



# THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

## Loewenberg Moves From Music to Museum

A Remodeled Randall Museum Is Not Just a Place for Toddlers

By Matthew S. Bajko

The nine years she served as executive director of Noe Valley Chamber Music, Tiffany Loewenberg worked out of her Eureka Street home. She shared her office space with her husband and their three kids, plus a brood of chickens housed in their back yard.

Today, her menagerie of officemates has significantly grown to include not only half a dozen professional colleagues but also a raccoon, a barn owl, a Swanson’s Hawk, various amphibians, fish, and insects. The number of children passing through her workspace is now many times larger.

Her new cacophonous office environment is a result of Loewenberg’s having been hired in August as executive director of Randall Museum Friends. The booster group fundraises on behalf of the Corona Heights facility, owned by the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department.

“I was looking for a change,” said Loewenberg, who for seven years on most Saturday mornings would frequent the museum with her oldest son, Noah, who is now 18. “The bunnies chewed on his first shoelaces.”

It was their interactions with the chickens

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



**Tiffany’s New Friend.** Tiffany Loewenberg often walks to her new job as executive director of Randall Museum Friends, where she gloves up and provides a perch to feathered friends such as this barn owl.

Photo by Beverly Sharp

## SFMTA Keeps Pushing for J-Line Efficiency

Neighbors Oppose Removal of Stop at Church and 30th Streets

By Matthew S. Bajko

Standing next to the northbound 30th Street J-Church stop, retired Muni operator Will Segen points out how trains traveling on the line headed to downtown San Francisco have to make multiple stops within a few blocks. As the trains approach Church Street, they are required to come to a halt at a stop sign mere feet from the entrance to Café XO.

As soon as they turn right onto Church, the J trains stop to pick up passengers. Then the trains must stop again at the intersection with Day Street.

Once through the stop, the trains may need to stop a third time in order to pick up a disabled rider using the ramp built into the roadway on the other side of the Day Street intersection. The next stop is mere feet away at the Church and 29th Street intersection, where the J also picks up passengers.

With so many stops near each other, transit planners for years have eyed removing the inbound 30th Street stop as part of their plans to speed up service on the notoriously slow line. Seven years ago, they had floated the idea, since they noted the J-Church also stops a block away

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



**The View in the 1930s.** The developing site of Douglass Playground, seen here in a photo taken from Douglass and 27th streets, shows newly planted trees and the early configuration of the park’s lower terrace, with tennis courts near the entrance at 26th Street.

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

## Douglass Playground From Top to Bottom

Two-Tier Park Carved Out of a Rock Quarry

By Christopher Pollock

Whether you’re a Noe Valley resident with two legs or four, chances are you’re familiar with Douglass Playground, Noe Valley’s largest park, running along Douglass Street from Clipper to 27th Street. But what was the property before dogs frolicked on the park’s upper terrace and kids on the lower playground?

Back in the 1890s, George and Harry Gray, two siblings with less than sterling reputations, owned the property, which they used as a quarry—one of four they owned in the city. They dynamited the hillside to harvest “hard, blue-grained metamorphic sandstone.” (Some of the stone was used to build McLaren Lodge in Golden Gate Park.) However, after an uncontrolled blast killed a worker in 1917, the Blue Rock Quarry at 26th and Douglass was closed.

In March of 1922, the Gray Brothers company filed with the city to reopen it. But objections by residents forced the Streets and Fire Committees of the Board of Supervisors to reject the petition. With

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13





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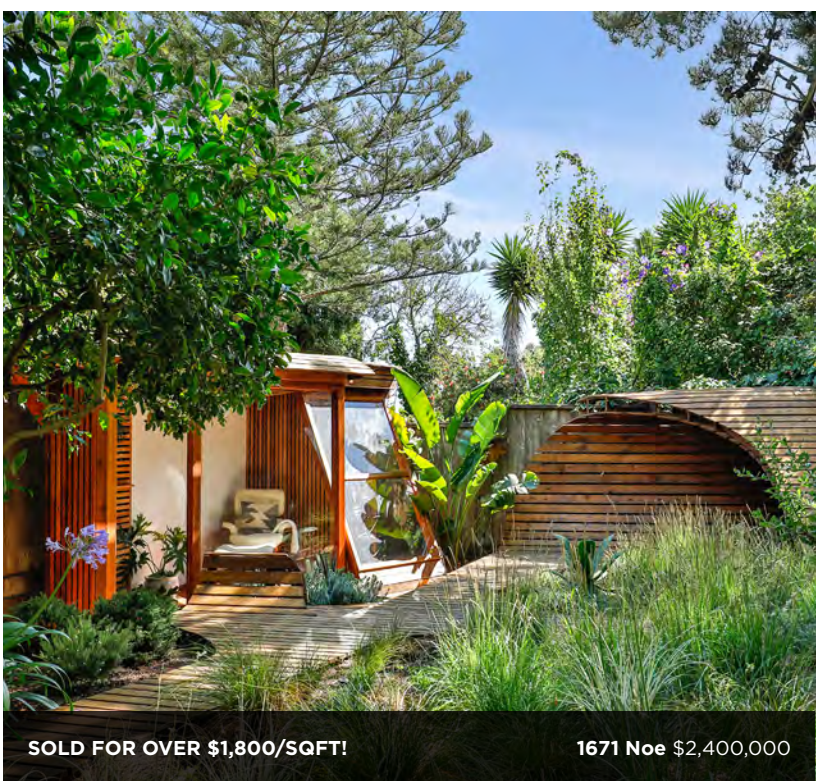
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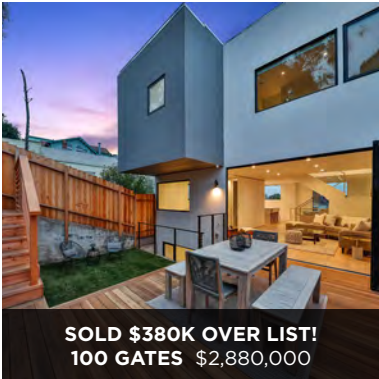
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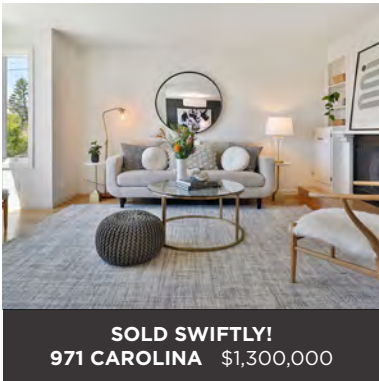
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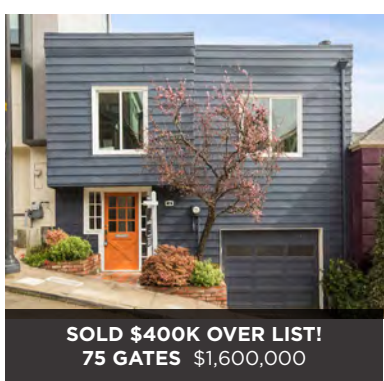
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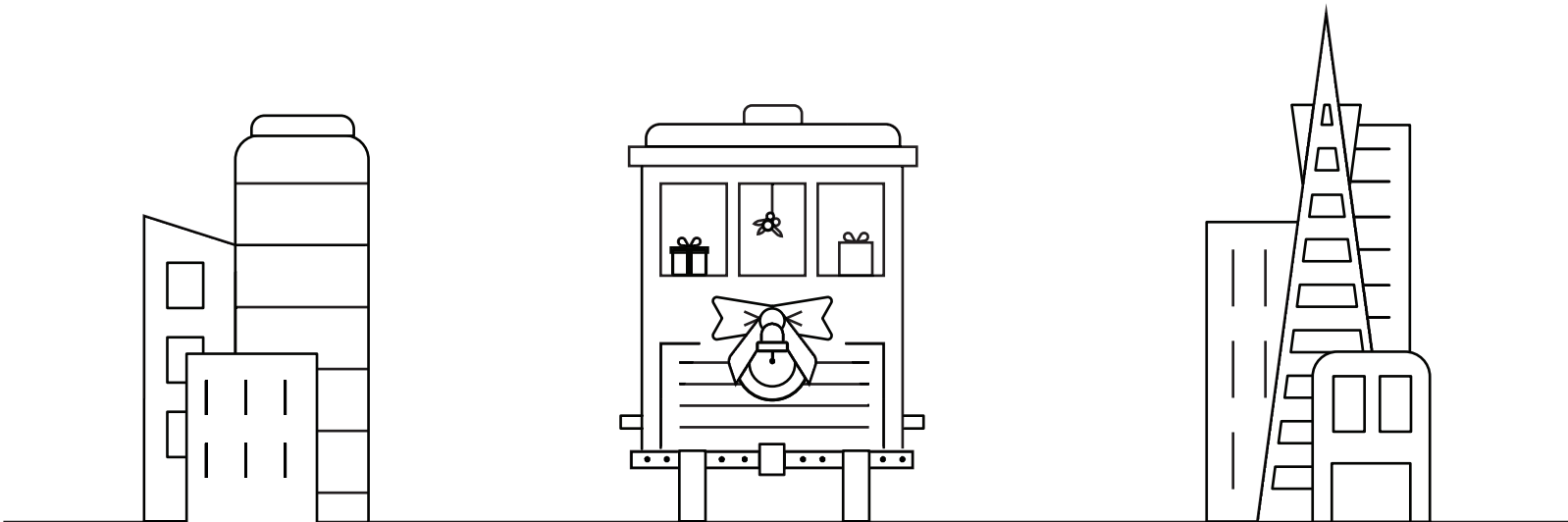
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**THE NOE VALLEY VOICE**  
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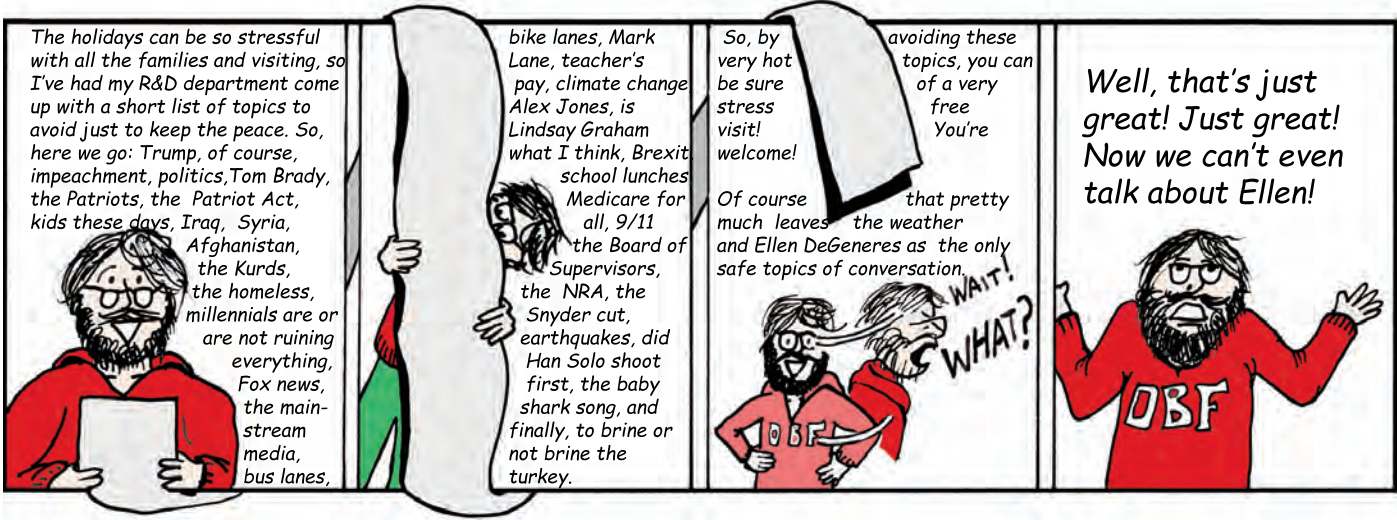
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THE CARTOON BY OWEN BAKER-FLYNN



LETTERS

Time to SurfVideo Wave  
Editors:

While it is heartbreaking to read of any passion-driven business being ground into dust by rising rents, it is especially cruel to see this happen to Video Wave [“Film Director Rushes in to Help Save Video Wave,” November 2019 *Voice*].

Colin Hutton’s cinematic curiosity shop is one of the last bastions of unique Noe Valley culture, stubbornly holding us back from our reincarnation as a foggy, less car-friendly carbon copy of Palo Alto.

I wish I could imagine a brighter future for our neighborhood, driven by brave, principled, artistically-minded people like Colin, but alas the psychic fog of late-stage VC-funded capitalism is impenetrable.

The only establishments capable of

survival either cater directly to rich people’s babies or to rich people’s baby brains, which, with every need fulfilled by their employers, can find value only in shops that accommodate their desires for overpriced sweet treats or for making themselves look pretty. Oh, and real estate offices. You can apparently never have enough of those.

When Video Wave is gone and its tiny storefront replaced by another dead-eyed Valencia Street derivative (\$15 boba? \$400 Danish-inspired potato sack dresses? An essential oil/novelty hummus emporium?), the walk down 24th Street will be conspicuously more grim. Until then, I’ll see you in the Wave’s shelves.

Stephen Michael  
Clipper Street

Stop Stalling Electric Cars  
Editors:

Thank you for the article regarding the sorry state of electric vehicle charging options in our neighborhood [“No Haven for Electric Cars in Noe Valley,” November 2019 *Voice*].

Like the residents you quoted, I have been frustrated by the city’s lackadaisical pace in addressing this issue.

The city is behaving as if it’s run by hypocrites, loudly proclaiming their desire to push forward a green energy future while doing so little to bring it about. As but one example, Berkeley has had a simple program in place since February of 2018, allowing city residents without garages to install, at their own expense, curbside EV charging. When I asked the City of San Francisco about this simple step, nearly two years ago, I got a nice letter explaining how complicated it all was, and inviting me to attend public meetings.

This is embarrassing. The city should take simple steps, like those of other progressive Bay Area cities, to make electric vehicle charging easy. That’s how we truly build a green energy future.

William Wehrle  
21st Street

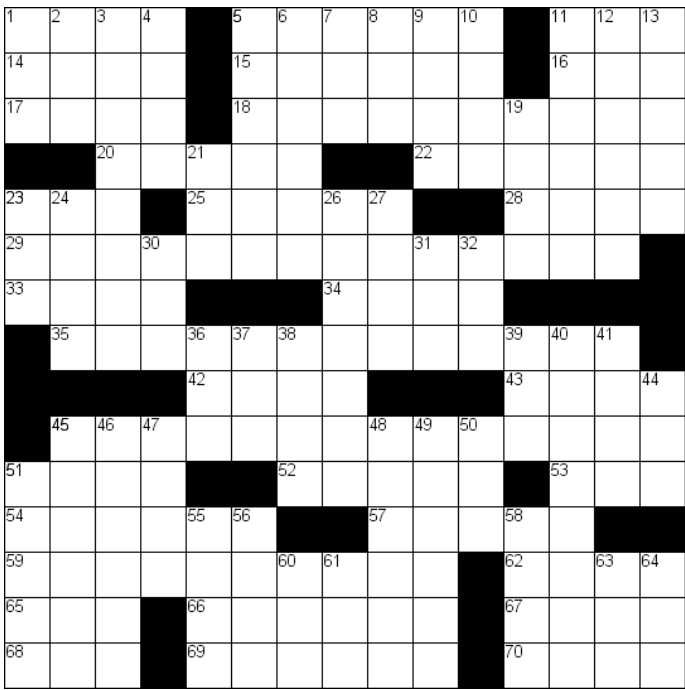


THE CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

Dining Out Repeatedly

ACROSS

- Like most colleges, but not Mills College
- Snoozing
- Mayberry
- “Hi, Pedro!”
- Dumplings at Henry’s Hunan
- Tide rival
- Essayist’s newspaper piece
- Crepe-and-salad place on 24th
- Congressional TV channel
- Weakest, as excuses
- Go (for)
- Got by
- Quaker product
- Comfort-cuisine place on 24th
- Toss, as a coin
- Pet peeve?
- Where, on 24th Street, the restaurants in this puzzle get chairs and tables
- Alto, CA
- Lowly serf
- Upscale pizzeria on Church
- Jai
- Improvised remark
- Chi. winter clock setting
- Not quite as much
- Exclamation of frustration
- Homemade-pasta eatery on Diamond
- Dublin’s land
- Caesar’s eggs
- Christmas tree decoration
- Defeat decisively
- Eponym of an SF diner



- Stadium cheer (that fits well in this puzzle)
- “Drinks are \_\_\_\_!”
- Funnywoman Margaret
- Alley
- Like some blankets
- Root beer brand
- Attack
- Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram*
- Adore, on candy hearts
- Comic Phillips
- Downton Abbey* title
- Galileo’s city
- “Key” crossword entry, like 35-Across in this puzzle
- Fictional snowman
- Pastime at the Dubliner
- “I \_\_\_\_ the opinion

- that...
- Adobe document suffix
- Switch position
- “Thick” carpet descriptor
- Designed for rough terrain
- Brickmaker’s oven
- N.T. book after Gal.
- Big name in outdoor gear
- Have a bite
- Nail polish brand with a Katy Perry collection
- Air traffic control org.
- Arm bone
- Longtime inits. in newswires
- What’s equal and opposite in a Newton law
- Ages and ages
- “King” Cole

- Take \_\_\_\_ of absence
- Our Gang member
- CD part
- Chinese eatery on Sanchez (for just once?)
- Cough drop brand
- Business name alias: Abbr.
- Tuesdays With Morrie* author Mitch
- Annual presidential address, for short
- Geishas’ sashes
- “Fiddling” Roman emperor
- Palindromic woman’s name
- Chico or Fresno campus inits.
- Bacardi product
- Nice season

Solution on Page 24  
Find more Crosswords at  
[www.noevalleyvoice.com](http://www.noevalleyvoice.com)

Dear Noe Valley  
Grade School  
Teacher,

I wish you the happiest of birthdays  
near the end of December!

From Napa Valley to Noe Valley,  
whether I’m with you,  
or whether I’m not,  
you’re always in my heart!

Love,  
Dad



# NOE VALLEY MINISTRY

Presbyterian Church, USA 415-282-2317  
1021 Sanchez St., between 23rd & 24th



Sunday Worship: 10:30 am    Childcare provided  
Rev. David Brown, Pastor

## Advent Taize Service

Sunday, December 15, 10:30 am  
A Worship Service of Music and Prayer



## Labyrinth Walk

Thursday, December 19, 6 pm  
A Candle-lit Meditation with Quiet Music

## Community Carol Sing

Friday, December 20, 6 pm  
Music for Kids and Grownups!

## Music for the Soul Sunday

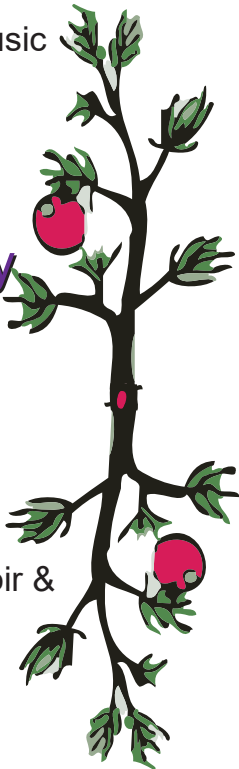
December 22, 10:30 am  
A Jazzy Advent with  
The Dave Scott Band

## Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 24, 5 pm  
Candle-lit Service of Lessons and  
Carols, With Noe Valley Ministry Choir &  
Guest Musicians

## New Year's Eve Service

Tuesday, December 31, 6 pm  
"A Time to..."  
Meditative Service for "Letting Go"  
Service of Rededication  
[www.noevalleyministry.org](http://www.noevalleyministry.org)



# St. Philip the Apostle Church

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## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Eve -Tuesday, December 24, 2019  
*Vigil of Christmas*

Children's/Family Mass: 4:00 p.m.  
Christmas Carols: 7:30 p.m.  
Solemn Mass: 8:00 p.m.

Christmas Day - Wednesday, December 25, 2019  
Masses: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 29, 2019  
*Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph*  
Masses: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, January 1, 2020  
*Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God*  
9:00 a.m.

Sunday, January 6, 2020  
*Epiphany of the Lord*  
Masses: 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.



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a very blessed and joy-filled Christmas Season  
and happy and prosperous New Year



Christmas Eve  
Tuesday, December 24, 2019  
Sacrament of Reconciliation  
11:00 am — Noon

Christmas Vigil Masses  
4:30 pm with Pageant & Choir  
8:00 pm with Adult Choir

Christmas Day  
The Nativity of the Lord  
Wednesday, December 25, 2019  
9:15 am and 11:00 am in English  
12:15 pm en Español

New Year's Day  
Wednesday, January 1, 2020  
The Solemnity of Mary  
Mass 9:15 am in English

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# Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church



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## Christmas Services:

### Christmas Eve, December 24

Family Service at 4:30 pm  
Storytelling, Carols & Communion  
Candlelight Communion Service at 7:30 pm  
Carols & Festive Music

### Christmas Day, December 25

Carols & Communion at 9:00 am

## Weekly Services:

### Sunday Communion

8:00 am and 10:00 am  
Sunday School & Childcare Available  
at 10:00 am

### Wednesday Communion at 6:00 pm

### Morning Prayer

Monday, Wednesday, Friday at 7:30 am

### Contemplative Prayer

Tuesday, Thursday at 9:00 am

All Are Welcome, Including Companion Animals

## Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church

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# Loewenberg and Friends Helping Randall Take Flight

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

housed at the Randall Museum that prompted the family to tend to their own flock. By chance they went to the Noe Valley Farmers Market one Saturday and ran into two children who were moving back to France and needed someone to adopt their chickens.

“Because of our visits to the museum, I thought we could have our own chickens,” recalled Loewenberg, who is married to Todd David, a leader of various Noe Valley neighborhood groups and executive director of the San Francisco Housing Action Coalition.

A lover of animals and long an advocate for children and families, Loewenberg sees her job as a perfect fit with her personal interests. She is one of two full-time staffers employed by Randall Museum Friends, and works alongside Nathan Robinson, its administrative director since 2003.

“I get so excited here,” said Loewenberg, as she and Robinson showed off their workspace in early November. “It has been phenomenal to come here for work. I walk over as often as I can here. I am loving it. Getting a chance to work with the staff and see things from the other side has been a wonderful experience for me.”

### New STEM Lab, Cafe

The facility is named after Josephine Randall, the city’s first Superintendent of Recreation. A main goal of hers was to create a nature museum for children, which she achieved in 1937 by turning the



Tiffany Loewenberg wants people to come meet this 9-year-old barn owl, which was rescued at a young age because it was found with broken wings. The nocturnal bird is one of more than 100 animals in the exhibit “Wild in California” now at the Randall Museum. Photo by Beverly Tharp

city’s old jail on Ocean Avenue into a “Junior Museum.” A decade later Randall was a key proponent of a \$12 million bond earmarked for recreation capital projects that included constructing a new museum.

The money enabled the city to buy the 16-acre hilltop site in Corona Heights and create a park adjacent to the Randall Museum, which has been located at 199 Museum Way since 1951. It reopened in February 2018 after a \$9 million top-to-bottom remodel of the building.

“I was floored when I saw the re-

model,” said Loewenberg.

The renovation project resulted in new features throughout the museum, including a state-of-the-art STEM lab, geology and zoology exhibits, an elevator, and a cafe, as well as updates to the live animal exhibits, science and ceramics studios, classrooms, and the first floor lobby. It also allowed the model train set up in the basement to be accessible to the public whenever the building is open.

“It was the largest renovation in the history of the museum,” noted Robinson. “It brought it up to the next level. There

is now 30 percent more programmable space and a better circulation path through the building.”

The friends group dates back to 1954, when a group of supporters formed a ladies tea auxiliary in order to benefit the museum. It incorporated into a nonprofit in 1956, but it wasn’t until 2007 that the group entered into a formal partnership with the city’s Rec and Park Department, said Robinson.

The partnership was renewed in 2017

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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## A Wild Job in the Heart of the City

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

for another nine years. Randall Museum Friends has a current budget of \$750,000, an increase of \$250,000 from the previous fiscal year.

There are 550 members of the group. Annual memberships cost from \$65 to \$2,500, and come with benefits like discounts on classes and camps, advance registration, and access to special events. The money raised by Randall Museum Friends is used to augment the class offerings and other services offered at the museum, which is run on a day-to-day basis by the rec and park staff.

“It allows the museum to expand its programming to seven days a week,” said Robinson. “We get a lot of bang for our buck.”

A major part of Loewenberg’s job is ensuring that city residents know about all of the programming offered at the museum, including the myriad classes and opportunities for adults. Offerings run the gamut from ceramics classes and telescope making to taxidermy and learning how to use a laser cutter.

“My job is to make sure we are known not just as a kids’ museum,” said Loewenberg. “It is not just a beautiful place to bring your toddler. We are such a community jewel and a community resource.”

### Parents and Kids Side by Side

In addition to the adult and youth classes offered at the museum, there are family classes, where parents and their children can learn side by side.

“It is for kids of all ages. It is what is unique about what we do here,” said Loewenberg. “It is side-by-side learning,

which is so old school. It is not what people normally do anymore.”

For the last 16 months, Corona Heights resident David Salem has regularly brought his grandson to the museum. The outdoor patio, with its views of the cityscape, bay, and East Bay hills, is one of the nicest viewpoints in the state, he said.

“This place is just a treasure,” said Salem.

### Free Admission

Loewenberg aims to keep it in such high regard as she works on expanding the friends group’s ability to offer classes not just at the site but offsite in neighborhoods across the city. She also wants to boost donations in order to provide free classes or financial aid to students whose families are struggling financially.

“The board and I are thinking of strategic partnerships to bring this organization to the next level. We have an opportunity, now that we have done all this, to look at what’s next,” said Loewenberg. “We want to bring our programming citywide and make the Randall Museum more than just a neighborhood treasure.”

The Randall Museum’s animal exhibits and educational displays are open to the public free of charge Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Museum space can be rented for birthday parties, weddings, or other events most days of the week.

For more information about the offerings at the Randall Museum, visit its website at [randallmuseum.org](http://randallmuseum.org). ■

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Noe Valley Voice welcomes your letters. Email [editor@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:editor@noevalleyvoice.com). Please include your name and contact information. Letters may be edited for brevity.

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# Move J Stop to 30th, Say Residents

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

at 30th and Dolores streets. Nonetheless, the removal of the 30th and Church stop has been vehemently opposed by nearby residents and merchants. A headline in the July/August 2012 issue of the *Voice* blared, “Idea to Drop J-Stop at 30th Street a Non-Starter.”

### Put J Stop at 24 Bus Stop?

Now the stop’s days could be numbered. As part of its J-Church Improvement Project, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency has proposed doing away with the stop. The idea continues to be met with wide opposition from the neighborhood.

“It doesn’t make sense to take away the 30th Street stop,” argued Segen, who operated both Muni’s cable cars and the J-Church line in the late 1960s through 1975. “They could move the stop to where the stop sign is and [where] the trains already have to stop.”

After all, Segen pointed out, there is already a red zone at that stop sign on 30th Street because it is a stop for inbound 24-Divisadero buses. Living near that stop, Segen will often take the bus to the Castro Muni Station if he needs to get downtown and it will be a long wait for a J train. “It is a transfer point,” he said, arguing that the better J-Church stop to remove is the one at Church and 29th Street. “The 29th Street stop shouldn’t be there.”

Other residents agree that the SFMTA should combine the J-Church 30th Street stop with the bus stop for the 24-Divisadero line. They question how its removal will have any impact on the goal of speeding up the J-Church line and worry it will negatively impact the busi-

nesses in the area. “It slows the time down maybe a couple minutes, but it removes street traffic in the Upper Noe business district. It is not a fair tradeoff to get rid of that stop,” said Christopher Faust, vice president of the Upper Noe Neighbors association.

Like Segen, Faust doesn’t understand why the J-Church trains can’t load and offload passengers where the 24-Divisadero buses stop. He also noted that seniors headed to the nearby 30th Street Senior Center used the 30th Street stop.

“The train cars have to stop on 30th at the bus stop where there is a stop sign. It doesn’t cause any problems when the buses pick up and drop off passengers there,” said Faust. “This is an easy fix. We have talked about this at every single meeting we have had with the SFMTA, and they just ignore it.”

### SFMTA Cites Survey

In response to questions, SFMTA spokeswoman Erica Kato said combining the bus and train stops “is possible, but the stop spacing would still be very close, and the travel time benefits would be less than removing the stop.”

She pointed out that based on the responses to a survey the SFMTA had people fill out earlier this year, an overwhelming majority supported the tradeoff of stop removals for faster trains. (It did not ask specifically about removing the 30th Street stop.) Almost 80 percent of the 825 survey respondents said they would walk an extra block “for faster, more reliable transit service.”

“SFMTA’s stop-spacing policy seeks to balance access to stops with efficient movement of transit. For light-rail lines, our guidance is approximately 900 to 1,500 feet between stops,” explained Kato. “We also take other factors into account, such as local land uses and major trip generators. If the 30th Street stop was

moved to the near side of 30th and Church, it would be less than 700 feet from the nearest stop at 30th and Dolores. By removing the stop, trains can move through more efficiently and get people where they’re going faster.”

She noted that transit planners would take into account the public’s feedback about the proposed changes to the J-Church line as they finalize the improvement plan. The agency expects to hold a public hearing on the proposals, said Kato, before presenting a final list of changes to the SFMTA board sometime in February or March for approval.

### Supervisor Asking Why, Too

District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman told the *Voice* that he is among those questioning why the 30th Street stop for the J-Church can’t be co-located with the 24-Divisadero bus stop.

“I also want to know why they can’t do the stop at the stop sign,” said Mandelman, who agreed that the current configuration doesn’t make sense. “As it is functioning now, there is a stop and then a block away the J stops again. That is ridiculous.”

The other quick fixes SFMTA has proposed for speeding up the J line have not generated as much opposition. Among those are timing several traffic signals along Church Street to benefit the trains and turning the four-way stop at Cesar Chavez and Church Street into a traffic light stop.

Transit planners are also reviewing whether J-Church trains could travel faster than the current 25 miles per hour along San Jose Avenue enroute to and from the Glen Park BART Station stop. And they are looking to install a number of safety improvements, such as improved buffer zones at stops and removing parking spaces at certain stops, which the SFMTA refers to as “daylighting.”

“The near-term improvements could reduce travel time between 30th and Market Street by about 5 percent. This travel time savings would be invested into providing more leeway in the schedule, which will improve reliability,” said Kato.

### Many Pieces to Puzzle

J-Church trains, which carry 17,000 riders on weekdays, should arrive every 9 to 10 minutes on weekdays and less frequently on weeknights—every 15 to 20 minutes—and every 12 minutes on weekends. But J trains are adhering to the schedule only 75 percent of the time.

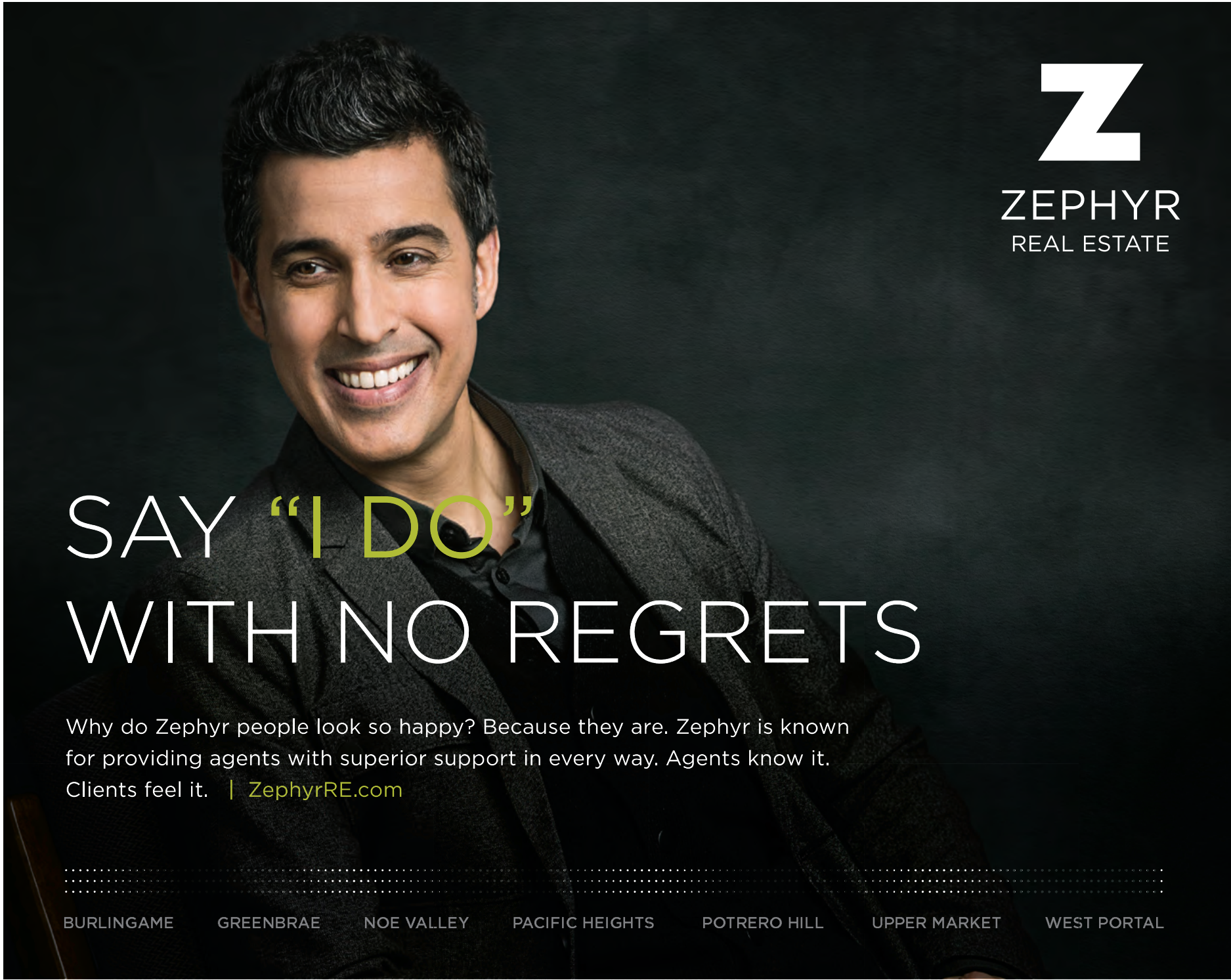
Myriad issues cause delays on the line, as the *Voice* pointed out in a story in the October issue. Any backup in the underground subway tunnel running below Market Street will ripple across Muni’s train lines.


And because the J-Church travels on surface streets after coming above ground behind the Safeway shopping center on upper Market Street, it is often slowed down by the numerous stop signs along Church Street. Several stops along the route in Liberty Hill require the transit agency to run only a single two-car train on the line because there would be no safe way for passengers to disembark from additional cars.

The SFMTA is working with several other agencies to renovate the bathroom at the Embarcadero Station to make train operators’ bathroom breaks “more efficient.” It also has a pilot under way to speed up how J-Church trains turn around at that station, and in the spring the agency plans to address trains bunching or falling behind schedule.

Most J-Church riders expressed few concerns to the *Voice* about the majority of the fixes the transit agency was looking to implement. Instead, they ques-

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# Debate Over J Line

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

tioned whether the changes were too little to help improve service on the line.

Walt Knoepfel, a Noe Valley resident since 1977, regularly takes the J-Church to get downtown. Asked if he thought the proposed changes would result in speedier service, he replied, “Not one iota. It really is all about safety and nothing about speeding it up.”

Frank Weigel, who has lived in Noe Valley for a decade, said he has stopped taking the J-Church inbound in the morning to commute to his IT job in downtown San Francisco. Instead, he will take a train headed outbound to the Glen Park BART Station and transfer there in order to catch a subway train downtown.

“The J-Church in the morning is a dis-

aster,” said Weigel, who also avoids using it to return home at night. “I will take BART to the 24th Street Station and get either the 14-Mission or the 49-Quintara bus. Both stop near where I live, so I can walk home within five minutes.”

Like other J-Church riders in Noe Valley, Weigel questioned what the benefit would be in getting rid of the 30th Street inbound stop. “I don’t know if removing that stop will do anything,” he said. “It takes maybe a minute for people to get off and on there.”

Additional, more expensive fixes for the J-Church line are under consideration as part of the SFMTA’s longer-term Muni Forward initiative. The current plan, said Mandelman, “has to be the start not the end for improvements on the J.”

To learn more about the coming changes, visit [www.sfmta.com/projects/j-church-improvement-project](http://www.sfmta.com/projects/j-church-improvement-project). ■

# CBD Renewal Passes First Stage

Fate of Noe Benefits District Will Be Known in January

By Matthew S. Bajko

The fate of the Noe Valley Association will be known Jan. 28, as the San Francisco Board of Supervisors has scheduled a vote that Tuesday on whether to renew the community benefit district for another 15 years.

One of the first such entities in the city, the Noe Valley Association CBD won approval to form in 2004. It was established to provide services along 24th Street (and parts of side streets), such as routine sweeping and power-washing of the sidewalks.

The association also planted myriad trees, installed hanging flower baskets, and provided street furniture such as benches and chairs for the public parklets along the corridor. The cleaning services and other amenities are paid for by a relatively inexpensive surcharge assessed on each property within the CBD’s boundaries.

As the *Voice* noted in September, the CBD is now looking to shrink in size by removing the properties at the intersec-

tion of 24th and Douglass streets, including the city-owned Noe Courts Park, from the benefit zone, since there is less foot traffic in that area. It does not intend to increase the tax that property owners will need to pay, which varies by lot size and can run from several hundred dollars annually to thousands of dollars for the larger parcels.

The new 15-year renewal of the CBD is dependent on support from property owners. The first step in the process was a ballot mailed out in October to owners of the 244 properties covered by the CBD. An affirmative vote was needed from property owners who accounted for more than 30 percent of the assessed fees, which amounted to \$266,060 in 2019.

According to the Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development, the first vote received 33.28 percent weighted support. (Not all ballots were returned.) Now a second ballot is being mailed out to the property owners. It must receive 50 percent weighted support for renewing the CBD.

The city’s elections director will open and tabulate the ballots after the supervisors take public comment at the January hearing. If the majority vote threshold is met, then the supervisors are expected to adopt the CBD’s new boundaries, management plan, and extension through June 30, 2035. ■



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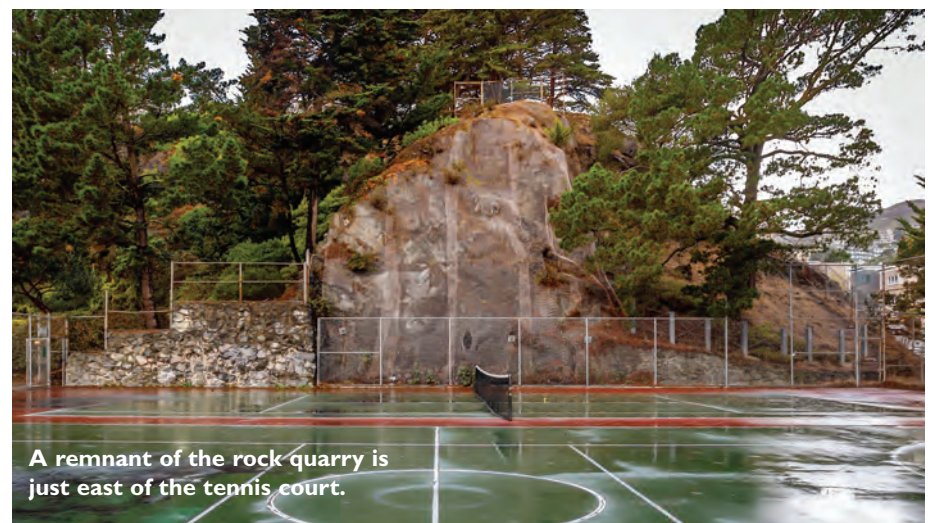




## Douglass Playground



Photos by Art Bodner



A remnant of the rock quarry is just east of the tennis court.

## The Evolution of a Park Carved Out of A Rock Quarry

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the stage set for other uses, the West of Castro Street Improvement Association and the Noe Valley Merchants Association, in May of 1922, asked the Budget Committee of the Board of Supervisors to purchase the quarry property for use as a park. The board purchased the bulk of the property from 1923 through 1926, for \$23,456. An additional purchase was made in July 1929 for \$3,175, for a total land cost of \$26,631.

The playground, with clubhouse and 6,000 newly planted trees, was dedicated Oct. 27, 1928, with the East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club in attendance. But there was more work to do.

Up until 1929, both 26th Street and Army (now Cesar Chavez) Street still proceeded west and, at least on paper, dead-ended within the park at Hoffman Avenue. The blocks now were ordered closed at Douglass Street to free up park acreage.

### WPA Built the Ball Field

In 1933, during the Great Depression, architect William Merchant presented development plans for the site. With the plans approved, Works Progress Administration workers began construction in November of that year. The federally funded workforce excavated rock that had been blasted loose by the Gray Brothers, built rubble walls, laid an irrigation system, constructed a baseball field, put up fencing and a toilet building, and landscaped the area with ice plant.

In May of 1935, Merchant delivered

plans for the layout of tennis courts in the lower playground, and by August the upper terrace with the ball field was mid-development. The WPA work was completed in 1936. (It is unclear when the fieldhouse was constructed, due to conflicting background information; it was probably no later than 1936.)

The upper terrace was opened on April 3, 1938, with San Francisco Mayor Angelo Rossi in attendance. A total of \$250,000 was noted to have been spent on land and equipment up to that point. A baseball game matching the Visitacion Valley Playground team against the Douglass Playground team topped off the day's activities.

### Rockslides Not Uncommon

As often happens with blasted rock, a rockslide occurred in 1951 above the tennis courts in the lower playground. An initial appropriation of \$2,000 was approved for repairs and removal of the slide debris. Repairs to the courts were carried out by Malott and Peterson-Gundy and rock removal by Eaton and Smith for a total of \$3,523. (Unfortunately, sliding rock is still an issue today. A protective mesh fence remains behind the tennis courts.)

A new baseball field backstop was installed in 1959 by contractor Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation for approximately \$1,595.

New children's play equipment was installed in 1972, funded by the M. Justin Herman Bequest Fund, which also provided equipment to two other playgrounds. Equally pro-rated, the funding would have been about \$4,000. (The playground was absorbed into the Diamond Heights Redevelopment Plan in the early 1950s. But the park does not seem to have benefited from the federal fund-

ing. Herman was head of the massive Redevelopment Agency and died in 1971.)

### Renovations and Art

In 1986, planning for renovation of the clubhouse in the lower playground started. The architectural firm of T.C. Chen and Associates designed the work. It included ADA-compliant toilets, reorienting the office to have a better view of the playground, an expanded kitchen, and more storage space. Ratto Construction was selected as the contractor in 1987; their bid fee was \$114,740.

A mosaic work, done in 1987 by artist Lois Anderson, is mounted on the exterior east side of the clubhouse. It is made of ceramic tile, glass, metal, buttons, and jewelry mounted on fiberglass. The artist's inspiration was architectural details or emblems found on many neighborhood buildings. The renovated building was rededicated on May 21, 1988.

The Recreation and Park Commission approved a conceptual renovation plan for the playground in July of 1999. It included a \$20,000 gift from Game Time, a playground equipment manufacturer, which featured pieces such as a spiraling structure called the DNA Climber. The renovated playground reopened in 2002.

### Dogs Have the Upper Ground

The lower portion was renovated but did not allow for the growing popularity of having a dog off leash. The upper terrace did not receive any work as part of the renovation, which left an open door to more changes.

In May 2002, the Rec and Park Commission created a new leash law and rules for creating off-leash dog areas. A dog run existed where 27th Street dead-ends, but it was unsafe due to an adjacent steep cliff.

In early 2003, nearby resident James

Collins, owner of a black German shepherd named DARTH, posted a proposal to use the entire upper terrace exclusively for off-leash dogs. He cited that drainage problems made the athletic field unusable and that the whole area was in rough shape with no amenities. In truth, the upper area had been used by dog walkers for quite some time, so a dog park would just be officially sanctioning what was already happening.

By fall, the Rec and Park Commission approved the proposal, and the city's first sanctioned dog play area was born.

In 2007, a group was formed calling itself the Friends of Upper Douglass Dog Park. They continue to help steward the dog park for its users with the Rec and Park Department.

An annual Easter Egg Hunt started in the playground in 2008, and today it continues as a neighborhood event sponsored by Droubi Team, the Noe Valley Association, and the Roddick Family Trust.

This past March, dog agility training equipment was installed in the dog play area through the efforts of Girl Scout Leila Ali O'Rourke.

For many years, the playground has been the site of an afterschool program sponsored by the Recreation and Park Department. ■

**C**hristopher Pollock is a 40-year city resident and the author of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park: A Thousand and Seventeen Acres of Stories, which will be published April 4, 2020, in honor of the park's 150th anniversary. As historian-in-residence at the Recreation and Park Department, he has written histories of over 200 parks in San Francisco. The Voice thanks him for sharing the local stories in his collection.



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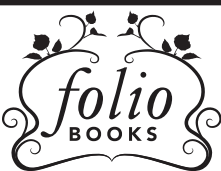
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San Francisco 49ers	Class of 2025	Men of St. Paul	Elizabeth Zamboldi
San Jose Sharks	Class of 2026	Mercy High School, SF	
Simply Uniforms	Class of 2027	Laure Moon	
Six Flags Discovery Kingdom	Class of 2028	Mary Morley	
Skin Spirit / Clinic & Spa	Laura Collins & Brian Glander	Kamala Mostert	
Smuin Contemporary Ballet	Peter Connor	Theresa Murphy	
Sonoma Raceway	Rita Cortes	Mary Murphy	
Two Rivers Soccer Camp	Anne & Joseph Crawford	John Murray	
Ultimate Cookie	Mike Daniels	Christine Nevarez	
	Armando DeAnda	Mai Nguyen	
	Christine DelCarlo	Irene Nolan	
	Sandy & Jere Driscoll	NorCal DJs	
	Joey Duggan	Phil O'Kane	
	Kathleen Esling	Mary O'Rourke	
		Tom Onda	
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		Giorgia Ortiz	
		Maria Pena	



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— William Saroyan

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# The Cost of Living in Noe

## Fewer Highs and Fewer Lows

By Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley’s residential real estate market was picking up steam in October, as buyers purchased 14 single-family detached homes, three more than in September.

Condominium sales were percolating as well. Buyers purchased nine condos in October, compared with five the previous month.

However, the volume of sales was nothing compared to that of October of 2018. Back then, shoppers closed escrow on 17 houses and 16 condos, according to monthly data provided to the *Noe Valley Voice* by Zephyr Real Estate.

Another difference from last year, notes Zephyr president Randall Kostick, is that buyers this October were purchasing fewer luxury homes, opting instead for properties with more affordable price tags.

For example, Kostick says, the data shows that in October of 2017, buyers paid \$6.5 million for the most expensive home. A year later, the costliest property in October was \$5.5 million. This October, the top-selling house went for \$3.7 million.



A condominium in this brand new building on Cesar Chavez Street sold in October for \$3.2 million. In addition to three bedrooms and 2.5 baths, the unit had a deluxe kitchen, a wet bar and outdoor barbecue, radiant heat, and a state-of-the-art entertainment system. *Photos by Corrie M. Anders*



Buyers paid \$3.7 million for this four-bedroom, three-bath house on a cul de sac bordering Douglass Park. The newly renovated home was Noe Valley’s most expensive in October, and featured a designer kitchen, skylights, a wine cellar, scenic bay views, and two-car parking.

On the other hand, he says, the least expensive property in October 2017 was \$1.1 million, a figure that rose to \$1.5 million the next year, and \$1.8 million this October.

“Only so many people are willing to pay on the high end, and the low end is kind of catching up,” Kostick says.

October buyers in all three years were willing to pay more than what sellers were asking, to get the house they wanted. In October 2017, home shoppers paid an average 6 percent over asking. In 2018 and 2019, the average overpayment was 8 percent.

The numbers also show the average sale price of a detached home in Noe Valley this October was \$2,709,286—about \$47,000 less than the average a year ago.

The most expensive property this go-round, selling for 5.8 percent more than its \$3,495,000 asking price, was a four-bedroom, three-bath house in the 800 block of 27th Street, near Upper Douglass Park.

Built originally in 1972, the home had been remodeled to feature an open floor plan, vaulted ceilings, four skylights, a deluxe kitchen with Polarstone quartz countertops and European cabinetry, a built-in entertainment/audio system, a wine cellar, and a two-car garage—in 2,500 square feet of living space.

The most expensive condominium was part of a newly constructed building in the 4000 block of Cesar Chavez Street, between Noe and Sanchez streets. Buyers paid \$3.2 million, 8.5 percent below the list price (\$3,499,000), to purchase the three-bedroom, 2.5-bath home, offering 2,333 square feet of space on two floors.

Like the detached home, the condo came with an array of luxury appointments, including a designer kitchen, radiant heat, a surround-sound audio system, a wet bar, an outdoor-barbecue kitchen, and parking for one car. ■

Noe Valley Home Sales*						
Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price as % of List Price
Single-family homes						
October 2019	14	\$1,820,000	\$3,700,000	\$2,709,286	17	108%
September 2019	11	\$1,600,000	\$4,500,000	\$2,932,734	20	112%
October 2018	17	\$1,500,000	\$5,550,000	\$2,755,882	20	108%
Condominiums/TICs						
October 2019	9	\$805,000	\$3,200,000	\$1,935,745	18	107%
September 2019	5	\$1,205,000	\$2,925,000	\$2,149,200	15	113%
October 2018	16	\$750,250	\$2,100,000	\$1,387,516	21	115%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
October 2019	1	\$1,529,000	\$1,529,000	\$1,529,000	201	100%
September 2019	2	\$1,755,000	\$3,100,000	\$2,427,500	87	97%
October 2018	3	\$1,220,000	\$1,995,767	\$1,705,256	23	111%
5+-unit buildings						
October 2019	3	\$2,225,000	\$3,095,000	\$2,731,667	55	93%
September 2019	0	—	—	—	—	—
October 2018	0	—	—	—	—	—
* 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. NWV12/2019						

Noe Valley Rents**					
Unit	No. in Sample	Range November 2019	Average November 2019	Average October 2019	Average November 2018
Studio	7	\$2,195 - \$2,775	\$2,601 / mo.	\$2,560 / mo.	\$2,482 / mo.
1-bdrm	38	\$2,500 - \$4,900	\$3,296 / mo.	\$3,319 / mo.	\$3,398 / mo.
2-bdrm	37	\$3,200 - \$6,395	\$4,551 / mo.	\$4,441 / mo.	\$4,104 / mo.
3-bdrm	20	\$4,200 - \$9,495	\$5,805 / mo.	\$7,916 / mo.	\$5,903 / mo.
4+-bdrm	6	\$6,500 - \$13,500	\$11,124 / mo.	\$10,348 / mo.	\$8,736 / mo.
** This survey is based on a sample of 108 Noe Valley apartment listings appearing on Craigslist.org from Nov. 3 to 10, 2019. NWV12/2019					

### LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, P.O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Or email [editor@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:editor@noevalleyvoice.com).

Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.

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NOE  
KIDS  
BY KATIE BURKE

Annika Palecek, Artist  
and Animal Lover

Annika Palecek will turn 11 on Dec. 4. Annika is the youngest of seven siblings, including four stepsisters. She and sisters Brynn, Caroline, and Sierra live with their mom, Melissa Black, and their stepdad, Diego Fonstad, in a converted fire station on 22nd Street. Their biological dad died almost 10 years ago.

Annika is in sixth grade at Alta Vista School. Brynn and Caroline, who are 16-year-old fraternal twins, and Sierra, 15, go to different schools around the city.

Their mom owns Honeycombers, a Menlo Park head lice removal salon on hiatus until next year. Their stepdad owns Lectrify, a company that designs educational toolkits for kids. “He has a lot of gadgets and gizmos,” Annika says.

Annika likes watching TV with her mom. “At one point, it was *Queer Eye*, and now we’re in the middle of *So You Think You Can Dance*,” she says. She also admires her sister Brynn for being an excellent sewer and jewelry maker, and for teaching Annika to sew.

But her favorite family members to talk about are the dogs: Mochi, their first dog, a rescue who is often hungry and who they believe is a Boston terrier chihuahua; Apollo, a Burmese mountain dog (and goldendoodle) who barks a lot; and Winston, a shy dog of unknown age or breed, who they think is a dachshund chihuahua mix. “And Bob is our stepdog,” Annika adds.

Just before Thanksgiving a year ago, the dogs got into trouble. “While we were gone one day, they managed to bite open seven pens and five paper towel rolls,” Annika recalls. “So we came home and started lecturing one of the dogs because we saw her first, and the other one jumped on the table and put his face in our Thanksgiving turkey.”

Speaking of Thanksgiving, Annika says she is most thankful for her sisters this year. “When I don’t know what to do or I’m scared of something, they help me with that,” she says. Most recently, her sisters helped her overcome her fear of swinging on a trapeze.

Annika has named the three squirrels who run in the tree next to her house: Cheryl, Bob, and Darryl. If she could have another pet, it would be a budgie. “They are short and fluffy birds,” she says. She likes to visit the budgies at the Animal Company on Castro Street.

Annika excels at photography and photo editing, and says she discovered her photography talent at her uncles’ wedding.

“They gave me the big camera,” she explains. “And there was a graveyard right next to where they were having the wedding, so I also took photos of the graveyard.”

Her uncles live in Madrid, where Annika might like to live someday. “There’s so much plant life there and cool buildings,” she says, “and I like to draw a lot of it and take photos of all of it.”

In addition to drawing, Annika enjoys painting and watercolors. “I like to draw my doggos, or cute characters like foxes or mice or bats,” she says.

One of Annika’s favorite places to shop for art supplies is Just for Fun. “I also like going there even when I’m not going to buy anything ’cause it’s just fun to look at things,” she says. “They have really cool stuff that you

usually don’t find in that kind of store, like a Christmas tree ornament that looks like a toilet.”

Annika also likes taking care of plants. “Plants help with global warming, and they add a lot to the house,” she explains. “They’re fun to grow and take care of. I always wanted to be a farmer.”

Other possible careers for Annika? “Maybe be a lawyer. I like a good debate,” she says. “Maybe an artist, a dancer, or a person who redecorates your whole house—not an interior designer, but the person who does the paint and the furnishing.”

Cooking and baking also interest Annika. “I can make steaks, mashed potatoes, and mille-feuilles,” she says. “That’s French for ‘a thousand layers.’ It’s a pastry with the texture of a croissant, and layers and layers and layers with filling.”

“I love party planning, too,” she adds. “I like to frenzy around and choose the tablecloths and the flowers and vases that match and what centerpieces to put on. I’ve got fake chandeliers, and I like thinking about what chairs I should use, and what napkins and napkin holders, and how I should fold them.”

Annika has taken dance since she was 2 years old, including tap, ballroom, ballet, hip-hop, and hula. “I have been skiing since before I could walk,” she says. She has also taken guitar lessons, at Russo on 24th Street.

Of living in a former firehouse, Annika says, “People get really excited about the fire pole. We still have the original fire alarm downstairs, and I like to go in and mess with it. It doesn’t sound the alarm anymore because you would hear it throughout the neighborhood, but you can still turn the knobs.”

If Annika could fix any problem in San Francisco, it would be housing people without homes. “I guess there

Annika Palecek poses with some of her favorite companions: family dogs (from left) Mochi, Winston, and Apollo.

Photo by Art Bodner

are organizations that build tiny mobile homes for homeless people,” she says. “I would want to organize, fundraise, or build the homes.”

As for other ways she wants to help the city, Annika says, “I want to volunteer at FDR—Family Dog Rescue—in San Francisco. And there’s this church downtown, Glide, where you can make sandwiches and other food for homeless people when they come in the church.”

If she could have any volunteer job anywhere, Annika would work at Liberty Wildlife in Arizona. “They save all types of birds and other animals,” she says. “Bald eagles, golden eagles, everything from tiny elf owls to the biggest bird you’ve ever seen. They also have snakes, they have a mouse named Finn, and they have two ducks named Cheese and Quackers. I’m pretty sure they might have coyotes. I just love animals and helping and volunteering.” ■

Katie Burke is a writer and family law attorney, who lives where Noe Valley meets the Mission. Her Noe Kids column features interviews with Noe Valley kids ages 4 to 12. In April 2020, Burke will publish a collection of profiles of San Francisco kids, titled *Urban Playground* (SparkPress). Know a great Noe Valley kid? Email [katie@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:katie@noevalleyvoice.com).



# STORE TREK

*Store Trek is a regular column in the Noe Valley Voice, featuring new stores and restaurants in Noe Valley. This month, we spotlight a cafe offering savory Burmese cuisine, a welcome addition to the neighborhood.*

**INLE BURMESE CUISINE**  
1298 Church St. at 25th Street  
415-374-7378  
<https://inle-burmese-cuisine.business.site/>

Morgan Sue grew up in Rangoon, Burma, and would vacation with his family at Inle Lake, a body of fresh water that is the second largest lake in the country. Also growing up in the Southeast Asian nation, now known as Myanmar, and enjoying lakeside family sojourns was Shirlene Lim.

Unbeknownst to them at the time, Sue and Lim lived only blocks away from each other in the capital city, which today is called Yangon. Yet they attended different schools and never met.

It wasn't until they had immigrated to the United States that their paths would cross as students at City College of San Francisco. Fifteen years later, they are married and co-owners of what is believed to be the first Burmese restaurant in Noe Valley.

They took over the storefront that formerly had housed the plant-based Le Cupboard Café and, after a short makeover of the space, soft-opened their doors Oct. 3. This is the couple's first restaurant of their own; they partnered with a silent investor to launch the business.

They had been looking at potential sites around the city and were excited to find the Church Street location.

"I am very familiar with Noe Valley because I like the neighborhood very much. I hang out with family in the area," said Sue, who is raising two sons with his wife in the Outer Richmond. "We are so lucky to be in this neighborhood."

They opted against having a ribbon-cutting or making an advertising push for the restaurant, to let the staff adjust to their new jobs and work out any kinks in the kitchen. Nonetheless, the restaurant has seen a flood of patrons from day one and is receiving positive word-of-mouth on online food sites.

"I just put our sign in the window and changed it from closed to open. I wasn't sure if our kitchen was ready or not," recalled Sue of that first Thursday. "We



Olivia Lim serves an Inle specialty called Golden Bags, pastries stuffed with potato and a touch of curry.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

wanted to start small and make sure we knew what we're doing."

Until they became restaurateurs, Lim had worked in accounting and Sue was an engineer. But during college he spent a decade working at Philip and Nancy Chu's Oakland restaurant Nan Yang, which opened in 1983 and is said to be the first full-fledged Burmese restaurant in the Bay Area.

Hired at first to bus tables two days a week, Sue worked his way up to become a manager.

"I learned a lot from that restaurant," said Sue, who considers the owners his godparents. "They trusted me when I first came here. After three months, they hired me as a busboy. Without them, I wouldn't be who I am today."

The Chus, now retired from the restaurant business, have been in to dine at Sue's eatery. He joked that the only advice they gave him about opening his own restaurant was, "Don't do it!"

Within a month of opening Inle, Sue says, the customers have picked a favorite: the tea leaf salad (\$12), made with assorted nuts, crispy garlic, sesame seeds, tomato, jalapenos, and romaine lettuce, tossed with a tea leaf dressing.

Another popular starter has been the paratha with coconut curry dip (\$8), a flatbread made from "thousand-layer"

buttery bread.

The Nan Gyi noodle salad (\$14) has also been a big seller. It is made with thick round noodles served in a chicken breast curry sauce with cabbage, lime juice, bean powder, and fish sauce that is garnished with cilantro and egg.

Also popular has been the garlic noodle dish, with a choice of chicken, pork, or tofu (\$12). It features flat egg noodles mixed with garlic oil and soy sauce that are then topped with the chosen protein, crispy garlic, and green onions. The dish comes with a side salad.

A staple of Burmese cuisine can also be found on the menu: Mohinga (\$14), a fish noodle soup prepared with catfish and rice vermicelli noodles. Mixed into the broth are lemongrass, ginger, onion, garlic, turmeric, fish sauce, and a dash of coconut. Diners are given a plate of cilantro, lime, a shredded Chinese donut, a sliced hard-boiled egg, and dried chili flakes to garnish the dish as they see fit. (Word of caution, a pinch of the chili adds quite a bit of heat to the soup.)

By December, the restaurant hopes to have its liquor license so it can add beer and wine to the menu. Among the non-alcoholic beverages are lychee iced tea and a blue lychee (\$5 each) drink that is mildly sweet and comes with a lychee ball.

For dessert, there is sticky rice wrapped around banana and black bean (\$5) or cassava cake with ice cream (\$7).

The restaurant has seating for 12 in the back half of the dining room and can accommodate up to 26 diners in the front section. The décor features wood floors, a white color palette on the walls, and orange light fixtures hung from the ceiling.

Reservations are currently not accepted, and the restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday for lunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and for dinner from 5 to 9:30 p.m. It is open from noon to 9 p.m. on Sunday and closed on Monday.

—Matthew S. Bajko



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# SHORT TAKES

### Let There Be Lighting!

The annual Christmas tree lighting in the Noe Valley Town Square at 3861 24th St. will be even brighter than usual this year, thanks to new lights strung across the middle of the square.

The new lighting, which went up in October, will be featured in a light show at the tree-lighting party, on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 5 to 8 p.m. With LED bulbs programmable by color and flash, the lights will glow red and green and offer a spectacular show, Leslie Crawford says, and she should know since she's the Town Square event manager.

The tree, a 15-foot beauty, will also be festooned with lights and decorations.

Two caroling groups—Loose Interpretations and the San Francisco City Carolers—will sing Christmas songs and stroll up and down 24th Street, spreading good cheer. Speaking of cheer, there will be free hot cocoa, candy canes, and other edibles at the celebration.

### Hanukkah Festival for All

Hanukkah is the eight-night Jewish Festival of Lights. Noe Valley's big celebration will be on the first night, which is Sunday, Dec. 22, this year. A six-foot-tall menorah in the center of the Town Square will be lit each of the eight nights at 5:15 p.m., except Friday, Dec. 27 (4 p.m.), and Saturday, Dec. 28 (6:30 p.m.).

In keeping with tradition, there will be a drop of foil-covered chocolates from the top of a fire department ladder truck. Watch out for flying gelt! There will also



Neighbors are invited to help restore the century-old stained-glass windows at St. Paul's Catholic Church on Church Street. See "Through a Glass..." below.

be music, crafts for the kids, a jumpy house, hot cocoa, and of course latkes, those tasty potato pancakes.

All is free, and everyone is welcome. As Rabbi Gedalia Potash of Chabad Noe Valley has told us more than once, "You don't have to be Jewish!"

### Reindeer Coming Before Santa

Reindeer come to Noe Valley every year in December and hang out in front of Just for Fun, a store on 24th Street. But besides the North Pole, where do the deer come from?

The rest of the year, the reindeer live at All About Animals, a ranch and animal rescue operation run by Diana Frieling in Tehachapi, Kern County. Frieling is a licensed reindeer rancher state-certified to breed and care for the critters. She also manages the annual visit of the much larger herd at the California Academy of Sciences.

David Eiland and Robert Ramsay, the owners of the store, came up with the idea of hosting the deer a decade ago. Eiland and Ramsay have long created an annual

Christmas display in and outside the store, and thought reindeer would be an extra treat for kids. "I googled reindeer.com," Eiland says.

One of Frieling's workers, if not Frieling herself, is with the herd at all times. The animals have water and hay, but they much prefer the graham crackers the wranglers hand out for kids to feed to them. The reindeer are very mellow, Eiland says. "They've never bitten anyone."

The reindeer can look a little untidy, though. December is molting season, so they aren't at their most physically attractive, but kids don't seem to mind.

A word about reindeer etiquette for humans. No screaming, please, nor slapping of reindeer. Pet them gently. No hands in the pen and definitely don't attempt to ride them. Selfies are encouraged.

The reindeer will be at the parklet outside Just for Fun, 3982 24th St., on Wednesday, Dec. 11, 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Three days later, on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 1 to 4 p.m., Santa, accompanied by Rudolph and a bag of treats, will make a stop at Zephyr Real Estate, 4040 24th St., to say ho, ho, ho, and pose for photos.

### I'll Drink to That!

Toast the season and each other at the Holiday Wine Walk, Saturday, Dec. 7, from 3 to 8 p.m. Specialty wineries will provide sips of their vintages in stores along 24th Street. Some of the wineries and wines that will be available include Boudinand Viognier, Fantini Montepulciano d'Abruzzo, Monte Oton Grenache, Berton Black Shiraz, and Terres Dorres l'Ancien Beaujolais.

Purchase your ticket and pick up your map and glass for \$35 at the Noe Valley Town Square on the day, or buy online at Eventbrite.com for the \$30 early bird special (good through Dec. 6).

The wine walk is sponsored by the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association. Some of the stops will include the Droubi Team office, Charlie's Corner (which will be hosting a customer appreciation party during the walk), Wink SF gifts, When Modern Was, Novy Restaurant, Small Frys, and Folio Books.

### Wax Art on Display at Lola

Lola Herrera creates fashion art at Lola San Francisco, her clothing store at 1250 Sanchez St. She also hosts frequent art exhibits at the shop. The January show will present the work of Peninsula printmaker and wax artist Lonnie Zarem.

Zarem creates encaustic monotype prints using an anodized aluminum plate, a heating element, encaustic paints (a mix of pigment, beeswax, and resin), and rice paper. She applies the paint onto a hot plate, manipulates the melting colors, rolls a sheet of rice paper onto the plate,



The artwork of Peninsula printmaker Lonnie Zarem will complement the whimsical fabric creations of Lola Herrera at Lola San Francisco in January. An opening reception will be held Jan. 3 from 5 to 8 p.m., at the gallery, 1250 Sanchez St.

### Noe Valley Loses to Atherton

Anyone looking for a home in Noe Valley might swear on a stack of gold bullion that it is the most expensive place in the country to buy a house.

Not by a long shot. That would be the Atherton, Calif., zip code of 94027, where the median cost of a home in 2019 was \$7 million, according to a Nov. 18, 2019, survey by PropertyShark, an online real estate company.

Noe Valley is not even the most expensive place in San Francisco. That dubious distinction goes to the Marina District-Cow Hollow zip code of 94123, where, says PropertyShark, you'd pay a median \$2,005,000 for a home.

The site's median sale price for the 94114 zip code, which includes Noe Valley, Dolores Heights, the Castro, and Corona Heights, is \$1,850,000. That number ranked 94114 the third highest priced area in the city and 49th in the nation—up from 60th last year.

Bottom line: You still need a bundle to buy in Noe Valley.

—Corrie M. Anders

lifts it off, and voila! Art!

Zarem says, "My work is not [usually] representational but rather an attempt to highlight a 'moment' that is recognizable, personal, and invites the viewer to remember some of our more basic and primitive emotions."

You are invited to view her work at Lola's at the opening Friday, Jan. 3, from 5 to 8 p.m. and throughout the remainder of the month. Complimentary wine and appetizers will be served.

### Through a Glass Beautifully

You don't reach nearly 112 years old without needing a little R&R from time to time. With the 45 stained-glass windows of St. Paul's Catholic Church, that means repair and restoration.

Pieces of stained glass are held together and separated by strips of lead. The leading decays before the glass does, sort of like the jawline on a human face. The St. Paul's stained glass hasn't broken or faded, but weather is taking a toll on the leading, which means leaks and drafts.

The parish is raising funds to replace the leading, window by window. Already, the Helms family has donated the dollars to repair the rose window above the main entrance, and other donors have contributed toward work on other windows around the church. You can sponsor an entire window, from \$3,900 to \$37,905, or contribute any amount.

You don't have to be a Catholic or a St. Paul's Parish member to donate. As Terry Brady, spokesperson for the church, says, "The windows are a treasure for the church community and the neighborhood."

To learn more about the restoration or to make a donation, go to [stpaulsf.org](http://stpaulsf.org). If you haven't been inside to see the stained glass and the other beauties of this neighborhood treasure, do so as soon as you can. The church is located on Church Street between Valley and 29th streets.

### Musical Notes

Music can make the season jolly and bright, and you can hear it at three upcoming concerts in the neighborhood.

Bell Appeal, the bell ringers of Bethany United Methodist Church, are performing religious and secular pieces, accompanied by piano and violin, in "Bells Make December" on Sunday,



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Alvarado students eagerly await the chance to run and tumble on their new turf field at an early morning ribbon-cutting ceremony Nov. 19. *Photo courtesy Joe Harrington*



The new patch of green at Alvarado is 85 by 50 feet and suitable for all kinds of exercise, including soccer, flag football, and yoga. *Photo courtesy Jessica Czarnecki Photography and Revolution Turf*

Alvarado Installs Field of Dreams

Hundreds of excited students, parents, and teachers gathered at 7:45 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 19, for a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new turf field at Alvarado Elementary School. The youngsters immediately took to the cushy new turf, which replaced a large section of the asphalt play area at the school, located at 625 Douglass St.

“They were over the moon,” said Trishan Arul, co-chair of the Alvarado PTA’s Healthy Kids Committee and parent of second-grader Zachary and kindergartener Jasmine. “The first days it was available, they were rolling on it. They were tumbling on it. Kids were sitting on it doing homework.”

The fundraising drive to replace the blacktop began in November 2018. Arul said parents pledged \$21,000; the Bay Area affiliate of America Scores, a national non-profit that works with soccer and literacy programs, chipped in another \$10,000; and District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman scoured the city budget for the remaining \$35,000 cost. The new 85-by-50-foot surface, made by Revolution Turf, is synthetic grass backed by thick padding, like the padding under carpets. It is permeable to allow for drainage during rainy weather. Any activities that can be done on a grass field can be played on the turf field—from soccer and flag football to yoga, dance, and gymnastics.

Neighborhood children and parents also can use the field as part of the city’s Shared Schoolyards program—on Saturdays and Sundays.

“On weekends, the yard is open to the entire community,” Arul said. “On weekdays, only students are allowed on campus, for safety/security reasons.”

—Corrie M. Anders



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SHORT TAKES

Dec. 8, 5 p.m., at the church, located at 1270 Sanchez St. Admission is free, but donations are accepted.

The Bay Area Vocal Academy will present two holiday performances filled with seasonal songs, opera arias, art songs, and musical theater numbers, on Saturday, Dec. 14, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 15, at 4 p.m., at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. \$20 tickets can be purchased at the door or online at bayareavocalacademy.org.

While not specifically a Christmas concert, the Civic Symphony Association program on Saturday, Dec. 7, will certainly be a relief from worldly cares. Franck’s Sonata in A Major, the Shostakovich Piano Trio #2, and the Faure Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor will be played. Admission for the 3 p.m. event at the Ministry is a suggested \$10 to \$20.

**NERT Training in January**

Once again, Noe Valleyans have a chance to prepare for disaster. A new NERT six-week training course in disaster preparedness starts Thursday, Jan. 9, and continues through Thursday, Feb. 13, at Holy Innocents Church, 455 Fair Oaks St. All classes run from 6 to 9:30 p.m. The course is free.

NERT stands for Neighborhood Emergency Response Team and is a program of the San Francisco Fire Department. The classes are on assembling a survival kit, formulating a family disaster plan, basic disaster medicine, doing search and rescue, learning response skills useful in

an emergency, and team organization.

To sign up, go to [sf-fire.org/training-schedule-registration](http://sf-fire.org/training-schedule-registration).

**Don’t Discard That Box, M’am!**

The neighborhood’s fourth annual commemoration of Boxing Day will take place at the Town Square on Thursday, Dec. 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event is free.

Boxing Day is a holiday celebrated in the United Kingdom, Canada, and a few other countries. It originated as a day off for servants to visit their families after Christmas. They also received a present, maybe in a box, from their employer. In modern times, it has evolved into a day to do good works or silly things like swimming the icy English Channel.

In our neighborhood, we lean toward the silly. Children are supplied with extremely large cardboard boxes, craft and coloring materials, and told to let their creativity run free, if not wild. Because it’s the day after Christmas and parents may be working, an unusual number of grandparents may be enlisted to help.

Past results have included cardboard tunnels, forts, factories, skyscrapers, and stores to play in. There are prizes for the best creations, although Leslie Crawford, event manager, confides that everyone receives something. There will also be refreshments. “No carrot sticks!” Crawford promises. There will also be gift certificate rewards for bringing boxes for the kids to work with. “The bigger, the better!” Crawford urges. Think furniture and large appliance boxes. You can drop them off on the day or ahead of time. Email [info@noevalleytownsquare.com](mailto:info@noevalleytownsquare.com) to arrange storage.

*Short Takes were compiled and written by Richard May.*



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**Holiday Bell Concert:** "Bells Make December". Hear joyous bells on "Angels We Have Heard on High", "I Saw Three Ships", and the contemporary "Better Days" and more. A piano duet on "Sleigh Ride". Free admission. A free-will offering will be passed. Sunday, December 8th, 5 p.m. Bethany United Methodist Church, 1270 Sanchez St. at Clipper.

**Johnny Dog Walker:** Specializing in reliable, affordable, loving pet care in Noe Valley (and nearby). PET CPR and FIRST AID CERTIFIED. Call or text for availability and rates. John Meggitt 415-505-6850.

**Cat and Dog Lover - Responsible:** Services offered: In home visits, fresh food and water, medication, companionship and waste cleanup. Overnights are available. Daily text, photo and home security. References available by request. Mary 415-994-4853.

**Creative Cleaning:** House or Apartment. Call or message. Marlene Sherman. 415-375-2980

**Driver Available:** Doctor appointments, shopping, errands. Dependable and punctual. 10+ years experience. Great references. \$25 hour (2 hour minimum). Bill 415-826-3613.

**Over 16 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.

**One Man Housecleaning:** All tasks cheerfully considered. 40 years experience in Noe Valley. Richard. 415-255-0389.







**Dec. 1:** Political group ACTION SF meets from 1 to 2:30 pm. Edward Jones, 4190 24th. actionsfsolidarity@gmail.com; resistry.net.

**Dec. 1:** A free woodwinds HOLIDAY MUSIC concert, organized by Ray Capiral, runs from 4 to 8 pm. Bethany UMC, 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org.

**Dec. 1-Jan. 5:** GALLERY SANCHEZ exhibits “A Brush With Color,” featuring Golden Gate Artists. Mon.-Fri., 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

**Dec. 1-Jan. 12:** Inclusions Gallery exhibits “Retrospective 12,” ARTWORK by 12 Bay Area artists. Reception Dec. 5, 6-9 pm; Wed.-Sat., 1-7 pm; Sun., 1-6 pm. 627 Cortland. 817-1493; inclusionsgallery.com.

**Dec. 1 & 15; Jan. 5 & 19:** SF City Guides offers 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.

**Dec. 1-29 & Jan. 5-26:** A free T’AI CHI class at the Noe Valley Town Square is scheduled for Sundays, 9 to 9:50 am. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 1-29 & Jan. 5-26:** Bring your own mat to a free YOGA CLASS at the Noe Valley Town Square. Sundays, 10-11 am. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 1-29 & Jan. 5-26:** 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.

**Dec. 1-31:** The Holiday Art Shop at CREATIVITY EXPLORED

• DECEMBER 2019 •

features paintings, drawings, and mixed media work. Mon.-Fri., 10 am-5 pm (Thurs. until 7 pm), Sat., noon-5 pm. 3245 16th. 863-2108; creativityexplored.org.

**Dec. 1-31 & Jan. 4-28:** 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.

**Dec. 2:** Stella Parks discusses *Brave Tart: Iconic American DESSERTS*. 11 am. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

**Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30; Jan. 6, 13 & 27:** 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.

**Dec. 2-30 & Jan. 2-31:** BootCampSF conducts FITNESS training Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8:30 am. SF Rec Center Basketball Court, 30th and Whitney. 567-9009; bootcampsf.com.

**Dec. 2-31 & Jan. 1-31:** Noe Valley OVEREATERS Anonymous meets Monday through Saturday, 7 am, at St. Aidan’s Church, 101 Gold Mine. oasf.org.

**Dec. 2-31 & Jan. 1-31:** The 30th Street SENIOR CENTER’s Mission Nutrition program serves lunches for people over 60, weekdays and Saturdays, including holidays. Noon and 1 pm. 225 30th. 550-2226.

**Dec. 3:** The Children’s Book Project’s GIVING TUESDAY at Folio Books is inspired by C.S.

Lewis’ Narnia books. 10 am-8 pm. Folio Books, 3957 24th. 821-3477; foliosf.com.

**Dec. 3 & 17; Jan. 7 & 21:** Bethany United Methodist Church offers free KNITTING lessons with Ray Capiral on first and third Tuesdays. 7-8:30 pm. 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org.

**Dec. 3-31 & Jan. 7-28:** The Eureka Valley Library tells TODDLER TALES on Tuesdays, 10:30 am. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 3-31 & Jan. 7-28:** Volunteer on Tuesdays to make meals for the hungry at Civic Center Plaza at “Curry Without Worry.” 1:30-5 pm. Bethany UMC, 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org.

**Dec. 3-31 & Jan. 7-28:** TOWN SQUARE TUESDAYS feature a farmer’s market, music, and kids’ activities in the Noe Valley Town Square. 3-7 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 3-31 & Jan. 7-28:** John McClean Wolf leads SACRED YOGA Tuesdays at Holy Innocents. 7-8 pm. 455 Fair Oaks. 824-5142; holyinsf.org.

**Dec. 4:** The group Friends of Noe Valley welcomes new members at its COMMUNITY meeting. 6 pm. Umpqua Bank, 3938 24th. 268-5260; friendsofnoevalley.com.

**Dec. 4:** Adult CRAFT NIGHT at the Noe Valley Library features sugar scrubs and holiday cards. 7-8:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 4 & 11:** Julia Griffiths leads a Wednesday all-level PILATES MAT CLASS at Upper Noe Rec Center. 5:30-6:30 pm. 295 Day. 970-8061; noevalleyreccenter.com.

**Dec. 4-18:** The Eureka Valley Library hosts BABY RHYME and play time on Wednesdays, 1:30 to 2:15. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 4 & 18:** Children 4 and up can read to a dog named Herbee at PUPPY DOG TALES. 4:15-5:15 pm. Eureka Valley Library, 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 4-18 & Jan. 8-29:** Chris Sequeira leads free senior QI GONG classes Wednesdays 1 to 3 pm, at Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. 773-8185; livingtaichi@yahoo.com

**Dec. 4-18 & Jan. 8-29:** Holy Innocents Episcopal Church holds Candlesong, a TAIZE-style service followed by a potluck on Wednesdays from 6 to 8 pm. 455 Fair Oaks. 824-5142.

**Dec. 4-25 & Jan. 1-29:** AL-ANON meets Wednesdays, including holidays, from 8 to 9:30 pm at St. Philip Church. 725 Diamond. 834-9940; al-anonsf.org.

**Dec. 5:** The Noe Valley Library hosts a WINTER CRAFT workshop for children to make decorative candles from flashlights. 3:30-5 pm. 451 Jersey. Reservations required: 355-5707.

**Dec. 5:** The monthly self-guided Castro ART WALK features exhibits by local artists in various neighborhood businesses. 6-9 pm. For a map and list of artists: castroartwalk.com.

**Dec. 5:** John Becker and Megan Scott introduce the new revised 2019 edition of *JOY OF COOKING*. 6:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

**Dec. 5-26 & Jan. 2-30:** Miss Catherine tells TODDLER TALES with books, rhymes, music, and movement on Thursdays. 10:15 & 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 5-26 & Jan. 2-30:** The Noe Valley Town Square offers group MEDITATION Thursdays, from 8 to 9 am. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 5-26 & Jan. 2-30:** Newcomers welcome at the AL-ANON Literature Discussion, meeting Thursdays at Bethany UMC, from 7:15 to 8:30 pm. 1270 Sanchez.

**Dec. 5-26 & Jan. 2-30:** Bring your storehouse of knowledge to TRIVIA NIGHT on Thursdays at the Dubliner, 3838 24th. 8 pm. 285-0674; brainstormer.com.

**Dec. 6:** Bring your own 45s to the Noe Valley Town Square for a RECORD HOP, from 5 to 8 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 6-27 & Jan. 3-31:** Chris Sequeira leads a free Friday KARAOKE for Adults gathering at Upper Noe Rec Center. 6:30-8:30 pm. 295 Day. 970-8061.



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THURS DEC 5	<b>AUTHOR TALK! JOHN BECKER &amp; MEGAN SCOTT • JOY OF COOKING: 2019 EDITION FULLY REVISED AND UPDATED • 6:30 P.M. FREE</b> John (great-grandson of Irma Rombauer) and Megan developed more than six hundred new recipes for this edition, tested and tweaked thousands of classic recipes, and updated every section of every chapter to reflect the latest ingredients and techniques available to today’s home cooks.
THURS DEC 12	<b>AUTHOR TALK! TONI TIPTON-MARTIN • JUBILEE: RECIPES FROM TWO CENTURIES OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN COOKING: A COOKBOOK • 6:30 P.M. FREE</b> Toni Tipton-Martin, the first African-American food editor of a daily American newspaper, is the author of the James Beard Award-winning <i>The Jemima Code</i> , a history of African-American cooking found in—and between—the lines of three centuries’ worth of African-American cookbooks. Adapted from historical texts and rare African-American cookbooks, the 125 recipes of <i>Jubilee</i> paint a rich, varied picture of the true history of African-American cooking: a cuisine far beyond soul food.



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• CALENDAR •

**Dec. 6-27 & Jan. 3-31 9:** The Friday night JAZZ series continues at Bird & Beckett bookstore, from 5:30 to 8 pm; Saturday night JAZZ is 7:30 to 10 pm. 653 Chenery. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

**Dec. 7:** Coffee and pastry are provided for volunteers on the JURI COMMONS gardening work crew, 9 to 11 am. The park is between Guerrero, San Jose Avenue, 25th, and 26th. RSVP to meetup.com/juri-commoners.

**Dec. 7:** The Baltic CHRISTMAS FAIR includes vendors from Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian communities, food, and a children's clothing exchange. 10 am-4 pm. Latvian Hall, 425 Hoffman. facebook.com/events/447647622768634.

**Dec. 7:** The SF SILENT FILM Festival hosts "A Day of Silents," featuring five films. 11 am-8 pm. Castro Theatre, 429 Castro. silentfilm.org.**Dec. 7:** The SF MIME TROUPE celebrates its 60th anniversary with archival videos and discussion. 3-5 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 7:**The Noe Valley Holiday WINE WALK, "Winter Wonderland," runs from 3 to 8 pm. Tickets at eventbrite.com and at the Town Square.

**Dec. 7:** Olive This Olive That hosts its annual HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE. 4-8 pm. 304 Vicksburg. 251-7520; olivethisolivethat.com.

**Dec. 7:** A HOLIDAY CELEBRATION and Christmas tree lighting at the Noe Valley Town Square runs from 5 to 8 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 7:** Alley Cat Books celebrates its 8th birthday with a party and ART RAFFLE. 7-10 pm. 3036 24th.

824-1761; alleycatbookshop.com.

**Dec. 7 & Jan. 4:** Learn to knit and crochet at the Noe Valley Library's KNITTING CIRCLE. 2-4 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 7-28 & Jan. 4-25:** 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.

**Dec. 7-28 & Jan. 4-25:** Upper Noe Rec Center offers free Vinyasa YOGA CLASSES Saturdays 9:15-10:15 am. Day & Sanchez. 970-8061; noevalleyreccenter.com.

**Dec. 7-28 & Jan. 4-25:** The Randall Museum's close-up of California wildlife, "Meet the ANIMAL KEEPER," happens Saturdays at 2 pm. 199 Museum Way. 554-9605.

**Dec. 8:** Bethany UMC hosts a concert, "BELLS Make December," featuring religious and secular pieces played on handbells, with piano and violin. 5 pm. 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org.

**Dec. 8:** The Farallon Quintet performs at MUSIC ON THE HILL. 7 pm. St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine. 820-1429; musiconthehill.org.

**Dec. 9:** Learn a new language at an introduction to ROSETTA STONE and Mango. 2-3 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 9:** Charlie's Corner Bookstore hosts a HOLIDAY CELEBRATION and fundraiser at 6 pm. 4102 24th. charliescorner.com.

**Dec. 9:** ODD MONDAYS hosts a Poetry Salon featuring Susan Dambroff, E.K. Keith, Jan Steckel, David Watts, and Shelley Wong. 6:30-8 pm. Notable House, 189 Ellsworth. oddmondays.com.

**Dec. 10 & 11:** The Long Now Foundation presents Rick Prelinger's film, LOST LANDSCAPES of San Francisco. 7:30 pm. Castro Theatre, 429 Castro. 621-6120; castrotheatre.com.

**Dec. 10 & Jan. 14:** PFLAG meets at the Women's Building, 3543 18th, on the second Tuesday of the month, 7 to 9 pm. 921-8850; pflagsf.org.

**Dec. 11:** Two of Santa's REINDEER will be at the parklet outside of Just for Fun from 3:30 to 7:30 pm. 3982 24th. 285-4068.

**Dec. 11:** LisaRuth Elliott discusses "VALENCIA STREET as a Lesbian Corridor: Living Memories," in a free public talk sponsored by Shaping San Francisco. 7:30 pm. 518 Valencia. shaping@foundsf.org.

**Dec. 11 & Jan. 8:** The GREAT BOOKS discussion group meets from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 12:** Toni Tipton-Martin discusses Jubilee: Recipes from Two Centuries of AFRICAN-AMERICAN COOKING. 6:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

**Dec. 13:** The Noe Valley Library screens the 1984 comedy FILM, Gremlins. 2-4 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 14:** The free Diamond Heights HOLIDAY PARTY includes caroling, crafts, food, and a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus. 3-5 pm. St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine. 285-9540, ext. 3; staidansf.org.

**Dec. 14:** The Bay Area Vocal Academy (BAVA) performs A BAVA CHRISTMAS. Sat. 7:30 pm & Sun. 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 723-2282; bayareavocalacademy.org.

**Dec. 14 & Jan. 11:** LADYBUG GARDENERS work on the Upper Noe Rec Center park grounds on second Saturdays. 9 am-noon. Day & Sanchez. noevalleyreccenter.com.

**Dec. 15:** SANTA visits Real Estate, 4040 24th, from 11 am to 2 pm; Folio Books, 3957 24th, from 2 to 4 pm.

**Dec. 17:** Ingleside POLICE STATION holds a community meeting on third Tuesdays. 7 pm. Community Room, 1 Sgt. John V. Young Lane. Confirm meeting location at 404-4000; inglesidepolicestation.com.

**Dec. 18:** The Noe Valley Library hosts a BUTTON MAKING workshop for ages 5 and older; all materials provided. 3:30-5 pm. 451 Jersey. Reservations required: 355-5707; sfpl.org.

**Dec. 19:** The Noe Valley Ministry offers a meditative LABYRINTH WALK at 6 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317.

**Dec. 20:** The Noe Valley Ministry hosts a Community CAROL SING. 6 pm. 1021 Sanchez.

**Dec. 22:** Vocalists Elaine Jennings and Janet Lohr perform "A JAZZY

Little Christmas" with a jazz trio. 4 pm. St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine. 285-9540, ext. 3; staidansf.org.

**Dec. 22:** KITKA performs its Wintersongs concert, "Weathering the Storm." 4 pm. Old First Presbyterian Church, 1751 Sacramento. 474-1608; oldfirstconcerts.org.

**Dec. 22-28:** Noe Valley celebrates HANUKKAH with the lighting of a six-foot tall menorah at the Town Square. 5:15 pm; Dec. 27, 4 pm; Dec. 28, 6:30 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 26:** The Noe Valley Town Square hosts an ACOUSTIC CONCERT. 1-3 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 29:** All ages can build a cardboard creation at BOXING DAY at the Noe Valley Town Square; bring a large appliance-size box to get a local gift certificate. 1-3 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

**Dec. 31:** MISSION POLICE STATION holds its community meeting the last Tuesday of the month. 6 pm. 630 Valencia. Call to confirm: 558-5400; missionpolicestation.org.

January Jam

The next Noe Valley Voice Calendar will appear in the January 2020 issue. The deadline for items is December 15. Write to calendar@noevalleyvoice.com Noe Valley events receive priority.



Happy Holidays!  
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NOE VALLEY TOWN SQUARE  
Noe Valley Town Square Events  
December 2019

Featured Events	
Friday Dec. 6	Monthly Record Hop! 5 – 8 PM Bring your vinyls & dance! (1st Friday of each month)
Saturday Dec. 7	5 – 8 PM: 3rd Annual Holiday Tree Lighting & Celebration holiday treats & caroling 3 – 8 PM: NVMPA Holiday Wine Walk
Sunday Dec. 15	Acoustic Sunday in the Square: 1 – 3 PM with Reed Awakening
Sunday Dec. 22	Chanukah Wonderland, 4 – 6 PM Menorah lighting, gelt, treats, crafts, jumpy house
Thursday Dec. 26	Annual Boxing Day! 10 AM – 2 PM Build your own cardboard box creation. Prizes for best design & for those who bring a big appliance/furniture box.
Weekly Events	
Tuesdays	Town Square Tuesdays • 3 – 7 PM Fresh produce & prepared foods • games for all ages
Thursdays	Meditation • 8 – 9 AM
Saturdays	Noe Valley Farmers Market • 8 AM – 1 PM
Sundays	T'ai Chi 9 – 9:50 AM • Yoga 10 – 11 AM



Events take place weather permitting. All events and classes are free and open to the public. 24th Street between Sanchez and Vicksburg. www.noevalleytownsquare.com



ADULT/TEEN EVENTS

**Adult Craft Class:** Make sugar scrubs and holiday cards; space is limited, so reservations are required: 415-355-5707. Wednesday, Dec. 4; 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Noe Valley Knitting Circle:** Learn how to knit or crochet or work on a project the first Saturday of every month. The library has supplies to practice on, or bring your own yarn and needles or hooks. Saturdays, Dec. 7 and Jan. 4; 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**San Francisco Mime Troupe:** The 60th anniversary celebration of the outdoor theater group features a member’s presentation of archival video footage. Saturday, Dec. 7; 3 to 5 p.m.

**Introduction to Rosetta Stone and Mango:** Learn a new language using the San Francisco Public Library’s online resources. Monday, Dec. 9; 2 to 3 p.m.

**Computer and Online Resource “Drop-In”:** Bring your mobile device or laptop to an informal workshop on using the SFPL’s digital resources including eBooks and eAudiobooks. Tuesdays, Dec. 10 and Jan. 14; 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**ATA @ SFPL:** Artists’ Television Access screens holiday and comedy shorts from the library’s 16mm film archive, including Laurel & Hardy’s *Big Business* (1929). Tuesday, Dec. 10; 6:30 to 8 p.m.

**Great Books Discussion Group:** Join others in discussing outstanding works of writing at this group, sponsored by the non-profit Great Books Council of San Francisco. For more information, contact Elena at [eschmid@sonic.net](mailto:eschmid@sonic.net) Wednesdays, Dec. 11 and Jan. 8; 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**Friday Film:** The Noe Valley Library screens the 1984 comedy *Gremlins*, about a boy who receives an unusual pet that leads to a lot of trouble when he fails to take care of it properly. Friday, Dec. 13; 2 to 4 p.m.

**Friday Film:** A female pilot gains superpowers after a freak accident and uses them to help save the world in *Captain Marvel* (2019). Friday, Jan. 10; 2 to 4 p.m.

**Noe Valley Book Discussion Group:** The book to discuss in January is *Asymmetry* by Lisa Halliday. Get a copy of the book at the circulation desk. Wednesday, Jan. 15; 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**eBooks and eAudio Overview:** Learn how to access library eBooks and eAudiobooks, with a focus on Overdrive, Libby, Hoopla, and Axis 360. Laptops will be provided or bring your own device. Saturday, Jan. 18; 3 to 4 p.m.

**Genealogy 101:** Learn how to research your family tree with library resources including the Ancestry Library Edition database and FamilySearch.org, which has the largest collection of genealogical and historical records in the world. Thursday, Jan. 23; 3 to 4:30 p.m.

**Earthquake Preparedness:** Dr. Matt Springer will offer a seminar, “Home Preparedness in Earthquake Country.” Wednesday, Jan. 29; 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**The AAC Conversation Club** meets to practice alternative and augmentative communication using tools such as Dynavox, QuickTalker, Tobii Sono Flex, Talk Bar, smartphones, and tablets. For more information, contact Kris Moser at [krismoser@aol.com](mailto:krismoser@aol.com). Mondays, Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 and Jan. 6, 13 & 27; 4:30 to 5:30 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](http://www.sfpl.org).



MORE BOOKS TO READ

Season’s Readings

Need something to read over the holidays? One of the new titles at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, provided by Branch Manager Denise Sanderson and Children’s Librarian Catherine Starr, could do the trick.

Local readers might enjoy a memoir about San Francisco in the 1960s written by a friend of Janis Joplin, or Cara Black’s latest Aimée Leduc mystery, set in Paris’ 12th arrondissement. Kids will have a whale of a time with a story about what lives at the bottom of the ocean.

To check on those books’ availability—and on the library’s CDs, DVDs, podcasts, you name it—call 415-355-5707, drop by the Noe Valley branch at 451 Jersey St., or visit the San Francisco Public Library online at [sfpl.org](http://sfpl.org).

Note: All San Francisco libraries will be closed on Wednesday, Dec. 25, for Christmas, and on Wednesday, Jan. 1, for New Year’s Day. On Dec. 24 and Dec. 31, libraries will close at 5 p.m.

Children’s Fiction

❖ A timid rabbit finds courage to search for his missing friend in *Rabbit and the Motorbike*, written by Kate Hoeffler and illustrated by Sarah Jacoby. Ages 3 to 7.

❖ A boy and his friends learn about pollution in *Join the No-Plastic Challenge! A First Book of Reducing Waste*, written and illustrated by Scot Ritchie. Ages 4 to 7.

❖ *Intersection Allies: We Make Room for All*, written by Chelsea Johnson, La Toya Council, and Carolyn Choi, with illustrations by Ashley Seil Smith, discusses equality, activism, and friendship. Ages 6 to 12.

❖ A girl goes to Harlem to visit her father’s family, in *Some Places More Than Others* by Newbery Honor and Coretta Scott King Author Award winner Renee Watson. Ages 8 to 12.

❖ In *Saving Hanno: The Story of a Refugee Dog*, by Miriam Halahmy, a boy and his dachshund escape Nazi Germany. Ages 8 to 12.

❖ An overweight boy learns to accept himself in *All of Me* by Chris Baron. Ages 9 to 11.

❖ A girl finds her place in a new school with computers and music, in *Emmy in the Key of Code* by Aimee Lucido. Ages 10 to 12.

Children’s Nonfiction

❖ The amazing creatures and flora at the deepest spots of the ocean are featured in *Down Down Down: A Journey to the Bottom of the Sea*, written and illustrated by Steve Jenkins. Ages 4 to 7.

❖ *Mahatma Gandhi* is the latest title in the “Little People, Big Dreams” series written by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara, with illustrations by Albert Arrayas. Ages 5 to 8.

❖ Beth Walrond describes and illustrates festive feasts in *A Taste of the World: What People Eat and How They Celebrate Around the Globe*. Ages 6 to 10.

❖ *A Book About Whales*, written and illustrated by Andrea Antinori and translated from Italian by David Kelly, tells the history, migration, and individual characteristics of whales. Ages 8 to 12.

❖ The National Novel-Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) handbook *Brave the Page: A Young Writer’s Guide to Telling Epic Stories* is by Rebecca Stern and

Grant Faulkner, with an introduction by Jason Reynolds. Ages 10 and up.

Adult Fiction

❖ Three lives are changed by random events in *Things That Fall From the Sky* by Finnish novelist Selja Ahava.

❖ Set in 19th-century Africa, *Out of Darkness, Shining Light*, by Petina Gappah, tells how a cook and a freed slave helped preserve the body and papers of explorer Dr. David Livingstone.

❖ In Cara Black’s *Murder in Bel-Air*, Paris detective Aimée Leduc discovers her mother is missing and her last conversation was with a homeless woman who’s just been found dead.

❖ In *Ruby and Roland* by Faith Sullivan, a young woman in early 20th-century rural Illinois whose parents have died in an accident faces adversity and opportunities.

Adult Nonfiction

❖ Cinead McTernan offers advice on creating a useful garden in *Grow Your Own Botanicals: Deliciously Productive Plants for Homemade Drinks, Remedies, and Skincare*.

❖ *I Ran Into Some Trouble* is a memoir set in psychedelic 1960s San Francisco by Peggy Caserta, a former Haight-Ashbury boutique owner and girlfriend of Janis Joplin.

❖ Jan Stocklassa’s “creative nonfiction,” *The Man Who Played With Fire: Stieg Larsson’s Lost Files and the Hunt for an Assassin*, delves into the 1986 assassination of Swedish prime minister Olof Palme.

❖ The many achievements of the inventor of the incandescent lamp are spotlighted in *Edison*, a biography by Pulitzer Prize winner Edmund Morris.

Adult eBooks

❖ Marcy Dermansky’s “story of sex and intrigue set amid rich people,” titled *Very Nice*, is set in present-day Manhattan and Connecticut.

❖ In *Searching for Sylvie Lee*, a novel by Jean Kwok, a Chinese immigrant family looks for a missing daughter.

❖ In his memoir *Wham! George Michael and Me*, bandmate Andrew Ridgeley details his long friendship with one of England’s best-known singers and philanthropists.

CHILDREN’S EVENTS

**Winter Crafts with Esther Kwan:** Make luminaries and festive “candles” by gluing petite objects onto battery-operated mini lights. Ages 7 to 12. Thursday, Dec. 5; 3:30 to 5 p.m. Reservations required: 415-355-5707.

**Button-Making:** Design and assemble wearable buttons; all materials provided. Kids 5 and older. Wednesday, Dec. 18; 3:30 to 5 p.m.

**Big Play Date:** Bring ages 5 and younger to fun activities that engage your children’s fine and gross motor development as well as socio-emotional attunement. Saturday, Jan. 11; 10 a.m. to noon.

Every Thursday morning, join Miss Catherine’s **Toddler Tales** from 10:15 to 10:45 a.m., or 11 to 11:30 a.m., for books, songs, chants, and small movement. For ages 16 through 36 months, with parent or caregiver.

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](http://www.sfpl.org).

❖ *The Art of Making Memories: How to Create and Remember Happy Moments*, by “happiness researcher” Meik Wiking, describes the brain’s work in remembering.

Adult DVDs

❖ The 1984 documentary *Before Stonewall: The Making of a Gay and Lesbian Community* includes interviews by Allen Ginsberg and Betty Friedan, and narration by Rita Mae Brown.

❖ Harrison Ford narrates *Armstrong*, the 2019 documentary about Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon.

❖ A cyber villain threatens the future of humanity in *Fast & Furious Presents: Hobbs & Shaw* (2019), starring Dwayne Johnson.

❖ In the 2019 film *Luce*, a boy adopted from Eritrea is threatened by a high school teacher.

Annotations by Voice bookworm  
Karol Barske

BRANCH HOURS

Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library 451 Jersey St., 355-5707							
Sun 1-5	Mon 12-6	Tues 10-9	Wed 1-9	Thurs 10-6	Fri 1-6	Sat 10-6	
Mission Branch Library 300 Bartlett St., 355-2800							
Sun 1-5	Mon 1-6	Tues 10-9	Wed 10-9	Thurs 10-9	Fri 1-6	Sat 10-6	
Glen Park Branch Library 2825 Diamond St., 355-2858							
Sun 1-5	Mon 10-6	Tues 10-6	Wed 12-8	Thurs 12-7	Fri 1-6	Sat 1-6	
Eureka Valley–Harvey Milk Branch Library 1 José Sarria Ct. (3555 16th St.), 355-5616							
Sun 12-6	Mon 10-9	Tues 12-9	Wed 10-6	Thurs 1-6	Fri 12-6	Sat	

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Dining Out by Michael Blake

C	O	E	D		A	S	L	E	E	P		R	F	D
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and now for the  
**RUMORS**  
behind the news

A Noe Noel

By Mazook

**CHARLIE’S COMEBACK:** Two months ago, it seemed as if children’s bookstore Charlie’s Corner was writing its last chapter. The four-year-old bookstore, at 24th and Castro, had announced it was closing in November.

But within weeks of that sad news, owner Charlotte Nagy sent an email to Charlie’s Friends, saying that because of an outpouring of support from loyal customers, the bookstore would not shut its doors and would stay open at least through December. (The store had said in September that to stay afloat it was going to have to charge for story times, \$10 a class.)

Nagy also announced she was launching a GoFundMe page (Save Charlie’s Corner). On the site, she wrote: “The more funds we raise, will give us time to implement a much needed option for customers: a membership option instead of paying per class, which we will try to implement in December/January.”

Well, as of Nov. 21, almost 300 donors have contributed more than \$30,000 to the cause. Nagy says on GoFundMe, “For anyone that gives \$100 or more, your donation amount will go towards the monthly membership program that will provide unlimited story times, so you won’t be double charged for it.”

The store is thanking donors at a Dec. 7 party at the store, 4 to 8 p.m., to coincide with the Noe Valley Holiday Wine Walk.

It also is holding a holiday fundraiser on Dec. 9, starting at 6 p.m. But don’t wait till

then. Go in and buy a book or four tomorrow.

Hopefully, this neighborhood gem will continue in the new year. If you have never been to a story time, take yourself and a child soon. They are almost like musical theater events, and often include puppets and costumes. Check with the store for times in December. The last time I attended was when Mayor London Breed visited and read a children’s story about San Francisco to the crowd of happy kids.



**RIDING THE VIDEO WAVE:** Another hot ticket in Noe Valley last month was a sold-out benefit screening of *The Last Black Man in San Francisco* on Nov. 12. The occasion was a fundraiser for Video Wave at 4027 24th St., and it was “a total success,” according to co-owner Colin Hutton. “We sold out of all 175 tickets.”

Hutton is still tallying how much was raised through donations and a raffle for 20 autographed movie posters and a DVD and Blu-ray of the film. But “we couldn’t have asked for any better turnout or any better donations,” Hutton said of the event, which was held at the Noe Valley Ministry.

The screening featured appearances by *Last Black Man* director Joe Talbot and actor Jimmy Fails, plus Eddie Muller, who puts on the annual Noir City film fest (coming up Jan. 24 to Feb. 2 at the Castro Theatre) and is host of Turner Classic Movies’ Noir Alley series.

Talbot and Fails said they grew up skateboarding in and around Noe Valley, and were regulars at Happy Donuts on 24th Street. Muller talked about the importance of saving Video Wave and preserving hard copies of classic (and independent) films, as Disney and Netflix tighten their hold on what’s available through streaming.

Video Wave has a wealth of video titles. Hutton says he has “just over 25,700 things to rent.”

To check out the latest fundraising tally, go to Save Video Wave at GoFundMe.com.



**SLUMS OF NOE VALLEY:** The esteemed *San Francisco Chronicle* entertainment writer Peter Hartlaub paid a visit to Noe Valley preparatory to the #TotalSF Movie Night that he and fellow *Chronster* Heather Knight will host Dec. 5 at the Balboa Theater, featuring the original *Sister Act* film. He was looking for stories from those who “were around for the filming of *Sister Act* and witnessed the neighborhood’s Hollywood transformation to an x-rated den of sin.” (You can read what Hartlaub found in the *Chronicle’s* Nov. 27 edition.)

The principal location in the flick was St. Paul’s Catholic Church, located at Valley and Church streets. Filming ran from September to December 1991. The storefronts on the opposite side of the street were redesigned to give the look of a run-down neighborhood ridden with crime, and included a pawn shop and a bookstore “rated XXX.” As Herb Caen wrote at the time, “The Hollywoodenheads slummified a formerly pin-neat block at 29th and Church.”

For the real scoop, read *Noe Valley Voice* writer Kathy Dalle-Molle’s story in the November 1991 issue, “Church Street Looking for Oscar in Disney Movie.”

My favorite part of the movie, by the way, is when the pope came to a mass to hear the choir led by Whoopi Goldberg, playing the nun (and disco diva) Deloris Van Cartier.



**MEAT AND POTATOES:** After the rather abrupt closing of Church Produce at 1798 Church in October, Baron’s Quality Meats offered to start selling produce at its store at 1706 Church at 29th Street. (Baron’s took over the Drewes Meats space in the spring of 2017.)

According to manager Lazarus Gereke-Couacaud, neighbors have been very receptive to having a new source of organic fruits, vegetables, and potatoes. “Like the

owner [Dave Samiljan] says, we want to provide the essential ingredients for a well-balanced meal, which we are now able to offer our neighbors. We were very happy we got all our permits just in time, since the produce store up the street closed last month.”

So are the many folks in Fairmount, Bernal, and Upper Noe who for many years had frequented Church Produce.

Baron’s also makes its own sausages in the front window of the market, where you can stand and watch the show. (I did so a while back and it was very cool.) The most popular sausages made onsite, according to Gereke-Couacaud, are the Sweet Italian and the Bratwurst.



**CUSTOM GOODS AND A COCKATIEL:** The smallish store next to Just for Fun, at 3980 24th—anybody remember when Ritz Camera used to be there?—has finally been rented, to a clothing designer who makes his creations in his Chinatown studio and workshop.

He has named his store after himself, Basil Racuk, and opened his door on Saturday, Nov. 23. When I wandered in, Racuk was busy telling curious shoppers, “This is not a pop-up. I’m here to stay.”

Racuk says he was a designer for Banana Republic and then for Old Navy for 16 years. He went out on his own six years ago making and selling his leather tote bags, women’s handbags, and garments on special order at his studio and also at his retail store at 18th and Valencia.

“I am just thrilled to be here.... I have been looking in the neighborhoods for a space to relocate my retail shop for several months, and this spot was advertised on Craigslist, so I came out and found it to be just what I needed in one of my favorite neighborhoods in the city, and here I am.

“I just brought some of my designs and displayed them in the store, so I could

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

**ON SALE**  
...at The Good Life Grocery



**Pacific**  
Chicken and Vegetable Broth  
32 oz -reg 4.99

**\$ 3.49**



**Prime Rib &  
Rack of Lamb**



**Clover**  
Half & Half  
32 oz -reg 2.99  
**\$2.49**



**Fever Tree**  
Ginger Ale  
17 oz -reg 6.79

**\$5.99**



**Fiasco Panettone**

**Get All Of Your Holiday Favorites  
Here At The Good Life!**



**Clover**  
European Style Butter  
1/2 lb -reg 3.99

**\$2.99**

**Martinellis**  
Sparkling Cider  
25.3 oz -reg 4.99

**\$3.99**



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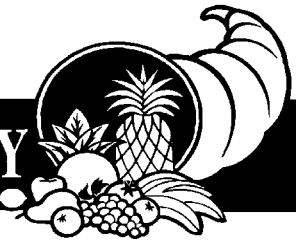
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RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

open the door.” Racuk said he was surprised so many people came to his soft opening. “I even sold several bags and some women’s apparel.”

For a look at his bags or clothing designs, mostly casual tees and jerseys—”modern style is all about comfort”—go to his website at BasilRacuk.com.

Also moving into the store is Racuk’s cockatiel, Julio, who has roots in Noe Valley. “I got Julio from the Animal Company [on Castro Street] when he was a newborn, and he had to stay there and be nursed before coming home.”

Stocking the store appears to be a work in progress, but a creative artisan is a welcome sight in Downtown Noe Valley.



IT’S A WASHOUT: The very popular coin launderette on the corner of 22nd Street and Noe with, as the sign on the window says, “dry cleaning, shirt service, wash & fold, and alterations,” is no more. Gone, poof, after 55 years. That was the mid-1960s, right around the time that Janis Joplin lived upstairs.

“Our lease was up, and the new owner gave us notice to leave and to have the space emptied, including all the machines and equipment on the ground floor and in the basement,” says Hui Bang Qian, who has operated Let’s Do Wash for the past 15 years. “We took over for the family who ran it for around 40 years.”

It appears the new owner of the apartment building Let’s Do Wash is vacating will start a soft-story seismic retrofit of the building at the beginning of next year. The cost of the work was probably prohibitive for the long-time owner of the building,

who decided to sell earlier this year. The new owner must be able to afford to bring the building into compliance with our strict earthquake safety codes.

It seems the unintended consequence of the city’s seismic safety requirements is the displacement of a lot of businesses located in buildings that are trying to come into compliance.

There have been many buildings on 24th Street where construction has had a major impact on tenants over the last few years. Consider Cardio-Tone, Charlie’s Corner, Peasant Pies, Toast, See Jane Run, and Small Frys, to name just a few. And don’t be surprised if many more businesses in Noe Valley (and every other neighborhood in the city) will have to close for retrofits, either temporarily or permanently, in the future.



CHEERS: Kudos go out to Jeffrey Tumlin, who was named last month as San Francisco’s new director of transportation at the SFMTA by Mayor London Breed. This month he’ll take over as the boss of Muni, BART, and the Chinatown/North Beach subway, among other projects.

A longtime SF resident, he lives in Noe Valley with his artist husband of 25 years. “I’m focused on putting people first and implementing solutions that work best for a diverse and ever-growing world-class city,” he said. He hopes to improve public transit by using some of the ideas of the mayor’s Transit Performance Working Group, as well as focus on vehicle and pedestrian safety.

In June, Noe resident Jessica Closson was named safety coordinator for District 8. Supervisor Rafael Mandelman’s office appointed Closson to the civilian position within the SFPD so she could help respond to calls from residents and merchants, attend community meetings, and act as a liaison between residents, city departments, and police. She’ll also assess services for

people without housing and look for responses to car break-ins and drug crime, if any, in District 8 neighborhoods. Former Supe Jeff Sheehy launched the idea last year.

You can contact Closson at 415-713-6877 or Jessica.Closson@sfgov.org.



SHORT SHRIFTS: The Noe Valley Branch of the Bank of America is going through an interior remodel these days. Surprisingly (at least to me), there is space only for one live teller and one electronic teller. Sure seems like an extreme way to encourage customers to bank electronically. I expect long lines to form on paydays.

For all of you who want to share in what happens in our neighborhood, you are invited to attend the Friends of Noe Valley meeting at Umpqua Bank Dec. 4, at 7 p.m. The agenda is “reorganizing, rejuvenating, and revitalizing” the Friends, which dates back to the early 1970s.

A “For Rent” sign was posted on the front door of the recently vacated Toast space at 3991 24th St. near Noe. Guess Toast is toast, on 24th that is. It’s still open on Church Street.

Congrats to Noe Valley Bakery (4073 24th), recently named third best on an SF.Eater.com list of “sweetest cakes” purveyors in the city. The red velvet cake was singled out, with its “tender buttermilk crumb and tangy cream cheese frosting.” Schubert’s Bakery on Clement Street came in at number one.

Oakland Athletics star outfielder and big-time foodie Mark Canha (and a San Francisco resident) has been on Twitter raving about two of his favorite eateries in Noe Valley: La Ciccina (world-class Sardinian cuisine, at 291 30th) for dinner, and Aha Fresh (4007 24th) for brunch.

We just learned that the former Cardio-Tone location, at Church and Day, is going to continue as an exercise spot. A fitness studio called Functional Elements, whose

owner is Lissy Stalter, has opened there and offers this description: “At Functional Elements we bring the mind, body, and soul together to create meaningful life synergies through movement, community, and mindfulness.” Sounds good.

At press time, Mother Nature declared winter had started. On Tuesday, Nov. 26, rain and winds struck the neighborhood and swamped many businesses around 24th at Sanchez and at Noe. The sewers could not handle the water propelled by winds reaching 36 mph, according to the very useful website Timeanddate.com.



THE SQUARE DEAL: The Noe Valley Town Square hosted a potluck dinner party on the evening of Nov. 9, and about 75 people showed up with food and blankets. “It was a bit chilly,” said Town Square director Leslie Crawford, “but everybody warmed up to the Parisian Café atmosphere, sat at white-clothed and candlelit tables, and enjoyed the ‘Gypsy Jazz’ by a great neighborhood group, 29th Street Swingtet, who got everybody moving.” She promised to do the event again in the spring, “when it gets a little warmer.”

Crawford wants to invite everybody to the second annual Boxing Day celebration in the square on Dec. 26. It’s named after a secular holiday that originated in the UK in 1871, but here it involves playing with cardboard boxes. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., many boxes will be provided to create tunnels and buildings and whatever, and art materials will be on hand to decorate the boxes. “We are looking for donations of large and super large appliance-sized boxes and we will have special prizes for the most artistic creations,” says Crawford.



THAT’S ALL, Y’ALL: Have happy holidays and days and days, and look forward to the coming year when we will all enjoy having 2020 hindsight. ■

Just For Fun

Artsake

& Scribbledoodles

toys and gifts  
for everyone on your list!

Wednesday, December 11th

Reindeer: 3:30 - 7:30

Santa: 4:30 - 7:30

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4pm

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7pm

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE DROUBI TEAM AT GENERATION



As a proud Noe Valley establishment with over 40 years in the neighborhood, we have donated over \$20,000 to local organizations including... Jamestown, the Mosaic Project, Access Institute, Support for Families, Noe Valley Association, Friends of Noe Valley, St. Philips School, Children's Day School, James Lick Middle School, and Noe Valley Girls Film Festival.

OVER \$100M IN SALES VOLUME IN 2019

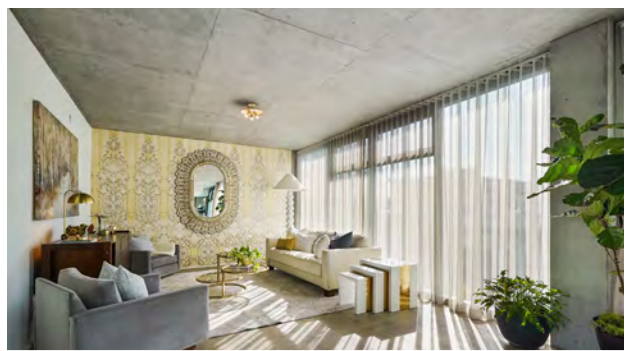
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72-78 28TH STREET



3479-3481 19TH STREET



8 OCTAVIA STREET #803

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1001 DIAMOND STREET



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**BUYER REPRESENTED**  
Sold Price \$3,250,000

**EUREKA VALLEY VIEW HOME**  
List Price \$1,995,000 / Sold Price \$2,150,000



**LAMISSE DROUBI**  
FOUNDER / REALTOR®

415.400.4069  
lamisse@droubiteam.com  
DRE# 01257759

**GENERATION**  
REAL ESTATE

4157 24th Street • San Francisco, CA 94114  
www.DroubiTeam.com





Come enjoy the festivities at the 10th annual 24 HoliDAYS on 24th Street, Dec. 1-24 in Noe Valley

for event calendar & all details, visit  
**www.24on24th.com**



NOE VALLEY  
TOWN  
SQUARE

**Holiday Celebration  
Tree Lighting  
Saturday, Dec. 7  
5 – 8 PM**

Caroling  
Festive lighting  
Holiday treats

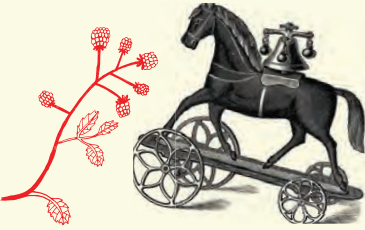
**Holiday Wine Walk  
Saturday 12/7, 3-8 PM**  
Details: [24on24th.com](http://24on24th.com)  
Tickets: [noevalleywinewalk.com](http://noevalleywinewalk.com)



**Holiday Events  
at local merchants  
More details at [24on24th.com](http://24on24th.com)**

- 12/1: Heroes and Howl-i-days at Doggy Style
- 12/3: Folio Books Giving Tuesday and Narnia reception
- 12/6, 4-7 PM: SkinSpirit Holiday Party + Tree Lighting
- 12/12, 5-9 PM: Ambiance Holiday Party
- 12/12, 6-8 PM: Wine Tasting Benefit for Fire Relief at NOVY
- 12/14, 4-6 PM: SkinSpirit Holiday Shopping Party
- 12/22, 4-6 PM: Vodka & Latkes, The Agency

Event details subject to change; please visit [24on24th.com](http://24on24th.com)



**Holiday Hayride**  
Saturday 12/7  
11 AM–2 PM  
**Free!**  
A Noe Valley Tradition  
sponsored by  
**Zephyr Real Estate**



**SANTA!**  
Times, locations etc:  
[24on24th.com](http://24on24th.com)  
12/11: Just for Fun  
12/14: The Agency  
12/14: Zephyr Real Estate  
12/15: Folio Books  
12/17: First Republic Bank



**Live music!**  
Times, locations etc  
at [24on24th.com](http://24on24th.com)



**Live Reindeer!**  
Wednesday, Dec 11  
3:30-7:30 PM  
West Parklet  
**Santa!**  
4:30-7:30 PM  
sponsored by  
Just for Fun

**Chanukah Wonderland  
Noe Valley Town Square  
December 22, 4:00–6:00 PM**  
Menorah Lighting, Gelt,  
Children's Arts and Crafts  
co-sponsored by Just for Fun  
& Chabad Noe Valley



The NVMPA wishes to give a **BIG SHOUT OUT** to all the property owners and merchants supporting the upcoming renewal of the Noe Valley Association Community Benefit District. Together we keep 24th Street clean & green, and continue to creatively build public space for our community. Look for the ballot in mid-December, and vote Yes!

**Thank you to our generous sponsors!**

