner and a NVMPA board member—said, “The merchants were far outnumbered, by mostly friends and supporters of Rachel, and [we were] surprised that Karnilowicz took over the meeting. It was like walking into a room and being run over by a steamroller.”

Hoover said he wanted to be supportive of Swann's great energy but he was disappointed by the tone of the meeting, which seemed to him to be anti-merchant.

He laments the decline of retail stores along 24th Street, he said.

“The successful neighborhood commercial strips have a multitude of different busi-

nesses that keep the merchants viable like Upper Fillmore, Hayes Valley, and West Portal.” In his view, retail businesses should be encouraged on 24th Street between Castro and Church, with “service businesses off the main drag.”



AFTER THE DUST SETTLED, merchants and professionals continued their discussions both on and off the NVMPA website.

Swann's position remained clear: she wants to expand her space from retail alone to a broader use of professional office and retail. “We have a whole retail line of ‘Agency’ apparel and accessories, which are very popular and sold nationwide online,” she said.

She also wants to stay involved in the community by hosting community meetings at her store and helping organize Noe Valley Town Square activities. She points to the abundance of vacant retail store space across the hill in the Castro. In her eyes, “we need more variety” of uses on 24th Street.

After the meeting, Swann wrote on the NVMPA site: “We just had a pre-application meeting at my office with 60 people there. Only three people did not want us there, and all three were merchants. The residents [who attended] appreciated all the community events that brought them out in the neighborhood and a place to pop in where everyone knew their name.”

Carol Yenne, past NVMPA president, neighborhood activist, and a longtime 24th Street merchant (Small Frys), is a Swann supporter. Although Yenne was not at the meeting, she opined, however, “Our neighborhood has had restrictions on financial institutions, which includes real estate offices, for over 30 years. The zoning for the 24th corridor was put in place to maintain the vibrancy of the retail environment, and studies showed that too many financial institutions, realtors, and other services like medical offices will reduce the foot traffic upon which retailers and restaurants depend. The original zoning set a limitation of three to seven financial institutions for the 24th Street corridor. Now we have many more than that.”

Yenne adds that “just a couple of years ago, Scott Wiener amended the zoning for the Castro and Noe Valley to permit all these financial services to be on the second floors of buildings, where commercial was allowed, ... to encourage them not to take ground-floor retail because of the concern in the Castro, which was having the same issues of too many realtors.”

Merchant activist and NVMPA member (“although I haven't been active for over a year”) David Eiland of Just for Fun says at this point he is indifferent to the debate. “[One of] the big problems is that the ‘formula retail’ stores came on the street and drove all the rents up and then ultimately have left the street.” He cites David's Tea and Radio Shack as recent examples.

Says Swann, “Looking at the bigger picture, what do people [living in the neighborhood] want?”

This should be an interesting spring in Downtown Noe Valley.



SHORT SHRIFTS: Leaving Noe Valley is the S.F. History Association, which held its monthly meetings at St. Philip's. The group outgrew the space, and is moving to the larger-capacity Newman Hall in Sherith Israel at California and Webster streets....

Rumors that Noe activist Todd David was joining the London Breed mayoral campaign are not true. “While I was offered a minor role, I declined and am supporting Mark Leno for mayor,” he says. The Noe Valley Democratic Club, of which David is president, hosted a meet and greet for the mayoral candidates on Jan. 31 (after we went to press). David said as of Jan. 30, 2,000 people on the club's Facebook page had said they were “interested” in going to the event, so he might have to move it from the Noe Valley Ministry to the Town Square....

Rumors that a new team has taken over at Le Cupboard on Church and 25th and will serve dinner seem greatly exaggerated—the sign still says “Closed”....

Rumors are true that a new Japanese restaurant called Seokyo will open in Upper Noe Valley at 1740 Church at Day Street. Seokyo will take over for a long line of sushi

restaurants, including Taku Sushi, Noe Sushi, Tataki South, Deep, and Deep Sushi....

Several sources have confirmed the rumor that Hamlet, the bar on the corner of 24th and Church, will become a Japanese eatery as well....

No reply to inquiries as to the fate of Real Food Company, a sale of which should come by spring. Sure.

Very Noe were the five cookbooks in the window of Omnivore, at Cesar Chavez at Church, and a sign that read, “President Trump called these ‘shithole countries.’ Learn about them....”

Noe Valley is rumored to be the most popular destination in San Francisco for Airbnb lodgings....

Congrats to Chocolate Covered for being named “Best Sweets/Chocolate Shop” in the *San Francisco Bay Guardian's* 2017 Best of the Bay awards. Other winners were Ambiance for best women's clothes, Glen Park's Manzoni's Restaurant for best Italian food, Mitchell's for best ice cream, and Shoe Biz for best shoe stores....

In the “Best Masters of Mysteries” category, very mysteriously the San Francisco Mystery Bookstore won, despite its having closed back in 2011. (The paper later removed the category from its website.) The bookstore used to occupy the space at 4175 24th, where Cliché Noe just closed its doors....

Kudos go out to Markos Major and Climate Action Now! They raised \$265,000 for a garden created and planted at James Lick Middle School, which will have 60 species of plants, an organic vegetable garden, and a “Dinosaur Garden” with plants that do well in air with high carbon dioxide. The grand opening is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 10, 11 a.m., at 1220 Noe St.



DIAMOND HOPES: By the way, Donahue Schriber Realty Group has acquired the Diamond Heights Shopping Center, our closest retail mall, for \$48 million. The Southern California-based firm said in a press release it is “focused on enhancing the already strong lineup of existing merchants” at the center, which, as you know, currently includes a Safeway, a Walgreens, the BofA, a vet hospital, post office, and several restaurants and small shops.

DS is a private real estate investment trust, specializing in “necessity-based retail.” It manages 82 shopping centers in California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. But this is its first shopping center in San Francisco. You can find out more at the Feb. 6 meeting of the Diamond Heights Community Association, 7 p.m., at the SF Police Academy, 350 Amber Drive.



HOT FLASHES from Washington, D.C., have caused signups in front of the Noe Valley Farmers Market for the national group Swing Left, whose goal is “to take back the House in 2018 by channeling the energy of volunteers across the country into targeted competitive local races.” According to Noe Valley's Beatrice von Schulthess, over 700 Noe Valleons (and/or other neighborhood pedestrians) have asked to be put on the mailing list. About 100 attended the group's last meeting at the Page Street Public Library.

“We in San Francisco are focusing on Congressional District 10, with a focus on Modesto, Tracy, and Turlock, where there are seven Democratic candidates running in the June primary who want to unseat the very conservative Republican Jeff Denham.”

The San Francisco group is canvassing and getting voters registered in this district, where 40 percent of the population is Latino.

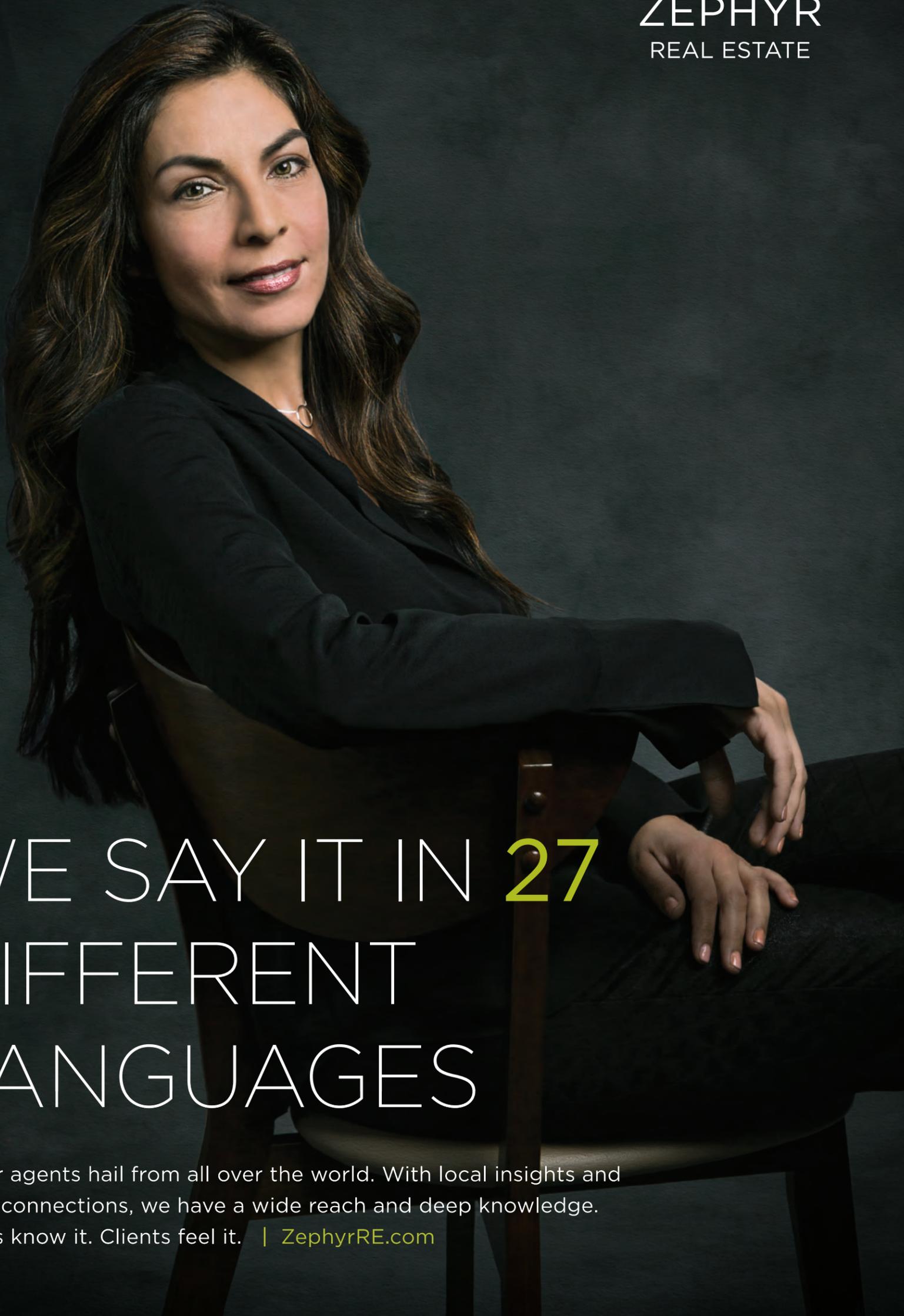
Says von Schulthess, “When I am involved like this, I feel I'm being part of the solution, and a welcome relief from the daily terrible news.”



THAT'S ALL, YOU ALL: Send all your comments on any of the foregoing in an email to editor@noevalleyvoice.com, so you can be part of the discussion and hopefully the solution. Ciao for now. ■



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