



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

Bay Nature Grows in Noe

Fueled by a Love of Magazines And Martha & Bros. Coffee

By Matthew S. Bajko

Since becoming executive director of the nonprofit Bay Nature Institute and publisher of its quarterly magazine *Bay Nature* in August 2017, Regina Starr Ridley has made a variety of editorial changes, some more noticeable than others to readers of the nearly two-decade-old publication. All are summed up in the tweak she and her staff made to the magazine's tagline.

For years it had been, "An exploration of nature in the San Francisco Bay Area." The narrowly focused scope on the local environment, however, no longer reflected the larger environmental issues the magazine was covering, which had far broader implications than just in the nine counties that comprise the Bay Area.

So last October, the staff debuted a new tagline. Derived from a quote attributed to Albert Einstein, it now reads, "Look into

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Take a Ride on The 48

Views of the City From Bayview to the Beach

By Olivia Boler

Ah, Muni. Whether you love or abhor it, the San Francisco Municipal Railway, comprising buses and Metro trains, provides San Francisco riders with a much-needed service—inexpensive public transportation. Not everyone drives or owns a car. Not everyone can afford Uber, Lyft, or taxi. If you ride Muni, you don't have to stress about finding parking or car break-ins.

But this isn't a story about Muni woes or glories. It's about the 48-Quintara/24th Street bus route, which serves Noe Valley and neighborhoods from Dogpatch to the Sunset. The 48 is a crosstown bus traversing the city 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At its eastern end, it finishes at 20th and Third streets. Its western terminus varies depending on whether it's a weekday, weekend, or evening.

The 48 goes all the way to lower Ocean Beach weekday mornings and afternoons. On weekday evenings and weekends, its last western stop is the Metro station at Ulloa Street and West Portal Avenue.

The bus runs most frequently weekday mornings before 10 a.m.—about every 10 minutes. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., riders can expect a 13-minute wait between buses. Surprisingly, the 48 doesn't run more frequently during afternoon rush hours, 3 to 7 p.m. Instead, it comes every 14 minutes, according to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency website. After 7 p.m., expect it every 20 to 30 minutes. Weekend waits are a steady 20 minutes.

On the Friday afternoon this *Voice* reporter and her companion catch the bus at



Growing Up Alex. Nine-year-old Alex Ausman is passionate about writing and aspects of the entertainment business. She also enjoys many of the treats life in Noe Valley has to offer. For more on this energetic and engaging youngster, see Katie Burke's *Noe Kids* column on page 16.

Photo by Art Bodner

Mary Ellen Pleasant and the House on Laidley

The Link Is Tenuous But We'll Take It

By Evelyn Rose

By its architectural design alone, the Gothic mansion located near Laidley and Fairmount streets in today's Fairmount Heights neighborhood evokes a sense of mystery and intrigue. Yet for more than a century, that aura has been enhanced by the house's association with Mary Ellen Pleasant, known as the mother of civil rights in California.

As a woman of color, Pleasant's groundbreaking achievements in the 19th century would be tempered by the disdain and derision focused against her by white residents and newspaper organizations of Jim Crow California. Descriptions of her life have often been sensationalized. Based on hearsay and innuendo, these characterizations solidified myths and stereotypes rather than celebrating a woman who should be recognized

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The End of the World As We Know It. After trekking from Third Street and winding through the Mission and Noe Valley, San Francisco Muni's 48-Quintara bus line reaches its western terminus at Rivera Street and the Great Highway—near Ocean Beach.

Photo by Jack Tipple

24th and Noe streets, I use the Next Bus app, and it proves off—it claims the next bus heading west will arrive in 50 minutes, so we opt to go east. Within a minute, a westbound bus roars by. We're miffed the app has led us astray, but a good attitude to cultivate when relying on public transit is to give up some control. If you really need to vent, call 311 to complain.

It's a chilly, sunny winter day with occasional showers. As we travel through Noe Valley, it's a typical day on 24th Street—

people walking their dogs and strollers, friends sitting on benches outside Bernie's and Whole Foods enjoying a bit of sun and conversation, shoppers heading in and out of stores.

Eyes on the Murals

We peer out the bus windows as 24th Street crosses Dolores Street and dives into the Mission. Shop fronts change—more Spanish appears on windows such as J.J. Jewelers (3214 24th St.): "Reparamos,

joyas de oro, plata-relojes, cambio de baterias—watch, gold, and silver repair." We note a variety of eateries—cafes, bars, restaurants—as well as shops like Alley Cat Books (3036 24th St.), which sells English and Spanish tomes new and used.

Some buildings are colorful, from the awning of Sidewalk Juice on 24th and Folsom to the murals adorning exterior walls. We're tempted to exit the bus and explore.

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OPENSFHISTORY



The Blue Church. A J-Church streetcar heads for the Transbay Terminal passing 28th Street and the Holiness Temple in Christ around 1970. The building was first constructed as the Searchlight Theatre in 1916. It was known as the Del Mar when it closed in 1965. Some may remember it more recently as the "Blue Church," so named for its royal-blue facade in the 2000s. It was demolished and replaced by housing in 2012.

Photo and information courtesy OpensFHHistory.org / Western Neighborhoods Project / David Gallagher

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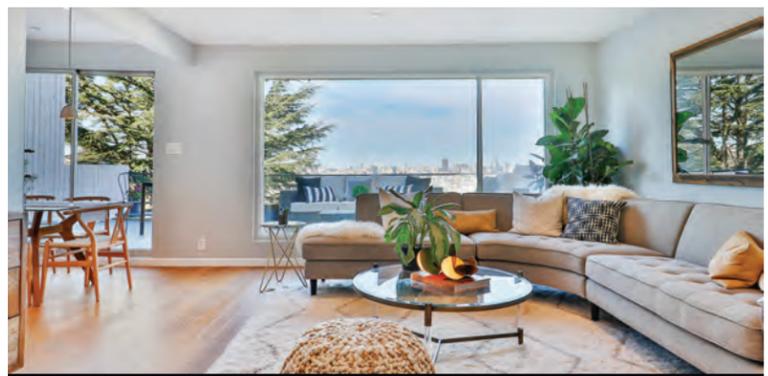
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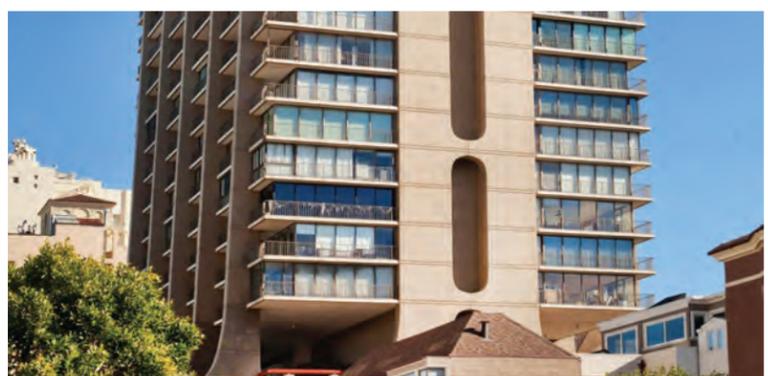
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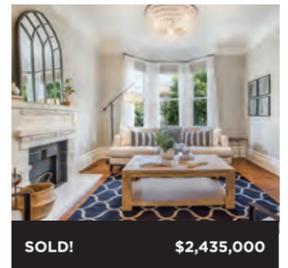
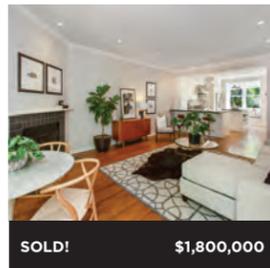
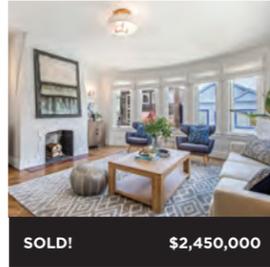
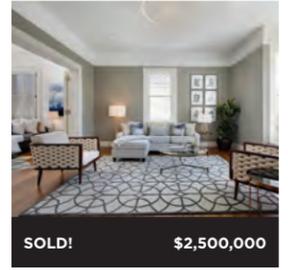
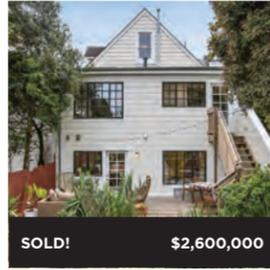
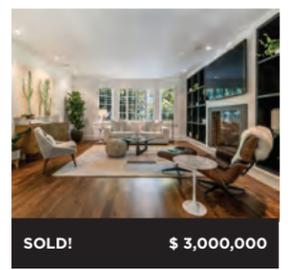
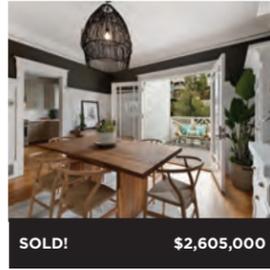
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THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

P.O. Box 460249
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The *Noe Valley Voice* is an independent newspaper published monthly except in January and August. It is distributed free in Noe Valley and vicinity during the first week of the month. Subscriptions are available at \$40 per year (\$35 for seniors) by writing to the above address.

The *Voice* welcomes your letters, photos, and stories, particularly on topics relating to Noe Valley. All items should include your name and contact information, and may be edited for brevity or clarity. (Unsigned letters will not be considered for publication.) Unsolicited contributions will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The *Noe Valley Voice* is a member of the San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association.

Email: editor@noevalleyvoice.com

Website: www.noevalleyvoice.com

Distribution: Call Jack, 415-385-4569

Display Advertising: Call Pat, 415-608-7634, or email PatRose@noevalleyvoice.com

Display Advertising Deadline for the April 2019 Issue: March 20, 2019

Editorial/Class Ad Deadline: March 15, 2019

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ADVERTISING SALES

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PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Contents © 2019 The Noe Valley Voice

THE CARTOON BY OWEN BAKER-FLYNN



LETTERS 55¢

Giving a Hoot

Editor:

I just read the article on the barn owl on Cesar Chavez Street ["Dead Owl Prompts Alert to Neighbors," February 2019].

I too have a female barn owl who has taken up residence in my back yard (on Alvarado Street) from June 2018 to the present. She is healthy and taking care of many rodents, as evidenced by her pellets in my yard.

I am attaching a flyer that I will be distributing to my neighbors regarding the presence of owls in the neighborhood and alternatives to rodent poison.

Thank you for your timely and very important article. It's so important to be the custodians of our environment and wildlife populations.

Marcia Ban
Noe Valley resident

Gifts From a Master Gardener

Editor:

The Friends of Noe Valley and the Noe Valley Town Square would like to especially thank Arete Nicholas, Master Gardener and Cesar Chavez Street resident, for overseeing the plant selection and plant design of the five semi-circular planters in the Town Square.

Plant selection was made with an eye for drought tolerance, hardiness, and a plant palette that would be pleasing to the eye and attract pollinators like our butterflies and hummingbirds.

Two months after planting time, the plants seem to be flourishing in their new home and the children in the square seem to love them too!

Peggy Cling
Friends of Noe Valley

Not the Remedy

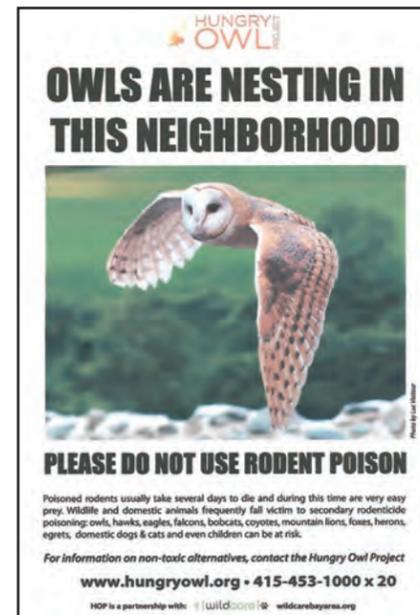
Editor:

I picked up the February *Noe Valley Voice* yesterday doing errands on 24th Street and was so dismayed to see the picture on the cover showing the manager of the lunch place that serves everything in plastic holding up the single-use plastic-covered salad. The Urban Remedy store was rewarded for their unconscionable practice of using single-use plastic exclusively for serving their food.

We all are trying so hard to cut down on our plastic use and that this was not mentioned in the article ["Eating Vegan in Noe Valley"] is a huge failure on the part of the *Voice*.

There must be a compostable solution for this store. Making alternatives to plastic visible should be the goal for many, many establishments, including the *Voice*.

Josie Iselin
29th Street



Alvarado Street resident Marcia Ban is distributing this flyer to neighbors to help protect owls and other wildlife in Noe Valley.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

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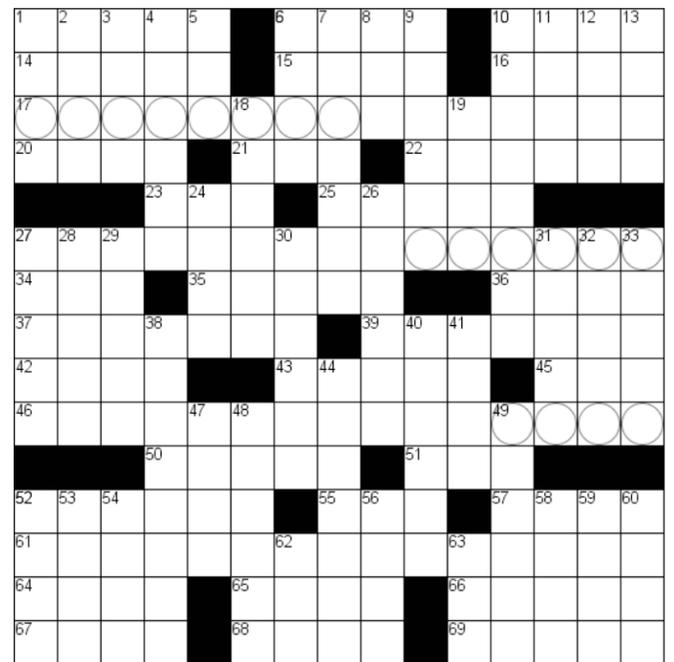
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THE CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

Hum a Few Bars

ACROSS

- 1. Talmud expert
- 6. Weaponry
- 10. ___ Guys: Asian milk-tea shops
- 14. Come ___ of the rain
- 15. Gala
- 16. German GM subsidiary
- 17. Prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude
- 20. Cassini who designed for Jackie
- 21. Number of monosyllabic state names
- 22. In order that one may
- 23. Mess up
- 25. Guy who writes jingles
- 27. Maryland-based MLB athlete
- 34. Pierre's friend
- 35. Counterpart of flora
- 36. Supercilious one
- 37. Most cushiony
- 39. No-goodniks
- 42. Road for Caesar
- 43. "You'd think so..." follower
- 45. Bauxite or hematite
- 46. Architect of London's St. Paul's Cathedral
- 50. Call to an Echo
- 51. Carrier to Tokyo
- 52. Get ___ (approval)
- 55. Actor Cage, familiarly
- 57. Big Easy acronym
- 61. 24th Street establishment offering voice



- 11. Linnaeus, notably
- 11. Bloom County penguin
- 12. Red shade
- 13. In addition
- 18. Actress Shearer et al.
- 19. Make like a lion
- 24. Widespread
- 26. Paucity
- 27. Early PC language
- 28. "Like ___ to the flame."
- 29. Military careerist
- 30. Where sent messages go
- 31. "It's ___ the other!"
- 32. Casablanca co-star
- 33. Buddy who played Jed Clampett
- 38. Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill area
- 40. Like a short play
- 41. Ripped up
- 44. Legit (with "on the")
- 47. Slovenly one
- 48. Monotony
- 49. Move aimlessly
- 52. Russian ruler
- 53. ___ Met Your Mother
- 54. Adam's grandson
- 56. Beliefs
- 58. Like the Gulf of Mexico after BP's spill
- 59. Women's clothier on Sanchez Street
- 60. Grp. that might have a .org URL
- 62. Carrier of genetic info
- 63. Part of N. Amer.

Solution on Page 26
Find more Crosswords at www.noevalleyvoice.com

48-Quintara Is a Crosstown Adventure

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Instead, we'll wait for a Precita Eyes weekend guided tour.

At Potrero Avenue, the 48 leaves 24th Street and wends its way up Potrero Hill, first passing San Francisco General Hospital and the Starr King Open Space, which offers spectacular urban views. We head downhill, turning left on Pennsylvania Street where the San Francisco–Marin Food Bank is located.

On 22nd Street, there's a shift change. This gives us a chance to study the Caltrain tunnel and tracks running beneath us while Interstate-280 looms parallel overhead. Alas, a train doesn't grace us with its presence at the 22nd Street station stop this time.

Wooly Pig on the Bay Side

The bus, with a new driver at the helm, continues through Dogpatch, also known as the Central Waterfront. We pass bars and restaurants such as the Dogpatch Saloon, Piccino, and Mr. & Mrs. Miscellaneous Ice Cream, before terminating on 20th Street at Third.

Our driver tells us to disembark for 10 minutes. It's started to rain, so we visit the Wooly Pig Café (2295 Third St.), which boasts charming pig-centric art and cute sayings such as, "We must take care of mother earth, it's the only planet that has bacon," on its compost bin.

After a refreshing OJ, we hop back on the bus to make our way back the way we came. Passing our original Noe Valley bus stop, we continue west. According to the SFMTA website, the 48-Quintara serves 11 neighborhoods: Bayview, Bernal Heights, Castro/Upper Market,

Diamond Heights, Lakeshore, Mission, Noe Valley, Parkside, Potrero Hill, Twin Peaks, and West of Twin Peaks. But the extended daytime route packs in a few more: Saint Francis Wood, West Portal, and the entire Sunset District.

Heading west, we leave 24th Street with a right turn onto Hoffman Avenue. Again, as it did in Potrero Hill and Dogpatch, the bus winds up and over the hill with a sharp left at 22nd Street onto Grand View Avenue past houses and apartments. We're briefly on Clipper Street before going left onto Portola Drive.

Muni serves thousands of the city's youth. We pass several schools along our route including the Ruth Asawa School of the Arts, which shares the old McAteer campus with The Academy–San Francisco. In Parkside, we stop near Hoover Middle School, and later in the afternoon, on our way home, we pick up students from Lincoln High School and St. Ignatius College Prep.

West Portal Has the Empire

Before all that, however, still near Twin Peaks, we pass Tower Market and the purple church on Portola. Ebenezer/herchurch Lutheran (its formal name) celebrates the "divine female" per their website, herchurch.org.

Our bus—it feels like *our* bus now—eventually turns onto West Portal Avenue via Vicente Street. This is where the bus terminates evenings and weekends. One can catch the Metro—the K-Ingleside, the L-Taraval, and the M-Ocean View trains—if needed.

West Portal is a fun, homey neighborhood. There are shops, cafés, restaurants, and bars, as well as CineArts at the Empire movie theater. Here they show artsy films, live broadcasts of New York Met opera, and some blockbusters. (*Green Book* and *The Favourite* were showing in



On the eastward route from Noe Valley, the tempting sights are the murals in the Mission, especially the *Carnaval* and other art works at 24th and South Van Ness. Photos by Jack Tipple

late February.)

The 48 continues on Ulloa Street, running along the L-Taraval tracks before turning right at 14th Avenue. A zig onto Santiago Street, a zag onto 17th Avenue, and finally, we're on Quintara Street—the other half of the route's name.

There's not much commerce outside the windows of the bus. We spy a sandwich shop at 21st Avenue called Uncle Joe, which likely serves Lincoln students.

It's nearly a straight shot to the beach now, except for one loop around part of the S.I. campus. Finally, we reach the terminus at 48th Avenue. Our bus driver hops off with a sandwich, which he munches while walking down the Great Highway promenade parallel to our bus stop.

Look for Snowy Plovers

My companion and I descend and stretch our legs. We cross the Great Highway—there's a traffic light and crosswalk—to stand on the promenade looking over Ocean Beach. The rain has stopped, and

even though the sun is out, so is the wind.

We opt not to go down to the beach but take a few photos of the amazing seascape from atop the seawall. The beach is the wintering ground of the Western snowy plover, a small brown-and-white bird that blends into the sand. The seawall is covered in colorful graffiti.

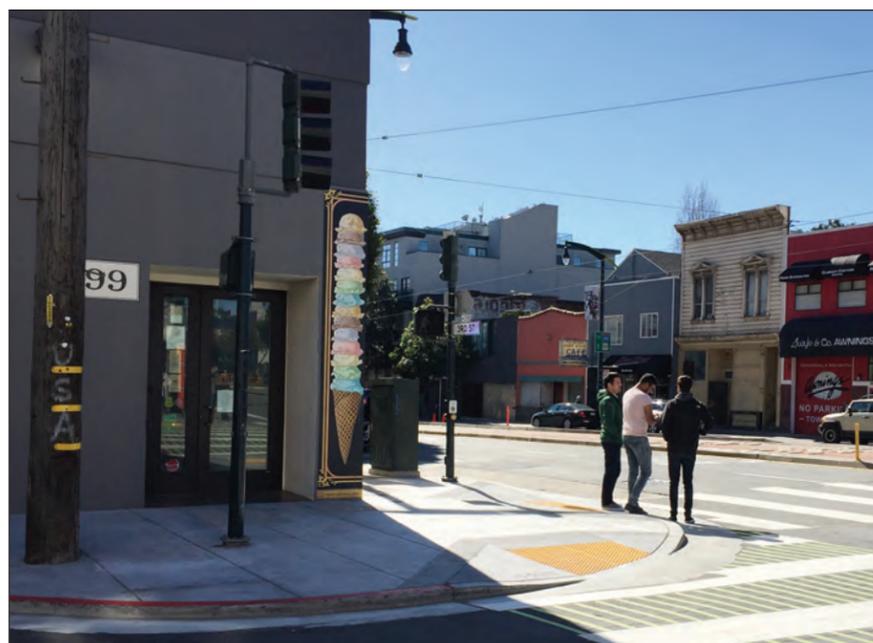
The area is quite residential. There's a house facing the ocean painted like a classic Mondrian—white with squares of primary colors.

Walk south four blocks and you'll find Andytown Coffee Roasters (3629 Taraval St.), which has an espresso drink named after the snowy plover. In the opposite direction is Devil's Teeth Baking Company at 3876 Noriega St. It's a half-mile walk. The San Francisco Zoo is about a 25-minute walk.

Again, because it's chilly, we choose to climb onto the next departing 48. One good thing about being first on—we have our pick of seats, which makes all the difference as we make our way back to Noe Valley. ■



You can still hop on the 48-Quintara bus and pay cash (exact change, please). The fare is \$2.75 for adults, \$1.50 for seniors or disabled, and \$1.25 for youth 5 to 18.



A stroll through the Central Waterfront neighborhood offers a chance to visit several saloons and a creamery called Mr. & Mrs. Miscellaneous.



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Bay Nature Growing Bolder

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nature and understand everything better.” It has manifested in the pages of the magazine through recent stories on green gentrification and environmental education.

“There is a growing realization that nature matters. When dealing with things like climate change, nature can be a solution,” said Ridley, 61, who lives with her husband in Noe Valley, where they raised their two children.

David Loeb founded *Bay Nature* 19 years ago and served as its publisher until he retired and brought Ridley on as his successor. Based in Berkeley, the printed magazine has a circulation of 7,500, and its website attracts 60,000 to 80,000 visitors a month.

“David had a vision for the magazine that came out of his conversations when he started it in 2001. In those nearly 20 years, the world has changed. What people think about nature and do in nature and why nature matters has changed,” said Eric Simons, 38, who has been *Bay Nature*’s digital editor since 2018. “It was important to reflect that change ourselves, albeit subtly.”

Simons, who has an environmental journalism degree from UC Berkeley, started with the magazine five years ago as its editorial director. A lifelong Bay Area resident, Simons grew up in Castro Valley and has lived in Noe Valley since 2009 with his wife, who grew up in Marin. The couple has two young children.

A Natural Career Path

Ridley and Simons met with the *Voice* over coffee in early February at Martha



Bay Nature magazine publisher Regina Ridley and digital editor Eric Simons take in the views from Billy Goat Hill, a favorite local refuge from urban life.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

& Brothers on 24th Street to talk about their work with the nonprofit and their editorial focus for the magazine. Ridley noted she moved to Noe Valley in 1987, the same year the locally owned coffeehouse opened.

“So I am very emotionally bonded to Martha’s,” said Ridley, who for the last decade has served on the board that runs the weekly farmers market across the

street in what is now the Noe Valley Town Square.

Ridley has worked in publishing her entire career, the first two decades in for-profit media. She then made the transition to the nonprofit sector, spending eight years overseeing the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*.

“I love magazines,” said Ridley, who jumped at the chance to oversee *Bay Na-*

ture. “The fact it was local was fascinating to me. Most of the magazines I’ve worked on have been national and global.”

Her interest in environmental issues stems from her commitment to promoting locally grown food, and the farmers who produce it, and being a dog owner.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Artwork, Book Shine Light on Seaweed

With a new book and a featured piece in *Bay Nature* magazine set for publication this summer, artist and author Josie Iselin is shining a light on the beauty and importance of seaweed.

Her ninth book, *The Curious World of Seaweed: Stories from the Pacific Coast*, is set to be published in August by the Berkeley-based Heyday Books. It is an exploration into the myriad varieties of a plant vital to the maritime health and habitats of the Pacific Ocean.

“I am pedal to the metal to meet a March deadline,” said Iselin, who took some time last month to speak with the *Voice* about her love for the ocean plants.

In 2014 she published *An Ocean Garden: The Secret Life of Seaweed*, which featured the artistic scans of oceanic flora she had collected and scanned. The new book, she explained, “is a deeper dive into the seaweeds of the Pacific Coast. There are 16 essays and stories about the iconic kelp and seaweed of our shores.”

She is also using her reportage from various field trips up and down the West Coast over the last five years for an arti-

cle about the interdependence of sea otters and kelp forests, in the summer issue of *Bay Magazine*, which has previously featured her seaweed artwork in its pages.

“I am always trying to bring the health of the oceans into my writing,” said Iselin, who is a kelp ambassador for the Pacifica Beach Coalition in the city’s school district. “The story of the otter I find to be an interesting one. There are so many misperceptions about otters out there.”

Iselin and her husband, Ken Pearce, have lived in Noe Valley since 1994. Their three grown children, two daughters and a son, all grew up in the neighborhood.

She moved to the city 30 years ago from New York and earned her MFA at San Francisco State University. She would walk her dog at Fort Funston and started collecting stones shaped like hearts.

The rocks led to her bestselling books *Beach Stones*, published in 2006, and *Heart Stones*, published two years later. She now works out of a small office built in the basement of the family’s home. It is jam-packed with books and her research specimens she scans using an old Epson scanner.

Her first appearance in *Bay Nature* came in 2015 with a spread featuring her seaweed fine art. That year, the nonprofit invited her to keynote its annual gala, where it awards honors to local residents working to protect the Bay Area’s natural wonders.

“It is so beautiful and visually interesting. The color palette is really intriguing,” Iselin said of marine macro-algae. “I’ve always loved the ocean and been concerned about the ocean. The seaweed speaks very directly about the ocean.”

—Matthew S. Bajko



Josie Iselin’s images of kelp, like this one, “Porphyra & Postels,” will soon show up in a new book and on the pages of *Bay Nature*.

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Bay Nature and Its Fertile Environment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

She rescued two mutts named Cody and Kelby, named after baseball players on the San Francisco Giants.

“A lot of my interest in nature comes from food,” said Ridley, “and being a dog owner, which a lot of people in nature are not happy about.”

Exciting but Challenging

As mainstream media outlets flounder amid declining ad revenues and decreasing paid subscribers, nonprofit publishers are experiencing a renaissance, said Ridley. “There is a resurgency or liveliness in nonprofit journalism because commercial journalism is sinking,” she said.

At the same time, *Bay Nature’s* staff has had to struggle with the same issues daily newspapers are facing, due to the digitalization of news. In order to entice people to subscribe to the magazine, the editors do not immediately publish its con-

tents online when each new issue, timed to the change in the seasons, comes out.

But to attract eyeballs to the website, they post online-only content on a frequent basis, often short features about the local fauna and flora, accompanied by lush nature photography. There is no firewall limiting how much people can read online without being a paid subscriber, and the articles in the magazine eventually do appear on the website.

“The content on the website should be free,” said Ridley.

Great Journalism Has a Cost

In a nod to how people consume magazines and other publications on various digital devices, Bay Nature Institute is launching a digital version of the magazine in July with the summer issue. It sends out a weekly email anyone can sign up to receive with links to its online content, while it also asks those who enjoy its work to make a financial donation if they don’t want to become paid subscribers. A yearly subscription to the magazine costs \$25.95.

“Great journalism is not free,” said

Ridley. “We ask for contributions, which we can do as a nonprofit. The online model for news is changing. People have a growing understanding they have to pay for it.”

While the magazine’s fulltime editorial staff all contribute to it, the majority of the work is done by outside writers. Freelancers, for instance, wrote three-quarters of the articles in the 2019 winter edition.

“There is a tremendous amount of work that goes into editing these stories,” said Ridley. “The contributors may not understand the voice we have, so these stories take a lot of work. There are also a lot of artists and photographers we work with.”

Not Afraid of Controversy

Ridley has made it a mission to see that *Bay Nature* is the publishing home for in-depth pieces on complicated, and at times controversial, subject matter. The winter issue tackled the thorny question, Is the push for eco-friendly housing policies in the Bay Area adding to gentrification pressures? It also dug into the movement for environmental literacy in California and explored the new “outside” ways schools are teaching environmental science. Articles in the fall edition—including “More Goats, Less Fire?” and “The Burning Question in the East Bay Hills: Eucalyptus Is Flammable Compared to What?”—were followed in December with “How Does Smoke Affect Wildlife?” and “California’s Massive Fires Reveal Our Illusion of Control Over Disasters.”

“One of the things we do is write the stories no one else is going to cover. These are not newspaper stories,” Ridley said. “And not many magazines will do something that local, so we fill a really wonderful space.”

The time that the editorial staff has between issues, noted Simons, allows them

to work with writers to really dive into difficult topics that *Bay Nature’s* readers expect to see in the magazine.

“These are long-running, systemic structural things that are hard for many magazines to focus on. I like we can do that and look at the natural phenomenon of what you see in the world,” he said.

Despite the political implications with much of the coverage in its publication, the Bay Nature Institute steers clear of the day-to-day political fights in local city halls, the statehouse, or in Congress on environmental matters. It does not lobby lawmakers, preferring to let its reportage on nature speak for itself.

“When we report on issues, we stay out of politics,” stressed Ridley.

Free Walks and Local Hero Awards

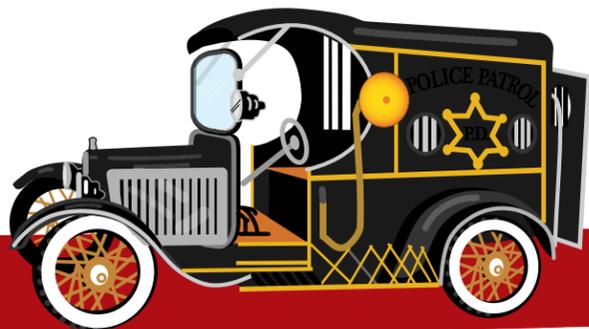
It does engage with its readers in the real world. Bay Nature leads various outings to natural sites around the Bay Area throughout the year. In February it hosted a guided tour of Sugarloaf Ridge State Park in the North Bay to learn about its fungi and a hike out to see Brooks Falls in San Pedro Valley Park in Pacifica. The trips are free but limited in space, so RSVPs are required.

“We encourage people to go out into nature and care about environmental issues,” said Ridley.

The nonprofit’s budget this year is \$850,000 with more than half of it coming from small donors, said Ridley. March 31 the nonprofit will host its 2019 Local Hero Awards Gala. The annual fundraiser honors those working to protect and enhance the Bay Area’s environment.

“We see increasing interest in the residents of the Bay Area about learning about nature and the importance of nature,” said Ridley. “I think we are in a sweet spot.” ■

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The Life of Abolitionist Mary Ellen Pleasant

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

as an American hero.

So who was Mary Ellen Pleasant, and what exactly did happen at the Poole-Bell mansion on Laidley Street?

Mary Ellen's true origins are unknown. A daughter of a black woman and a white man, she was born into slavery, likely in Georgia, around 1814. Separated from her mother at the age of 10, as a bonded servant in Rhode Island she learned how to run a store, cook, and make wine. She later married an abolitionist in Boston, James Smith, and worked with him on the Underground Railroad transporting slaves to freedom. When Smith died and left her a small fortune, she married James Plaisance, and the two moved to New Orleans.

Continuing to work on the Underground Railroad, Mary Ellen met Marie Laveau, a woman renowned for her so-called voodoo powers. Yet, rather than magical spells and sorcery, it seems Laveau may have taught Mary Ellen more down-to-earth skills, including how to exert influence for social change and "pressure the powerful to help the powerless," primarily blacks and poor women.

When Mary Ellen's role in slave rescue was discovered, she would follow her husband to Gold Rush San Francisco. Arriving in 1852, they changed their name from "Plaisance" to "Pleasant."

San Francisco Success

In a city overwhelmingly rich and male, Mary Ellen put her talents to work as a cook and housekeeper, initially for Case and Heiser, importers and commission merchants. She also encountered Thomas Bell, a native of Scotland, about this time. Among his future ventures, Bell would serve as director of the Virginia & Truckee Railroad of Nevada and then director of the Bank of California. Mary Ellen and Bell would remain close confidantes for a lifetime. Often, she would be a silent partner in his real estate and mining transactions.

Through her domestic work, Pleasant became privy to conversations among the city's nouveau riche about the next big investment, then proceeded to make the investment herself. Her wealth continued to grow, and she is credited with being the first African American woman to become a millionaire. After financially and logistically supporting the transit of black men and women from the southern United States to San Francisco, she would help them find jobs, and establish and maintain their own businesses.

Mary Ellen bought properties throughout the city and Bay Area. She also opened boarding houses primarily for young women in need, some of whom were married off to wealthy men.

Near today's intersection of Geneva



The former Poole-Bell mansion at 196-98 Laidley St., as it appears today. Though Mary Ellen Pleasant knew the original owners, there is no clear evidence she lived in the house.

Photo by Jack Tipple

Avenue and Bayshore Boulevard, Mary Ellen built what became known as the Geneva Cottage, described as a "resort" by some newspapers. With legends of unbridled lust and debauchery engaged in by resort guests and female hosts, the *San Francisco Chronicle* stated in 1899, "What happened there during its first year of occupancy may best be passed over without comment."

An Early Resister

In San Francisco, Mary Ellen's participation in the Underground Railroad continued. Acquainted with abolitionist John Brown, she provided \$30,000 to finance his "army of emancipation" and secretly traveled to the Eastern Seaboard to rally slaves to Brown's militant cause.

When his attack on the federal armory in Harper's Ferry, Va. (today, West Virginia), failed in 1859, Brown was captured by future Civil War generals Robert E. Lee and J.E.B. Stuart and executed for treason. Legend has it that a note from Mary Ellen with the initials "W.E.P." was found in Brown's pocket. If true, and if the inversion of "M" to "W" was intended to hide her identity, it worked: she was never pursued by investigators.

Despite California being a free state, during and immediately after the Civil War several privately owned railroad companies in San Francisco maintained a "whites only" policy. After being ejected from an

her to board. A female passenger had urged the car to stop for her, but the conductor had responded, "We don't take colored people in the cars." Mary Ellen would also be awarded \$500. Twenty-five years later, the state legislature prohibited railroad segregation in California.

Championing Women

Mary Ellen's rise to prominence would not necessarily be due to her ongoing fight for equality and civil rights in Victorian San Francisco. Instead, when the private lives of some of her most intimate and trusted friends became embroiled in very public and sordid affairs, her name would be dragged into the mire.

Mary Ellen's dearest friend, Sarah Althea Hill, in 1880 would seek divorce and a substantial settlement from William Sharon. He had become one of the richest men in the world through underhanded business dealings while representing the Bank of California in Virginia City, Nev. Historian Gray Brechin claims, "To call Sharon a piranha would be to insult the character of the fish."

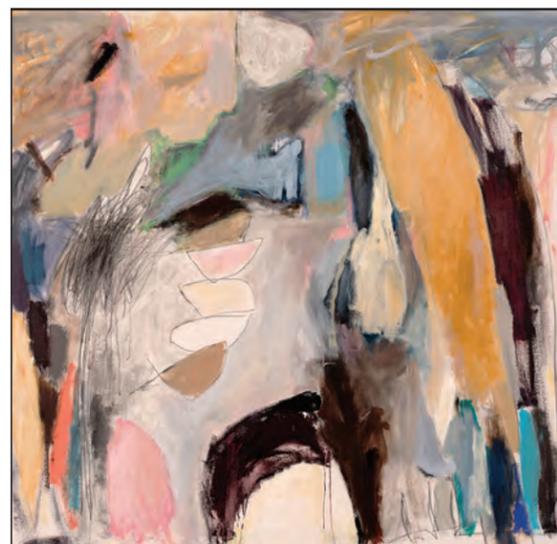
Sarah presented papers documenting their marriage. Sharon vehemently denied any marriage had existed, declaring she had only been his mistress. Mary Ellen, likely knowing she was entering a snake pit, testified for Sarah during the drawn-out and very public "Sharon v. Sharon" legal battle, one that the *Healdsburg Tribune* reported, "challenges the world of fiction for its many startling developments." The final verdict was in favor of Sharon: the court declared there had been no marriage.

Since her arrival in San Francisco, Mary Ellen had maintained her business association and friendship with Thomas Bell. When she met a young new arrival by the name of Teresa Percy, Mary Ellen

Omnibus Railroad car, Charlotte Brown was the first to challenge the practice in 1863 and was eventually awarded \$500.

Mary Ellen sued the North Beach and Mission Railroad Company in 1867, when a car with ample room for additional passengers failed to stop and allow

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



Helen S. Cohen

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Mary Ellen Pleasant

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

introduced her to Bell. They married in 1879. Shortly thereafter, Mary Ellen designed and constructed a 30-room gothic mansion on a lot she owned at Octavia and Bush streets. Living there with the Bells, Mary Ellen handled all business matters for the residence and managed the Bells' finances. It may not have been the happiest of homes.

Betrays in Later Life

In 1892 at age 70, Thomas Bell fell over the staircase railing, and the county coroner ruled his death accidental. Yet speculation was rampant that Mary Ellen was the diabolical agent who had caused his death, either with a push or a voodoo spell. Teresa Bell then turned against the now aging Mary Ellen, claiming she had stolen thousands of dollars from them. Courts had a difficult time ascertaining the line between Thomas Bell's and Mary Ellen's finances. Teresa Bell, determined to destroy "the old she-devil," eviscerated Mary Ellen in testimony, an injustice her legacy still struggles to overcome today.

Becoming frail in health, Mary Ellen saw her investments begin to fail and her funds dwindle. For a time, she lived at the Geneva Cottage, tending her garden. Then she moved to the Beltane Ranch in Sonoma she had purchased in 1892. She spent her final years with her friends, Lyman and Olive Sherwood of Napa.

Mary Ellen died in 1904 and is buried in the Sherwoods' plot in Tulocay Cemetery. Her tombstone reads, "She was a friend of John Brown." On Jan. 31, 2019, in a series titled "Overlooked," the *New York Times* belatedly published an obituary of Mary Ellen Pleasant.



This image of Mary Ellen Pleasant, from the the Everett Collection/Alamy, appeared in the *New York Times* Jan. 31, 2019, alongside an obituary that the newspaper acknowledged was long overdue.

Property in Noe Valley

The mansion at Octavia and Bush—"The Bell House of Mystery"—burned down in 1925. And what exactly did happen at the mansion at Laidley and Fairmount?

Attorney and notary John P. Poole, who came to prominence as secretary of the Swamp and Overflowed Land Commission in the late 1850s, had purchased the lot in the late 1880s. Poole and his wife Annie are first listed as residents at the Laidley mansion, nearly identical in design to the "House of Mystery" at Octavia and Bush, in 1894. The following year, John Poole died suddenly after being indicted for defrauding the federal government in a pension scam. Annie was forced to sell many of their properties, including the Poole mansion, to Thomas

Bell's widow, Teresa, in 1906—two years after Mary Ellen's death.

While Mary Ellen had purchased lots near Church and Duncan streets in 1879, evidence that she resided in Noe Valley or Fairmount Heights has yet to be found. Regardless, the indirect association of Mary Ellen to the Poole-Bell mansion on Laidley Street and to other property in the area is something the neighborhoods will keep and honor to further conserve the true legacy of the Mother of California Civil Rights.



A sidewalk plaque at Mary Ellen Pleasant Memorial Park, at the corner of Octavia and Bush streets, commemorates the Mother of California Civil Rights.

Image by Chris Carlsson courtesy of FoundSF.org

Evelyn Rose is the director and founder of the Glen Park Neighborhoods History Project (www.GlenParkHistory.org), covering Glen Park, Sunnyside, Fairmount Heights, and Diamond Heights. The group meets five times a year and leads a dozen different history walks in Glen Canyon and other locations. If you would like to support the GPNHP, join in activities, or if you are researching the history of Noe Valley and would like to participate, contact Rose at GlenParkHistory@gmail.com.



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The Cost of Living in Noe

A Winter's Nap

By Corrie M. Anders

Homebuyers purchased just five single-family detached homes in Noe Valley in January.

That's not too surprising. Traditionally, January is the slowest month of the year for real estate sales.

In fact, there were only four sales in January a year ago and three in January 2017, according to data provided monthly to the *Noe Valley Voice* by Zephyr Real Estate.

"It's par for the course," said Zephyr president Randall Kostick, noting that real estate activity usually didn't rev up until April.

Escrow closings in January reflect purchases initiated in late November or December, when people are preoccupied with Thanksgiving, Chanukah, and Christmas.

The lack of sales was not the only sign that folks were spending their free time elsewhere. There was a near absence of overbidding.

Three of the five houses that were sold this January came in below the sticker price, Kostick said.

A prime example was the most expensive home sold during the month, a contemporary showpiece in the first block of Day Street between Dolores Street and



This four-bedroom, 4.5-bath home on Day Street, boasting a penthouse, a two-car garage, and panoramic views, sold for \$4.7 million in January. Photo by Jack Tipple

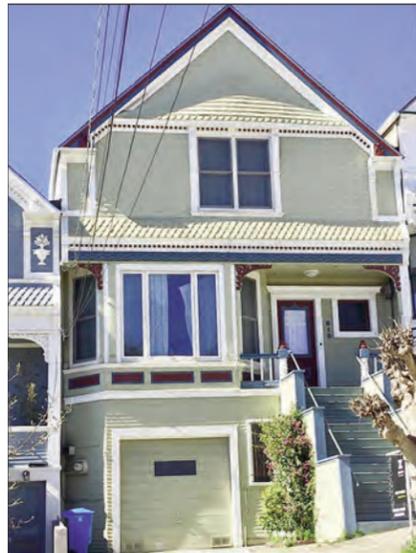
San Jose Avenue. The house was on the market for 3.5 months before a buyer offered \$4.7 million—\$88,000 below the seller's asking price.

The new owner walked into a 4,087-square-foot four-bedroom home, with an abundance of bathrooms (4.5 to be exact). Built in 1900, the house had been remodeled several times over the years, with the latest renovation adding white-oak flooring, a marble fireplace, state-of-the-art appliances, floor-to-ceiling glass walls, a large family/media room, a penthouse with two decks, a two-person soaking tub, and a two-car garage with an electric car charger.

By contrast, the least expensive house among the five attracted an offer in just five days and sold for \$2,015,000, nearly 35 percent more than its asking price (\$1,498,000). The 1905 Queen Anne Victorian, located in the 900 block of Noe Street between 22nd and 23rd streets, had three bedrooms and one bath but featured 1,592 square feet of living space, a one-car garage, and, according to its advertisers, "loads of potential for designing your spacious dream home."

Also showing potential were condominium sales. There were five sold in January, as compared with three in January of last year (and two in January 2017).

A three-bedroom, 2.5-bath condo in the 700 block of Clipper Street was the most expensive attached unit sold during the month. Part of a 20-unit complex located midway along Clipper Street between Douglass Street and Grand View Avenue, the two-level home offered 1,921 square feet of living space, a modern chef's kitchen, a deck, bay views from each room, and one-car parking. The final price was \$1,495,000, 2.3 percent less than the list price (\$1,530,000). ■



In January, this Queen Anne on Noe Street sold for 35 percent more than the seller's asking price. Still, at \$2,015,000, it was the least expensive single-family home sale during the month. Photo by Corrie M. Anders

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 | | | | | | |
| January 2019 | 5 | \$2,015,000 | \$4,700,000 | \$2,996,000 | 41 | 101% |
| December 2018 | 10 | \$1,625,000 | \$3,400,000 | \$2,196,900 | 29 | 109% |
| January 2018 | 4 | \$1,400,000 | \$4,715,000 | \$2,526,250 | 59 | 114% |
| Condominiums/TICs | | | | | | |
| January 2019 | 5 | \$810,000 | \$1,530,000 | \$1,238,000 | 25 | 107% |
| December 2018 | 1 | \$1,300,000 | \$1,300,000 | \$1,300,000 | 47 | 100% |
| January 2018 | 3 | \$870,000 | \$2,360,000 | \$1,576,667 | 63 | 99% |
| 2- to 4-unit buildings | | | | | | |
| January 2019 | 2 | \$2,000,000 | \$2,000,018 | \$2,000,009 | 51 | 100% |
| December 2018 | 0 | — | — | — | — | — |
| January 2018 | 1 | \$2,060,000 | \$2,060,000 | \$2,060,000 | 0 | 100% |
| 5+-unit buildings | | | | | | |
| January 2019 | 1 | \$6,700,000 | \$6,700,000 | \$6,700,000 | 244 | 92% |
| December 2018 | 0 | — | — | — | — | — |
| January 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. NVV3/2019

Noe Valley Rents**

| Unit | No. in Sample | Range February 2019 | Average February 2019 | Average January 2019 | Average February 2018 |
|---------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Studio | 4 | \$2,250 - \$2,875 | \$2,494 / mo. | \$2,542 / mo. | \$2,228 / mo. |
| 1-bdrm | 33 | \$2,500 - \$4,900 | \$3,314 / mo. | \$3,330 / mo. | \$3,139 / mo. |
| 2-bdrm | 29 | \$3,025 - \$6,150 | \$4,331 / mo. | \$4,368 / mo. | \$4,432 / mo. |
| 3-bdrm | 19 | \$4,185 - \$11,000 | \$6,015 / mo. | \$6,092 / mo. | \$6,040 / mo. |
| 4+-bdrm | 9 | \$5,995 - \$34,000 | \$13,606 / mo. | \$21,417 / mo. | \$11,788 / mo. |

** This survey is based on a sample of 94 Noe Valley apartment listings appearing on Craigslist.org from Feb. 6 to 13, 2019. NVV3/2019



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NOE KIDS

Mystery Writer Alex Ausman

By Katie Burke

Alex Ausman, a 9-year-old Noe Valley resident, founded a detective club in first grade. Now a fourth-grader, she regularly writes mysteries.

Alex lives on Church Street with her 13-year-old sister, Ava, and their mom and dad, Bao-Tran and James Ausman. Alex is in fourth grade at Commodore Sloat School in the Balboa Terrace neighborhood. She commutes by taking the J-line to Balboa Park, then the K. The family also has a dog, Luna, “short for Lunatic.”

Alex writes in multiple genres, “mostly fantasy, horror, mystery, and folk tales.” She also writes historical fiction, realistic fiction, non-fiction, and science fiction. With help from Ava and from Alex’s classmates, Alex is creating a daily school newspaper, the working title of which is *The Mystery Club Riddle*.

“We just create a mystery for [other students] to solve, and then whoever solves it first gets some sort of prize, like getting to write the next riddle,” Alex says.

Her favorite classes at school are writers workshop and readers workshop. She was reading *The Dork Diaries* at interview time.

A story Alex recently wrote with her friend Hanna is about two sisters who meet a boy whom a witch has changed into a caterpillar. The story ends “on a cliffhanger, when they’re about to go [to Venice] where the witch lives,” Alex says. She’s writing a sequel now.



Alex Ausman, 9, is well on her way to a career as a writer. But she also has dreams of becoming a designer, singer, or director. Photo by Art Bodner

Musing about her future family, Alex says, “I want to name my children after the names of mostly the characters in my books.” If she has two children, she hopes for a girl and a boy because “I want the experience of raising two different genders.”

She would name a boy Casey because “I feel like not enough people name their kids what can be a boy name or a girl name.”

And for a girl? “I was thinking

Elizabeth, since that’s a name of a lot of people from movies and real life. I’m listening to a soundtrack called *Hamilton*, and his wife’s name is Elizabeth, Eliza for short. On the *Riverdale* show, the main character is Elizabeth. *The Little Mermaid* is a live action movie. The mermaid’s name was Elizabeth.

“I’d very much rather adopt than give birth,” Alex adds, “because I feel like there’s more than 500 children who don’t have homes. I’d adopt a young child so I would have a lot of experiences [with them]. Or teenagers because they probably don’t have a chance to get adopted by a lot of people.”

Speculating on the number of children she’ll adopt, Alex says, “The max is probably about four kids. I don’t want my only child to feel lonely, nor do I want to have five, so probably two, three, or four. It depends on what my husband thinks, or my wife.”

Alex will also have a cat and a dog. “I’d get them when they are both puppies, so they’d be raised together and would not chase each other around the house, because cats and dogs are known for being rivals.”

When she grows up, Alex wants to be a writer and a costume designer “in the play business.” She adds, “I was thinking of starting off not so famous, like starting off as a model or an author, and then going big time as an actress, a singer, or a director.”

Asked how she would be as a boss,

Alex replies, “I’ve seen a poster that says: ‘Treat people the way you want to be treated’—but I don’t agree with that because what if some people want to be treated with humor, and what if some people don’t want to be treated with humor? I believe, treat them the way they want to be treated.”

Alex’s favorite neighborhood places are Noe Valley Bagel (“they have many varieties of bagels, like chocolate chip, blueberry, poppy seed, or plain, or everything”), Cafe XO (“they have a huge variety, like Smoothie of the Day, Cupcake of the Day, Bagel of the Day, and Soup of the Day”), and Noe Valley Bakery. “That’s where I plan to get my birthday cake. I like a gourmet cake for \$48. The cake is the size of your head!”

Alex also loves the dog park at Upper Noe Rec Center, where “I get to exercise, and so does my dog”; Just for Fun, where she buys gifts for her friends; and Folio Books, where “they have a huge variety of books: adult, kids, many.”

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.

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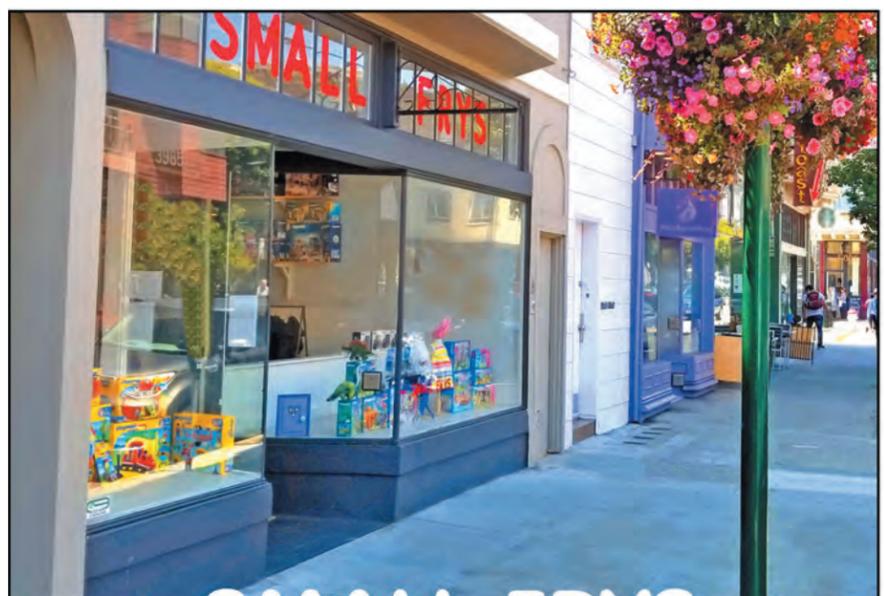
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Lately—and I mean lately in a broad sense, like not in the past few days but for the past couple of years—life, things, haven't been feeling so zippy. We've all been in this together, walking around confused and trying to carry on. Chin up and all that.

It's been a challenge. So much has been thrown at us: the smoke from a paradise lost that blocked the sun and scorched our throats, the never-ending border wars, the Cavanagh-Supreme Court debacle, and the perplexing reality that Amazon founder Jeff Bezos makes roughly \$107 million a day while, as the delivery trucks double-park on 24th Street (I know, the suffering), we stroll down the sidewalk lamenting the demise of beloved stores that used to sell real, live, wonderful things or offer valuable services.

Places like Sam's newsstand, where besides magazines you could also buy gum and not-so-fancy chocolate bars. Or Tuggey's Hardware, which, along with having every little toilet flapper, sink stopper, or tiny screw in the world, also had Rubberta the Giant Rubberband Ball and the quarter glued on the counter, so customers reached for it, every time. Or that weird store that sold crystals, where you could get a photo taken of your aura or explore the glow-in-the-dark outer-space room in the back that was only big enough for kids. Or places like Ladybug Ladybug, where you could buy unusual presents for your relatives and mail them home ("Look what I got for you in Noe Valley!") even though they were probably made in China. Or stores filled with unguents, like Beyond the Sea. (We never found out: What was beyond the sea? Now we never will.)

That's a lot of loss. But woe to the person who clings futilely to the past. Now that I've spent the last 301 words making us feel bad, it's time to turn this baby around. There's so much that's worthwhile here in Noe Valley. Here is a list to perk us up when whatever the next terrible thing that is going to happen happens. Feel free to add to it.

1. **Bernie.** Without Bernie, there is no Bernie's. Duh. But if you know her and she knows you, you know. Bernie is the bomb. Go get a coffee there today and you'll be happy. Bernie will make you happy. I promise.

2. **The Noe Valley Town Square.** This may appear self-promotional because I oversee events there, but it really is a happy place, isn't it? There are old-time square dances with pie-eating contests, movies, bingo (with a San Francisco twist, since the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence emcee), rescue animal fairs with pigs and bunnies and goats, music concerts, a tots' playground, free yoga and t'ai chi and meditation, holiday tree lightings, and hayrides with actual horses.

3. **The Saturday Farmers Market.** Right!?!?

4. **The Wishing Tree** on 23rd between Noe and Castro, which accepts hand-written wishes from Thanksgiving to New Year's. Now the

OTHER VOICES

fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction • the noe valley voice

Happy Valley

By Leslie Crawford

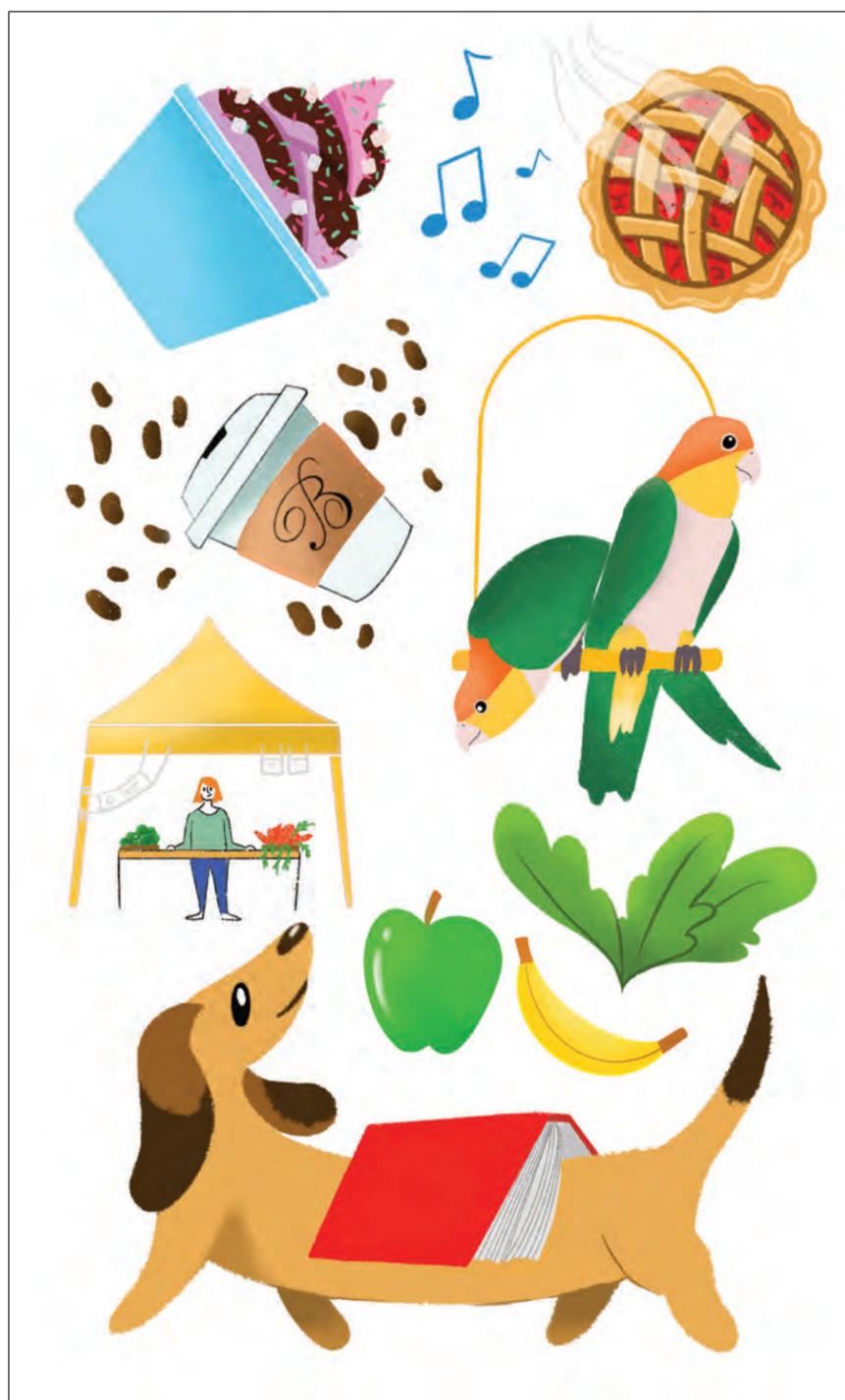


Illustration by Ayla O'Brien

branches are back to being a sidewalk tree, so you'll have to wait till next year to make new wishes. Sorry about that. For years, my friend Paula and I wanted to have a Bitterness Bush where you could leave sad and spiteful notes. But maybe that's a little too...negative?

5. **The Noe Valley Voice.** I'm not being paid to write this. (Literally. Not. Being. Paid.) It's not just a really good neighborhood newspaper. It's simply a good newspaper. And I bet, before reading the articles, you go straight to (a) Rumors and then (b) Letters and

then (c) the real estate section, just to gasp at the insanity of the prices.

6. **The parklets.** We have two of them! One is in front of Just for Fun. (The store is, as the name suggests, very fun, although my children would remind me there were some items that weren't "just for fun," like, say, spatulas.) The other is outside of Martha's. (Martha will also make you happy. If you haven't, try to meet her. She's one of the kindest people you'll ever know. What is it about these entrepreneurial, charismatic coffee women?) And what is it about parklets? Unlike elevators or Muni, people rarely look unhappy sitting in a parklet. Maybe it's the name. "Parklet." So cute.

7. **Little Free Libraries.** There are many sprinkled around the neighborhood, and they are also sooo cute! Especially the miniature house ones. What an idea. Just to give and take so freely, so generously.

8. **Charlie's Corner and Folio Books.** Charlie's Corner is to children's books what Willie Wonka is to chocolate. And Paula Foley of Folio has created the perfect neighborhood bookstore. And when you're driving out of Whole Foods and waiting to turn right on 24th (because no one ever turns left there since it's illegal! ha ha ha), Folio's sign looks like it reads "Bookhop." And that's funny.

9. **Easy Breezy.** Confetti sprinkles! Hot fudge! Mochi blobs!

10. **The Animal Company's birds.** It's our own aviary zoo, where Ellen and Rick will let you sit down and hold a parrot that will say something funny and look at you sideways. Don't you feel better already?

There's more, of course: just about everything at Wink and their politically righteous prose in the windows, Peasant Pies, Video Wave, the chocolate store, the Noe-O cookies at Noe Valley Bakery, the window displays at Eye Q, Casa Mexicana (which accounts for one-fourth of the bulk of my two children), the library, and all of the children who fill our sidewalks.

It's impossible not to be sad about some stuff these days. But who knows what the future will bring. Too terrified to imagine? Go look at the east wall of the Town Square, where the muralist Mona Caron painted a future Noe Valley. There are frolicking, wild (and we hope gentle) animals freely roaming about. A giant slide that starts in Noe and ends in the Mission. A hot air balloon. Nothing but happiness. ■

Leslie Crawford is a 22-year resident of Noe Valley, a journalist, and the author of two children's books about rescue animals.

The Noe Valley Voice invites you to submit fiction, creative nonfiction, or poetry for possible publication in Other Voices. Email OtherVoices@noevalleyvoice.com or write Other Voices, Noe Valley Voice, P.O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include your name and contact information.

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Driving Mr. President. Celia Sack of Omnivore Books fame piloted the vehicle that took Barack Obama for a ride in February. For more on the story, see our Rumors column on page 25.

The Noe Valley Voice READER SURVEY

When we're out among you in downtown Noe Valley, we have our eyes and ears open, hoping to cover and report things of interest and what matters to you. We also encourage you to communicate with us by writing—either with pen and paper or via email. See the Letters to the Editor box below.

1 - How do you read the *Voice*?
Online _____
Print Edition _____

2 - Where do you pick up the print edition?

3 - How long have you been reading the *Voice*?

4 - What are your favorite regular columns or departments?

- History photo _____
- Cartoon _____
- Crossword _____
- Cost of Living _____
- Short Takes _____
- Store Trek _____
- Calendar _____
- Noe Kids _____
- Reader Photos _____

Upper Noe Rec Center _____
More Books to Read _____
More Groups to Join _____
Rumors (Behind the News) _____

5 - Do you have any favorite writers? (Please list)

6 - Do you have any favorite photographers?

7 - What other sources of neighborhood information do you use regularly?

8 - Do you subscribe to the print edition? _____

But if you haven't gotten around to that, please consider filling out this form and let us know your opinions and suggestions.

Cut out and mail to us at:

The Noe Valley Voice Reader Survey
P.O. Box 460249
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Thank you for your support!

9 - Do you live in or near Noe Valley? _____

10 - What new department or column would you like to see in the *Voice*?

11 - What should we cover that we're not doing currently?

12 - Is there anything else you'd like us to know?

13 - Please list your name, phone number or email address. (OPTIONAL).

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.

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.

SHORT TAKES

Spring Arrives in the Bookstores

Spring starts March 20, so it's time to be preparing the ground and planting your summer garden. If you need a little push, put on your coat and rush over to Omnivore Books on Food at 3885A Cesar Chavez St. on Sunday, March 10, at 3 p.m.

Lauri Kranz, author of *A Garden Can Be Anywhere: Creating Bountiful and Beautiful Edible Gardens*, will be there to help you do just that. The event is free, but you might want to buy her book. See the whole March schedule of author visits to the store at omnivorebooks.com.

Spring Equinox Eve will be celebrated at Charlie's Corner children's bookstore March 19, in between two colorful holidays, St. Patrick's Day and the Holi Festival, an end-of-winter festival also known as the Festival of Colors. On March 17, for St. Pat's, the story times will be Ireland-themed and feature folktales, limericks, leprechauns, and Irish soda bread. For Holi, on March 20, there will be no throwing of colored powders or waters, like in India, but there will be plenty of books with vibrant colors, songs, and games.

Check out charliescorner.com for times and locations for these and all March events at 24th and Castro streets.

St. Patrick's Day comes three days early at Folio Books, 3957 24th St.

At 6 p.m. on March 14, Thomas Lennon, perhaps more famous for his short shorts on the TV series *Reno 911!*, debuts *Ronan Boyle and the Bridge of Riddles*, the first book in a new middle-reader series. It's about a 14-year-old recruit to the Irish police force investigating crimes committed by leprechauns. A very dangerous crew, that. Be sure to RSVP at tiny.cc/folioworms.



Thomas Lennon, an actor on the TV series *Reno 911!*, will unveil his new book *Ronan Boyle and the Bridge of Riddles* at Folio Books on Thursday, March 14. Please RSVP.

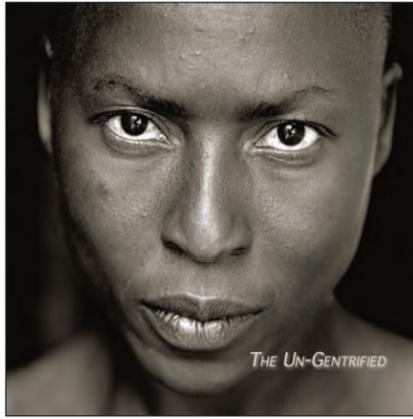
Photo courtesy Folio Books

Jazz, Lieder, and a Classical 'American Idol'

Fans of jazz and lieder have treats in store for them in March, plus Noe Valley will have its own classical *American Idol*.

Jazz is up first, March 9, 7:30 p.m., with the Evan Price Trio at Holy Innocents Church, 455 Fair Oaks St. Price, a jazz violinist and the leader of the trio, is also a member of the Turtle Island String Quartet and the Hot Club of San Francisco, a gypsy jazz band. Tickets at the door are \$25 general admission and just \$5 for people under 18.

On March 16, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra presents "American Idol, Classical Edition" at 2 p.m. at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.



Valley Street resident Najib Joe Hakim recently released a book of his photographs called *Un-Gentrified*, depicting faces of working-class people in San Francisco.

Photo courtesy Najib Joe Hakim

Twelve instrumentalists from the orchestra will compete for the grand prize, as decided by the audience. Be sure to vote. Admission is free.

Songs by Brahms, Strauss, and Paolo Tosti will be played by Lieder Alive! artist-in-residence pianist Peter Grunberg and sung by Tosti Song Prize winner baritone Eugene Villanueva March 24, 5 p.m., at the Ministry. Tickets are \$75 reserved, \$35 general, and \$20 for seniors, students, and working artists.

Buy at www.liederalive.org.

Mandelman and Wang at UNN

Upper Noe Neighbors is hosting two important speakers at its meeting Saturday, March 20, 7 p.m., at Upper Noe Recreation Center, 295 Day St. The neighborhood association will also be holding its annual board elections.

District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman will give an update on legislation he is working on at the Board of Supervisors and will present his action plan for Noe Valley.

Karry Jiayi Wang, president of the Youth for Community Engagement Club at Thurgood Marshall High School and a volunteer for Community Youth Center, will recommend what to include in a disaster-preparedness kit and provide other survival tips. Wang recently received the 2019 Neighborhood Empowerment Network Award for youth leadership.

To find out more about UNN, go to www.uppernoeneighbors.com.

Two New Photo Books and a Road Trip

Documentary photographer and photojournalist Najib Joe Hakim of Valley Street has recently published two new photographic essay books and has a photo exhibit opening at an art gallery this month. The books you can order online. For the exhibit, you'll have to go to Washington, D.C.

Hakim's two new books, both published last month, are *Born Among Mirrors* and *The Un-Gentrified*. The former uses historical documents, as well as photos, to trace his family's history from leaving Palestine as refugees to living successful middle-class lives in the U.S. The latter book presents working-class people in San Francisco, an increasingly smaller group. Both books can be bought online at jaffaorange.com.

A third photo book by Hakim, *Wayside*, published in 2018, is also available at the site.

The exhibit, "Palestine Diary," will be at the Jerusalem Fund Gallery in our nation's capital from March 28 through June 8. Hakim's photos on display in D.C. were taken while he lived in Jerusalem in 1978-79 and 1981. He is preparing a book based on the exhibit and says it will be published this summer. He also hopes to show the photo exhibit in San Francisco after it closes in Washington.

The Wide World of Word Week

Noe Valley's annual literary festival, now in its 13th year, promises to be a bit zany, more than a little poetic, and downright bedazzling for Shakespeare fans.

Nine events have been scheduled for Noe Valley Word Week 2019, which runs Friday, March 8, through Saturday, March 16, at five venues in the neighborhood. All activities are free.

The first event, coinciding with International Women's Day, is already drawing a crowd on Word Week's Facebook page. Titled "**Thelma and Louise**—Back Behind the Wheel," it will bring together filmmaker Wendy Slick, *San Francisco Chronicle* film critic Ruthe Stein, law professor Susan Rutberg, and moderator Maxine Einhorn for a discussion of how far women have come in the last 25 years. The event kicks off at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 8, at Folio Books, 3957 24th St.

Saturday, March 9, from 3 to 5 p.m., is the **Noe Valley Authors Festival**, featuring book exhibits, author readings, and visits from such local luminaries as children's book author Emma Smith, historian and war correspondent Mary Jo McConahay, mystery writer Cara Black, memoirist Ramon Sender, and poets Susan Dambroff and Eveline Kanés. This year's gathering will be at Umpqua Bank Noe Valley, 3938 24th St.

One of the most unusual events, says Word Week organizer Richard May, will be "**Classical Mediterranean Poetry**," on Sunday, March 10. Writers Erika Atkinson, MaryLee McNeal, Wayne Goodman, and Kim Shuck will recite favorite verses in their original Roman, Greek, Hebrew, and Egyptian, as well as in English.

Shuck, now serving as Poet Laureate of San Francisco, will be speaking New Kingdom Egyptian. "I've been a big old Egyptian nerd for a long time," says Shuck. "I think it should be a fun event—kind of quirky and interesting."

It will take place from 4 to 5 p.m. at Olive This Olive That, 304 Vicksburg St.

Bill Vlach, David Watts, and Bill Yenne—three authors who speak the language of the American West—will take the stage at Folio Books on Monday, March 11, at 7 p.m. The event, says May, is all about "Ridin', Ropin', and Writin' **Western Novels**," such as *Ambush of the Vigilante* (Vlach), *Showdown at Possum Trot* (Watts), and *The Other Custers* (Yenne), to name just a few.

Mary Jo McConahay joins fellow journalist Chris Feliciano Arnold in a panel Tuesday, March 12, titled "Tangled Paths: **True Stories from Latin America**," at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St. McConahay's latest book is

The Tango War: The Struggle for the Hearts, Minds, and Riches of Latin America During World War II. Arnold explores similar themes in his *Third Bank of the River*, about the rise of the middle class in Brazil and its impact on the land and indigenous cultures.

A reception with wine and other refreshments starts at 6:30 p.m. Readings and discussion follow at 7 p.m.

Small Publishers Night is Wednesday, March 13, 7 p.m., at Umpqua Bank. Bay Area publishers Manic D Press, Nomadic Press, Two Lines Press, and Why There Are Words will exhibit their books and introduce a few of the authors they represent. "It's a way to highlight local presses, to give them some more exposure, and to get their books out into the world," says May.

On Thursday, March 14, **Cara Black**, known for her detective series featuring Inspector Aimée Leduc, will offer a tour of Paris' 13th Arrondissement, in words and photos. Black, who visits Paris frequently to research her novels (now numbering 18), begins the travelogue at 7 p.m. at La Boulangerie de Noe, 3898 24th St. The cafe will be staying open late that night, as an homage to mystery lovers (and to Word Week).

Members of the group **Word for Word** will share passages from *The Widow Dreams*, a work-in-progress by Nancy Selby, at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 15, at Folio Books. *Dream* is the true story of the author's journey from loss and grief to a feeling of acceptance following the death of her husband. Joining Selby in reading from the narrative will be Sheila Balter and Jeri Lynn Cohen.

The final day of Word Week will be an ode to William Shakespeare, the 17th-century English bard who wrote more than three dozen plays and hundreds of sonnets. (He also coined many words still in use today, including leapfrog, bedazzle, and newfangled.)

Players from the **San Francisco Shakespeare Festival** will act out 400 of the author's most famous words at the Noe Valley Library on Saturday, March 16, at 1:30 p.m. Children and adults are welcome to attend the show, called "Did Shakespeare Really Write That?"

Yes, moonbeam, he probably did.

Word Week is a production of Friends of Noe Valley. Other sponsors include Martha & Bros. Coffee, La Boulangerie de Noe, Folio Books, Umpqua Bank, and Olive This Olive That.

For more information, go to friendsofnoevalley.com or email wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com.

—Corrie M. Anders and Sally Smith

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SHORT TAKES

Cumbia, Reggae, Salsa, Hip-Hop

The high-energy, Caribbean-fusion music of La Gente will get the dancing started at the Big Night/La Gran Noche annual fundraiser for James Lick Middle School, Saturday, March 9, 6 to 10 p.m., at 111 Minna art gallery in the New Financial District.

Of course, dancing works up a thirst. No worries. There'll be a no-host bar with signature James Lick cocktails like Extra Credit and Bulldog Bubbly. (The school mascot is the bulldog.) Guests can munch for free at the taco bar catered by Sneaky Pete's BBQ.

And everyone has the chance to win terrific raffle prizes—if you buy a coupon. Local merchants have donated gift certificates, wine, gift baskets, and prizes. The big prize is a stay in a spacious mountain home in Tahoe Donner over Memorial Day weekend.

Michele Perlmutter, co-chair of the event and the parent of a JLMS student, says, "We are inviting everyone to come, whether you have a student at the school, are thinking about middle schools for your child, or just want to get together with some friends for a fun Saturday night."

Tickets are \$50 at Eventbrite.com. Proceeds go to continue enrichment programs for the students, like an eighth-grade trip to Washington, D.C., and field trips to the National Cesar Chavez Center near Bakersfield. You'll find more information at jlms-sfusd-ca.schoolloop.com or at the school, located at 1220 Noe St. (415-695-5675).

Dogs, On Your Mark! Park Set to Reopen With New Toys

Girl Scout Adds Agility to Upper Douglass Dog Park

By Matthew S. Bajko

When the Upper Douglass Dog Park reopens Saturday, March 9, from its annual winter closure, dogs and their owners will find two new elements added to the off-leash play area that will test the canines' agility.

A tire jump that is height adjustable and 11 weaving poles, all made out of PVC pipes painted blue, have now been installed in the former softball field turned dog park. They are located several yards directly in front of the dog park's entrance off 27th Street at Douglass.

Girl Scout Leila Ali O'Rourke, 16, oversaw their design, construction, and installation as part of her Gold Award

project. It is equivalent to becoming an Eagle Scout, the highest rank one can achieve in the Boy Scouts.

"I was at the dog park with my dog when it hit me," said Leila, a member of Girl Scout Troop 32215. "There is a mini agility course for dogs to jump over. Sometimes the sticks get knocked over."

She went home and researched other agility elements she could add to the park that dogs could enjoy and that would be safe.

"I didn't want to risk injuries for the park with complicated structures there," said Leila, who put in roughly 90 hours on the project.

She won approval from the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department and received \$200 from the Friends of Upper Douglass Dog Park. RJO Produce Distributing, co-founded by her late un-

cle, who was an Eagle Scout, kicked in another \$200. A group of volunteers helped Leila install the agility structures Saturday, Feb. 23.

Leila will be on-site when the dog park reopens to the public to see how the dogs take to the agility poles and tire. She planned to test them out with her family's two poodles, Habibi and Jamila, to see if any adjustments needed to be made.

"I don't know how interested they would be," she said. "They don't do many agility tests."

As for whether the rec department will be changing the hours of the dog park in response to the noise complaints several nearby residents have lodged, the agency had not disclosed its decision prior to the *Voice's* print deadline. The park's website lists its hours as 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and closed on Wednesdays. ■



Girl Scout Leila Ali O'Rourke measured the turf before she and family and friends planted poles for a new agility course last month at Upper Douglass Dog Park. The city approved the project, which was part of Leila's Gold Award achievement. Photos courtesy Melane Ali and Rick O'Rourke



Poems by Children in a Concentration Camp

Dramatic soprano Madeline Abel-Kerns sings "I Never Saw Another Butterfly," poems written by children in the Terezin Nazi concentration camp during World War II and set to music by Lori Laitman. Saxophonist Rhett Bender accompanies Abel-Kerns.

Also on the bill are dancers Angela Newsham and Maia Scott and spoken-word artists Linda Hope, Ron Jones, Ruth Kirschner, and Beth McLoughlin. Steve Pomeroy shows projections of his photos.

All are part of *Press PLAY—The Human Jukebox*, the latest performance showcase to be mounted by the group's producer and artistic director Doug Baird at St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine Drive in Diamond Heights.

There are two performances of the showcase: Friday, March 29, and Saturday, March 30. Both begin at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$15 for seniors and students. They can be purchased at the door, which opens at 7 p.m. Parking is permitted in the Diamond Heights Shopping Center across from the church.

The producer advises that this production is recommended for adults only.

Summer Camp Registration

It's never too early to plan for summer activities, especially for kids who are out of school. Registration for the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department's summer day camps starts on Saturday, March 16. You will be able to register children for activities online at sfrecpark.org/register or in person at city rec centers starting at 10 a.m. Upper Noe Rec Center is located at 295 Day St. Rec and Park camps run June 10 to Aug. 16. To peruse the catalog, go to sfrecpark.org.

The Mission Cultural Center is also offering summer day camps at its 2868 Mission St. location. There are two sessions: June 10 to July 3 and July 8 to Aug. 2. For

more information and to register, go to missionculturalcenter.org.

Volunteers Needed on Patrol

Just over the hill, the Castro District has a volunteer patrol, CCOP, Castro Community on Patrol. If you'd like to be a member of the patrol, there's a training class on Monday, March 11, from 7 to 10 p.m., at the Chase Bank community room, 2112 15th St. in the Castro.

You don't have to live in the Castro. You do have to be at least 18 years old, able to walk continuously for up to three hours, be felony and violence or theft misdemeanor free, and capable of holding a cell phone, radio, and flashlight. Volunteers go on patrol at least once a month.

If you're good with all that, you can sign up at castropatrol.org. Click on Next Volunteer Training Class.

Performathon at Community Music Center

The San Francisco Community Music Center has been teaching young people to play musical instruments since 1921. It is holding its annual "Field Day Performathon" to raise money for student scholarships and tuition assistance over two days, Saturday, March 16, and Sunday, March 17, at the SFCMC concert hall, 544 Capp St.

Several young CMC musicians have recitals in the Performathon, to be held on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is also an open house for the school, with class demos and an instrument "petting zoo." Admission is free, but donations are gladly accepted. "Cultural Traditions in Diaspora," the Saturday evening performance by CMC faculty, will begin at 7 p.m. The suggested donation is \$20.

The Performathon continues on Sunday with free classes and demonstrations.

Short Takes are written by Richard May.

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STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular feature of the Noe Valley Voice, introducing new stores and restaurants in the neighborhood. This month, we profile a bakery café that had a Blissful opening on 24th Street in January.

VIVE LA TARTE

4026 24th Street between Noe and Castro streets
<https://vivelatarte.com/>

To celebrate the opening of their third location in San Francisco, Vive la Tarte co-owners Julie Vandermeersch and Arnaud Goethals created a special house-milled sweet-potato bread that is only available at the Noe Valley bakery and restaurant.

Called the Noe Valley Loaf (\$9) and made with purple sweet potato, rye, and malt, the bread comes from a sourdough starter that is infused with the nutrients and microorganisms found in the neighborhood's air. The flour is milled in-house in a dedicated milling lab, and the bread is baked on-site in traditional cast-iron pans.

"With every dish we do and the products we make, we go from a classic product like a croissant or bread and do one notch further. Rather than make a heavy potato bread, how can we make it a much more interesting product," explained Vandermeersch. "We worked with various ingredients to find some really cool color to give the bread. It is a purple color but all natural. We added some purple barley to it with our sourdough."

As of now, the bakery makes six to a dozen of the specialty loaves per day and will increase production as demand requires. While there is a kitchen on-site, its capacity is limited, as everything on the menu is made in-house.

"We believe in not moving product too far. We like to make it on location," said Vandermeersch, the business' head chef.

Thus, while Vive la Tarte is known for its stuffed croissants at the first location it opened four years ago South of Market, the famed sandwiches are not yet on the menu at the Noe Valley location. (The Belgian-style bakery also has a kiosk inside the Ferry Building and is set to open its first outpost outside the Bay Area in the Silver Lake district of Los Angeles.)

At the 24th Street location, customers will find a small counter upfront where they can place their orders and then be given a number if they choose to eat there,



Jacob Garding mans the counter while Antoine Hammet tends the espresso machine at Vive la Tarte, a new bakery café specializing in house-made breads, creative egg dishes, and a warm and cozy environment.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

as the staff will bring the food to their table. There is seating for up to 40 people in the 2,200-square-foot, all-white rectangular space, which was designed by Goethals in collaboration with Kilomade Studios and Planart.

Fresh baked goods on offer include turmeric monkey bread (\$4) and a variety of croissants, from plain butter (\$3.75) to pain au chocolat (\$4) or almond (\$4.50). Drink options run the gamut from Sightglass espresso and August Uncommon tea to organic lemonades from Tractor Beverage Co. and natural wines.

The couple also developed a selection of kombucha cocktails such as the Booch Mosa (\$9), made with organic cava, blood orange, and oak kombucha. Pitchers of mimosas (\$35), regular or grapefruit, are also available.

A highlight of the food menu is the Kaleifornia Breakfast Salad (\$14), made with fried egg, shredded kale, red beet hummus, vegan eggplant bacon, and pepitas (pumpkin seeds).

The eggs benedict (\$16) is made with poached eggs, hollandaise, prosciutto cotto, and asparagus served atop house levain bread.

The smashed avocado toast (\$14) is served with poached egg, feta, pickled

tomatillo, cherry tomato, and sumac on house levain. A P.L.T. sandwich (\$13) features prosciutto crudo, aged cheddar, gem lettuce, tomato, and basil aioli, on house levain.

Vandermeersch also developed a dedicated kids' menu, including pancrêpes (\$10), a cross between pancakes and traditional crêpes, made with in-house milled kamut flour, topped with torched banana and date syrup. There is also a breakfast pizza (\$8) made with egg, bacon, green onions, and crème fraiche.

The co-owners are still adjusting the menu for the Noe Valley café, which officially opened Jan. 29 in the space that once housed Bliss Bar, at 4026 24th St. (After a fire ripped through the bar in 2013, the building's owners announced plans to open their own restaurant and nightclub in the space, once it was rebuilt. However, they abandoned the idea several years later.)

Arnaud and Vandermeersch, who are married and live in Mill Valley with their newborn son, had scouted out locations for a second, full bakery and café for two years before signing the lease for the Noe Valley storefront.

"Noe Valley is the perfect spot to expand to because we are all about building relationships," said Goethals, "and build-

ing community around our business."

The Belgian natives relocated from Brussels in late 2011 and started their culinary business by focusing on catering services.

They chose the name Vive la Tarte to evoke thoughts of European bakeries, and because French is also spoken in their home country.

"Vive la Tarte is all about celebration," said Vandermeersch. "We were wanting to bring people together in a celebratory way."

Within a week of their debut in Noe Valley, the café already had a number of regulars popping in to have lunch, meet friends, or do work.

"We made so many new friends in our first opening week! Thank you for the LOVE, Noe!" noted the couple on their Instagram page.

"We want it to be a place people feel at home and an extension of their home, where they can come if they don't want to cook or just have a good time," said Vandermeersch. "We want to bring people together in a comfortable setting."

Vive la Tarte is open weekdays from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on weekends from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. Delivery is available through Caviar.

—Matthew S. Bajko



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MARCH ONLY, WITH THIS AD

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March 1: Anthony Holdsworth teaches OIL PAINTING for beginner and advanced students in the gallery of Alley Cat Books. 6:30-10 pm. 3036 24th. 824-1761; anthonyholdsworth.com.

March 1-25: Local sections of the WPA MODEL of San Francisco will be on display at the Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 1-29: BootCampSF conducts FITNESS training Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8:30 am. SF Rec Center Basketball Court, 30th and Whitney. 567-9009; sfbootcamp.com.

March 1-29: Chris Sequeira leads a free Friday KARAOKE for Adults gathering at Upper Noe Rec Center. 6:30-8:30 pm. 295 Day. 970-8061.

March 1-30: Noe Valley OVEREATERS Anonymous meets Monday through Saturday, 7 am, at St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine. oasf.org.

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

March 1-30: 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.

March 1-31: Charlie's Corner offers children's STORY TIMES every day. Mon.-Fri., 10 am, noon, 3 & 5 pm; Sat. & Sun., 10:30 am, 12:30 & 3:30 pm. 4102 24th; 641-1104.

March 1-31: Helen S. Cohen exhibits her PAINTINGS at Lola's Art Gallery. Reception March 1, 5-7 pm; Tues.-Sun., noon-6 pm. 1250 Sanchez. 642-4875; lolasanfrancisco.com.

March 1-31: Cary Friedman exhibits PHOTOGRAPHS in "Looking Back, Looking Forward." Edward Jones, 4190 24th. fotoartiste@icloud.com.

March 2: Learn to knit or crochet at the Noe Valley Library's KNITTING CIRCLE. 2-4 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 2 & 3: SF HISTORY DAYS at the Old Mint features the Neighborhood Newspaper collection at the Department of Memory booth. 11 am-4 pm. 88 5th.

March 2 & 9: John Fisher performs his solo show, A History of World War II: The D-Day Invasion to the Fall of Berlin. 5 pm. The Marsh, 1062 Valencia. themarsh.org.

March 2-30: 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.

March 2-30: Upper Noe Rec Center offers free YOGA CLASSES Saturdays 9:15-10:15 am. Day & Sanchez. 970-8061; noevalleyreccenter.com.

March 2-30: The Randall Museum's close-up of California wildlife, "Meet the ANIMAL KEEPER," happens Saturdays at 2 pm. 199 Museum Way. 554-9605.

March 2-31: 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.

March 3: Timothy Pakron introduces Mississippi VEGAN: Recipes and Stories from a Southern Boy's Heart. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

March 3 & 17: SF City Guides leads a free WALKING TOUR of Noe Valley on first and third Sundays at 1:30-3:30 pm. Meet at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 557-4266; sfcityguides.org.

March 3-31: A free T'AI CHI class at the Noe Valley Town Square is scheduled for Sundays, from 9 to 10 am. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

March 3-31: Taylor Pangman and Lauren Cohen from Yoga Mayu offer a

free YOGA CLASS at the Noe Valley Town Square; bring your own mat. Sundays, 10-11 am. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

March 3-31: 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.

March 3 & April 7: The Asian Art Museum offers FREE ADMISSION on the first Sunday of the month, courtesy of Target. 200 Larkin. 581-3500; asianart.org.

March 4, 11, 18 & 25: The ACC Conversation Club meets on Mondays from 4:30 to 5:30 pm at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. For details, email krismoser@aol.com.

March 5: Artists' Television Access screens the 1981 film *The Willmar Eight* from the library's 16mm film archive. 6:30-8 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. Limited to 12 participants; call to register: 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 5 & 19: Bethany United Methodist Church offers free KNITTING lessons with Ray Capiral on first and third Tuesdays; free yarn, needles, and instruction. 7-8:30 pm. 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org.

March 5-26: The Eureka Valley Library tells TODDLER TALES on Tuesdays, 10:30 am. 1 Jose Sarria Court (16th & Market). 355-5616; sfpl.org.

March 5-26: Volunteer to make meals for the hungry at Civic Center Plaza at "Currry Without Worry." 1:30-5 pm. Bethany UMC, 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org.

March 5-26: John McClean Wolf leads SACRED YOGA Tuesdays at Holy Innocents. 7-8 pm. 455 Fair Oaks. 824-5142; holyinsf.org.

March 5 & April 2: The de Young Museum and the Legion of Honor have FREE ADMISSION on the first

Tuesday of the month. 750-3600; deyoungmuseum.org.

March 6: Make cork coasters with maps of San Francisco at adult CRAFT NIGHT at the Noe Valley Library. 7-8:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 6-27: Folio Books offers STORYTIME for toddlers Wednesdays at 10 am. 3957 24th. 821-3477; foliosf.com.

March 6-27: Chris Sequeira leads free senior QIGONG classes Wednesdays 1 to 3 pm, at Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez. 773-8185; livingtaichi@yahoo.com

March 6-27: 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.

March 6-27: 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.

March 6-27: History group Shaping San Francisco offers free PUBLIC TALKS on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Eric Quezada Center, 518 Valencia. shapingsf.org.

March 6-27: AL-ANON meets Wednesdays 8 to 9:30 pm at St. Philip Church. 725 Diamond. 834-9940; al-anonsf.org.

March 7: The monthly self-guided Castro ART WALK features exhibits by local artists in various neighborhood businesses; Be.Musical performs in Jane Warner Plaza from 6 to 7 pm. 6-9 pm. For a map and list of artists: castroartwalk.com.

March 7, 14, 21 & 28: 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.

March 7-28: The Noe Valley Town Square offers group MEDITATION

Thursdays, from 8 to 9 am. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

March 7-28: Charlie's Corner Bookstore has a FRENCH STORYTIME Thursdays at 3 pm. 4102 24th. 641-1104; charliescorner.com.

March 7-28: Newcomers welcome at the AL-ANON Literature Discussion, meeting Thursdays at Bethany UMC, from 7:15 to 8:30 pm. 1270 Sanchez.

March 7-28: Bring your vast storehouse of knowledge to TRIVIA NIGHT on Thursdays at the Dubliner, 3838 24th. 8 pm. 285-0674; brainstormer.com.

March 8: The Noe Valley Library screens the 1966 FILM *Fahrenheit 451*, based on the book by Ray Bradbury. 2-4 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 8: Folio Books celebrates Noe Valley WORD WEEK 2019 and International WOMEN'S DAY with a panel discussion about women in film, "Thelma & Louise Back Behind the Wheel." 7 pm. 3957 24th. foliosf.com.

March 8-14: The 23rd "Berlin and Beyond FILM FESTIVAL" screens at the Castro Theatre (429 Castro), Landmark Shattuck Cinemas in Berkeley, and the Goethe-Institut (530 Bush). For a schedule: berlinbeyond.com.

March 9: Upper Douglass DOG PARK reopens with a new agility course designed by Girl Scout Leila Ali O'Rourke. 6 am-10 pm daily except Wednesdays.

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

March 9: Cara Black, Mary Jo McConahay, Emma Bland Smith, and Ramon Sender will be among the authors at the NOE VALLEY AUTHORS Festival at Word Week 2019. 3-5 pm. Umpqua Bank, 3938 24th. friendsonoevalley.com.

March 9: Celebrate Women's History Month with the first of a three-part American Gothic literature series with a reading of Mary Shelley's *FRANKENSTEIN*. 4-5 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

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MARCH EVENTS AT OMNIVORE BOOKS

| | |
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| SAT MAR 2 | ELISA CALLOW • URBAN FORAGER: CULINARY EXPLORING & COOKING ON L.A.'S EAST SIDE • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • Part cookbook, part guide to foraging, <i>The Urban Forager</i> showcases one of California's richest and most rapidly expanding culinary cultures |
| SUN MAR 3 | TIMOTHY PAKRON • MISSISSIPPI VEGAN • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • Timothy Pakron found his heart, soul, and calling in cooking the Cajun, Creole, and southern classics of his youth. Here he shares 125 plant-based recipes to reveal the secret tradition of veganism in Southern cooking. |
| SAT MAR 9 | YANA GILBUENA • NO FORKS GIVEN • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • Gilbuena has an evangelical zeal to share the cuisine of her childhood in the Visayas region of the central Philippines. Come let her entice you into the world of Visayas cooking! |
| SUN MAR 10 | LAURI KRANZ • A GARDEN CAN BE ANYWHERE: CREATING BOUNTIFUL & BEAUTIFUL OUTDOOR EDIBLE GARDENS • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • Edible Gardens LA founder Lauri Kranz shares her secrets for planning, planting, growing, and maintaining luscious edible gardens, no matter the setting or size of the plot. |
| TUES MAR 12 | JOHANNA KINDVALL • SMORGASBORD: THE ART OF SWEDISH BREADS & SAVORY TREATS • 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE • An illustrated cookbook with traditional and contemporary recipes for the classic breads, savory foods, and infused aquavit liqueurs of a Swedish smörgåsbord. |
| THURS MAR 14 | DAVID LBOVITZ • THE PERFECT SCOOP: REVISED & UPDATED • 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE • David's frozen favorites range from classic and comforting to contemporary and cutting-edge. This new edition includes a brand new selection of frozen cocktails and an indulgent series of toppings. |
| SAT MAR 23 | RYAN ALVAREZ AND ADAM MERRIN • HUSBANDS THAT COOK • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • Over 120 vegetarian recipes that reflect Ryan and Adams' marriage in all its flavor and variety. |
| THURS MAR 28 | KATIE PARLA • FOOD OF THE ITALIAN SOUTH • 6:30-7:30 P.M. FREE • Rich recipes, both original and reimagined, along with historical and cultural insights that encapsulate the miles of rugged beaches, sheep-dotted mountains, meditatively quiet towns, and, most important, culinary traditions unique to this precious piece of Italy. |
| SAT MAR 30 | JANET FLETCHER • WINE COUNTRY TABLE • 3:00-4:00 P.M. FREE • A beautifully photographed tour of 23 stunning farms and wineries whose sustainable practices highlight the future of responsible farming and winegrowing, accompanied by award-winning author Janet Fletcher's recipes. |

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CALENDAR

March 9: SF Neon offers a NEON WALKING TOUR, "Market-Mission-Castro." 6-8 pm. sfneon.org.

March 9: "Big Night/La Gran Noche" is a BENEFIT GALA for James Lick Middle School, with food, cocktails, and dancing. 6-10 pm. 111 Minna Gallery, 111 Minna. 695-5675.

March 10: Political group ACTION SF meets from 12:30 to 2 pm on the second Sunday of the month at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. actionsolidarity@gmail.com; resistry.net.

March 10: Lauri Kranz discusses her book *A GARDEN Can Be Anywhere*. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

March 10: Erika Atkinson, Wayne Goodman, Marylee McNeal, and Kim Shuck read classical Mediterranean poetry in Greek, Hebrew, Roman, and Egyptian (and English) at WORD WEEK 2019. 4 pm. Olive This Olive That, 304 Vicksburg. friendsofnoevalley.com.

March 10: The Eos Ensemble performs at MUSIC ON THE HILL. 6:30 pm. St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine. 820-1429; musiconthehill.org.

March 11: The Noe Valley Library offers an introduction to RESEARCH DATABASES. 2-3 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 11: ODD MONDAYS at Word Week hosts authors experienced in "Ridin', Ropin', and Writin' Western Novels," Bill Blach, David Watts, and Bill Yenne. 7 pm. Folio Books, 3957 24th. oddmondays.com.

March 12: The Noe Valley Library hosts an eReader and ONLINE RESOURCE "Drop-In" from 10:30 to 11:30 am. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 12: Johanna Kindvall introduces *SMORGASBORD: The Art of Swedish Breads and Savory Treats*. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

March 12: Mary Jo McConahay and Chris Feliciano Arnold reveal their "Tangled Paths: True Stories from Latin America," at WORD WEEK

2019 at the Noe Valley Library. Wine reception 6:30 pm. 451 Jersey. friendsofnoevalley.com.

March 13: The Castro FARMERS MARKET is open every Wednesday, 4 to 7 pm, through Nov. 20. Noe at Market. pcfma.com.

March 13: Word Week's SMALL PUBLISHERS Night features *Manic D, Nomadic, Two Lines, and Why There Are Words*. 3-5 pm. Umpqua Bank, 3938 24th. friendsonoevalley.com.

March 13: The GREAT BOOKS discussion group meets from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 14: Thomas Lennon discusses *Ronan Boyle and the Bridge of Riddles* at a St. Patrick's BOOKWORMS Club (and pizza party) at Folio Books. 6 pm. 3957 24th. RSVP required: 821-3477. tiny.cc/followorms.

March 14: David Lebovitz discusses *The Perfect Scoop*, featuring 200 recipes for ICE CREAM, gelato, sorbet, and more. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

March 14: Word Week presents "CARA BLACK Takes Us to Paris" at La Boulangerie. 7 pm. 3898 24th. friendsonoevalley.com.

March 14: The DIAMOND HEIGHTS Community Association meets on the second Thursday of the month, at 7 pm. Call 867-5774 for location; dhcasf.org.

March 14-May 2: CREATIVITY EXPLORED hosts an art exhibit, "5 and 2 Others." Reception March 14, 7-9 pm; Mon.-Fri., 10 am-5 pm (Thurs. until 7 pm), Sat., noon-5 pm. 3245 16th. 863-2108; creativityexplored.org.

March 15: Folio Books hosts a reading of *The Widow Dreams* by Word for Word performing arts company, at Noe Valley Word Week. 7 pm. 3957 24th. friendsofnoevalley.com; foliosf.com.

March 16: The SF Chamber Orchestra performs "AMERICAN IDOL, Classical Edition," where 12 instrumentalists compete for the grand prize. 2-4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2314; noevalleyministry.org.

March 16: Family DOG RESCUE brings adoptable pooches to the Noe Valley Pet Company, from noon to 4 pm. 1451 Church. 282-7385; noevalleypetco.com.

March 16: Members of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival act out bits from the BARD at Noe Valley Word Week 2019. 1:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. friendsofnoevalley.com.

March 16: Therapy dog Stanley and trainer Rebecca bring "PUPPY DOG TALES" to the Noe Valley Library, especially for ages 4 to 7. 4-5 pm. 451 Jersey. Call to reserve a spot: 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 19: Noe Valley resident Laurie Coyle's DOCUMENTARY FILM, *Adios Amor: The Search for Maria Moreno*, screens at the 2019 Albany Film Festival. 7:30 pm. 1115 Solano, Albany, CA; albanyfilmfest.org.

March 19: 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.

March 20: The Noe Valley Library hosts "An Evening with MARY JO McCONAHAY," author of *The Tango War*. 6:30-7:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 20: Supervisor Rafael Mandelman presents his plan for the neighborhood and a rep from Community Youth Center will discuss disaster-preparedness at UPPER NOE Neighbors. 7 pm. Upper Noe Rec Center, 295 Day.

March 20: The Noe Valley BOOK DISCUSSION Group considers *My Antonia* by Willa Cather. 7-8:30 pm.

Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. For the title: 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 21: Charlie's Corner celebrates WORLD POETRY DAY with stories and rhymes. 4:02 24th. 641-1104; charliescorner.com.

March 21: Artist and author Nidhi Chanani discusses *GRAPHIC NOVEL Pashmina* at the Noe Valley Library, for ages 7 and up. 4-5 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 22: Judd Winick discusses *Hilo—Then Everything Went Wrong* at the BOOKWORMS Club (and pizza party) at Folio Books. 6 pm. 3957 24th. RSVP required: 821-3477, tiny.cc/followorms.

March 23: Ryan Alvarez and Adam Merrin introduce the VEGETARIAN recipes from their book *Husbands That Cook*. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

March 24: LIEDER Alive! hosts a concert featuring baritone Eugene Villanueva and pianist Peter Grunberg. 5 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. liederalive.org.

March 25: ODD MONDAYS hosts the 18th Street Writers Group, with Michael Aleynikov, Andrew Chen, Wilfredo Pascual, and Genanne Walsh. 7 pm. Folio Books, 3957 24th. No-host supper. 5:30 pm, Haystack Pizza, 3881 24th. oddmondays.com.

March 26: MISSION POLICE STATION holds its community meeting the last Tuesday of the month. 6 pm. 630 Valencia. 558-5400; missionpolicestation.org.

March 28: Katie Parla discusses *Food of the ITALIAN SOUTH*. 6:30-7:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

March 29 & 30: In Press Play: *The HUMAN JUKEBOX*, Ron Jones performs spoken word, song, and music and dance. 8 pm. St. Aidan's Church, 101 Goldmine. 206-0700; performanceshowcase.com.

March 30: Coffee and pastry are provided for volunteers at JURI COMMONS, 9 to 11 am. The park is between Guerrero, San Jose Avenue, 25th, and 26th. RSVP to meetup.com/juri-commoners.

March 30: Noe Valley author Don McCunn discusses "Creating Custom-Fit BRAS," with a book signing to follow. 1-3 pm. Sips N Sews, 1167 Sutter. deosf.com/Talk.html.

March 30: SF SHAKES performs *The Comedy of Errors*, from 2 to 4 pm, at the Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

March 30: Janet Fletcher talks about RECIPES from California's harvest in her *Wine Country Table*. 3-4 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

March 31: LIVE Music in the SQUARE. 1-3 pm. BYOB. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com.

March 31: Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC presents a benefit concert by tenor Paul Groves and pianist Stephen Prutsman, with special guests. 4-6 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 648-5236; nvcm.org.

April 4-6: Bellwether DANCE Project presents *Let Slip the Witches*, a world premiere directed by Noe Valley's Amy Foley. Thurs., Fri. & Sat., 8 pm. ODC Theater, 3153 17th. 863-9834 or <http://www.odc.dance/witches>

April No Foolin'

The next *Noe Valley Voice* Calendar will appear in the **April 2019** issue, distributed the first week of April. The deadline for items is March 15. Please email calendar@noevalleyvoice.com. Events in Noe Valley receive priority. Thank you.



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— William Saroyan

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CLASS ADS

Liquidation of Estate Garage Sale:
163 28th Street (between Church and Dolores streets). Saturday March 23 and Sunday March 24 – 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. An entire garage full of great things that are priced to go – hand-picked collectables, kitchen items, glassware, small appliances, furniture, linens, old music albums and CDs, Christmas decorations, costume jewelry plus so much more. 510-579-9787.

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Submissions: The Noe Valley Voice welcomes submissions of short fiction, essays, or poetry, particularly those relating to Noe Valley. Email editor@noevalleyvoice.com or write Noe Valley Voice, P.O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include a phone number.

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

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and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Marching Forth

By Mazook

A WALK ON THE NOE SIDE: Mayor London Breed came to our village on Friday, Feb. 22, and spent the day. In the morning, she met with students at Alvarado Elementary School. Then she went for a walk in Downtown Noe Valley and had a snack at Bernie's coffeehouse. Mayor Breed roamed the aisles at Just for Fun with co-owner David Eiland, visited Carol Yenne at her Small Frys children's store, and then went up to Charlie's Corner to read to toddlers who had assembled for a story time. Later, she went on to James Lick Middle School on Noe Street.

Joining Breed on her walk were Supervisor Rafael Mandelman; Debra Niemann, director of the Noe Valley Association; and Rachel Swann, president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association.

After goodies at Bernie's, the group paid a visit to Just for Fun, where Eiland asked for the support of the mayor and supervisor for an application he is making to become a legacy business in San Francisco. To be registered as a legacy business, you need to be a business that is at least 30 years old and nominated by a member of the Board of Supervisors or the mayor, and you need to convince the Small Business Commission that you've made a significant impact on the history or culture of the neighborhood. Legacy business owners and property owners receive various benefits from the city, as an incentive to preserve the business. Last year, Church Street's Chloe's Café achieved legacy status.

Just for Fun has been a neighborhood fixture for 33 years and has sat at its present location at 3982 24th St. for the past 30 years. Eiland says it's magical that the kids he saw coming into the store with their parents years ago, shopping for toys, are now all grown up and bringing their own kids to the store.

After having some fun at Just for Fun, the mayor and her entourage crossed the street to where Small Frys toddler shop is temporarily located (3985 24th) while its store and building at 4066 24th is being retrofitted and renovated. Small Frys has been located at 4066 since 1984, and Carol and husband Bill Yenne bought the property in 1991.

Carol Yenne used the mayor's visit as an opportunity to express her dismay and frustration over years of dealing with City Hall bureaucracy. She said she first filed papers and paid fees in December of 2014 with the city's historical review department to renovate the 110-year-old building.

"We did not ask for any variances and we had no DRs [Planning Commission reviews]," Yenne told the mayor. "We even paid expedited permit fees, but still it took three years and 11 months! Our permit was granted November 2018."

At the end of the visit, Yenne handed a letter to the mayor and supervisor detailing her experiences in the process. It read, in part: "Along the way, we received many apologies for the unnecessary delays, from Planning, SFFD, DPW, etc., but we will never get back the time lost. Our grandson was in the fourth grade when we started this project, and he talked happily about what he hoped to have in his 'new' room. He is now in the eighth grade, and his excitement has waned to cynicism, nearly halfway through high school before he sees the room about which he once dreamed."

Yenne says she hopes to the Small Frys project will be finished by summer of 2020, and she can move her store back home.

The mayor's Downtown Noe Valley excursion ended at Charlie's Corner (on the northwest corner of Castro and 24th), an immensely popular children's bookstore with four story times a day during the week

(usually at 10 a.m., noon, 3, and 5 p.m.). Some readings are in Spanish, French, Mandarin, or Italian. Some are with musical accompaniment. If you walk by at story time, you will find strollers parked outside, sometimes around the corner.

Mayor Breed read a book about San Francisco, of course, to the 20-plus toddlers (and at least that many parents or caregivers of the kids). The happy occasion ended as the mayor was whisked away to Lick Middle School.

According to Jeff Cretan, Breed's communications director, the mayor wants to visit every neighborhood in the city and was happy to visit us and get a sense of what is happening in our schools and businesses.



REALSKINCARE: The big news in Downtown Noe Valley is that the long-vacant space formerly occupied by Real Food Company (which shut its doors at 3939 24th St. on Labor Day 2003 and has been a blight on the street ever since) has a new tenant.

As you know, the building (approximately 5,490 square feet, consisting of a ground floor and mezzanine level) was sold in the spring of last year to a developer who got permits using plans that showed the space would be partitioned into three separate retail stores.

The permits were granted to change the space from a grocery store to commercial use, the front was boarded up, and work began last fall. By the time winter came, peeks through the plywood gates showed construction of something different than expected. The plywood façade across the front was removed in the middle of February, revealing just one store space behind the façade, and the For Lease sign was gone. The space had reportedly been offered for lease for \$30,000 per month, which would have meant \$10,000 per store per month if there were three stores.

So who is moving in? The envelope, please! "SkinSpirit Skincare Clinic and Spa," says store spokesperson Allyson Campa. The clinic is hoping for a grand opening, she says optimistically, "sometime in the spring."

SkinSpirit, launched in 2003 by plastic surgeon Dr. Michael Dean Vistnes, describes itself as a luxury spa experience that "provides cutting-edge products and services in its clinics, including Botox, dermal fillers, facials, laser treatments, and other non-invasive aesthetic services." Additional services and treatments listed on its website include CoolSculpting fat reduction, microneedling, dermaplaning, back deep-cleansing, and "brightening treatments," as well as chemical peels and, of course, facial massage.

The Noe Valley spa will be SkinSpirit's ninth location, including another in San Francisco, at 3325 Sacramento. The others are in Walnut Creek, Los Gatos, Mill Valley, and Walnut Creek, and Palo Alto, the California headquarters. SkinSpirit also has spas in Bellevue and Redmond, Wash.

For the grand opening, Campa says SkinSpirit will offer complimentary events to introduce itself to the neighborhood. She says about 90 percent of the company's clientele are women, but she sees a growing number of men availing themselves of services, especially hair restoration.



THE TURN-KEY TROT: The space vacated last year by Pete's Cleaners (next to the Town Square and currently being renovated) will become, after all the dust settles, a fish market.

The plan, according to seafood wholesalers Ismael Macias and Adrian Hoffman of Four Star Seafood at 1315 Egbert Ave. over in Bayview, is to open a seafood market that would also prepare and serve seafood dishes to eat there or take out.

Hoffman lives in Noe Valley and saw the For Lease sign on the window of Pete's while he was having sushi at Saru, which is across the street. According to Macias, they started their seafood business in 2015 and now provide many restaurants with their products. "We wanted to open a retail space



A Snack With Friends: Mayor London Breed (in red) and Supervisor Rafael Mandelman (right) stopped at Bernie's Coffee for a quick bite on Friday, Feb. 22, in between visits to Alvarado and James Lick schools. Posing with the dignitaries were (from left) Bernie Melvin, Elen Konjo Asgedom, Miguel Almeida, and Mike McFadden.

Photo by Art Bodner

for a while, and Noe Valley seems to be the right spot for us at the right time." He says it is hard to estimate when all the work will be finished, but they hope to be open by summer.

Further foodwise, you might have noticed that a For Lease sign is posted in the restaurant where Le Cupboard wilted last year at 1298 Church at 25th Street. It had billed itself as "a healthful food start-up that serves fresh, plant-based, nutrient-dense meals," but closed last year after about a year in operation. It was a start-up that just plain stopped.

As you might remember, their plan was to produce a plant-based menu for wholesale distribution throughout the city in vending machines serviced on a daily basis. They were preparing their products in Noe Valley and had several clients (health clubs) to service. Then they opened up the space and started serving locals in a small dining area in front of their large kitchen.

According to the real estate agent for the owner, Haley Klein, "There has been a lot of interest in this space," emphasizing that it is "a turn-key lease, since the large and fully equipped kitchen is all set up and in immaculate condition." The monthly rent is \$7,000 and Klein said there would be "no key money," which means no up-front payment of money to enter into the lease. That is to say, the premises are ready for immediate use.

There is also news that the restaurant which was once Fattoush at 1361 Church, restored by the building owners and turn-key available for several months, has been rented to the owners of Bernal Heights Pizzeria. They're moving from their current location at 59 30th St., on the Noe Valley/Bernal border.

Last year, Twin Peaks Pizza, which has been a popular pizza place in Noe Valley for many years, took over ownership of the Bernal Heights branch of Baiano Pizzeria, and changed its name. The menu will be the same, so all you Bernal folks can relax. My advice: ask for coupons!

A further turn-key opportunity has come up at 1461 Church, where Royal Cleaners closed its doors last month after a 20-year run. The storefront had been another cleaners for 20 years, prior to Royal.

According to the building's owner, Patrick Morris, the operator of the cleaners has retired and left her equipment, along with what was there when she took over 20 years ago.

The space is now for rent, with around 1,500 square feet and a basement, at the asking price of \$5,590 per month. Morris says that if no one steps forward to take over the cleaners, he will sell all of the equipment and open up the space for another kind of commercial use.



SHORT SHRIFTS: Rare Device is closing its Noe Valley store at 4071 24th St., after a five-year run. The farewell party was to take place March 1, and many were expected to attend. Owner Giselle Gyalzen

says she is refocusing on her other shop, located at 600 Divisadero....

It looks as if the large commercial space at 3818 24th St. that was going to become an urgent medical care facility is now DOA, since the New York group that was going to open it has been bought out by another medical group, which is now trying to sublease the space at a rent rumored to be around \$14,000 a month, basement included....

Word is that Noe Valley's Patxi's Pizza chain (also in the Inner Sunset and Hayes Valley, not to mention Palo Alto, Campbell, Lafayette, Greenbrae, San Jose, Seattle, and Denver) will be closing its store in the Marina by April....



COULD BE VERSE: Feb. 15 was poetry night at Lola's art gallery, slightly off the beaten path at 1250 Sanchez on the corner of Clipper Street. More than 40 people showed up for readings by poets Kit Kennedy, Greg Pond, Dan Richman, and Alice Rogoff. Gallery owner Lola Herrera says she will have more readings in the future, and more exhibits of work by local artists. Paintings by Helen S. Cohen are set to go on display March 1.

And finally, just as the *Voice* was going to press, I (well, Sally the editor) received a newsletter from Celia Sack, owner of Omnivore Books on Cesar Chavez Street. The newsletter is where Sack gives the schedule of authors' visits to the store. But this time she had a tale to tell first, about an experience she won't soon forget:

"A friend of a friend asked me if I would like to drive the staff car in **President Obama's motorcade** for a couple of days while he was in town [for a special event in Oakland Feb. 18-19]. Not only was I out of my mind with excitement, but I was finally being rewarded for being an aggressive driver!" Sack wrote. "So with fancy new shoes and lipstick (lipstick!), I drove out to the airport, where my minivan was swept by the **Secret Service** and I was sniffed by an adorable bomb-detecting dog named Tosca. Then it was on to the tarmac to await his private plane. Wheels down, he swaggered down the steps with a cup of coffee, in sunglasses, looking like the coolest cat to ever deplane. His lovely staff hopped in my car, and we were off, speeding toward the highway. I was nervous about not letting any cars between me and the car in front of me, but luckily, there is the California Highway Patrol for that: they had completely blocked off rush hour traffic on 101, so we cruised along at 70 miles an hour, with no other cars in sight. That was basically worth the job alone! **I met the President** briefly at his hotel, where I surely bumbled my practiced sentence, 'Thanks for eight joyful years.' At least I didn't drool, as one of the other drivers was certain he had done."

What a great story! There's more to it, of course, and even a photo of Sack and Obama, but we ran out of room this issue for that. *You* can see it, though. Go to the store and talk to our new celebrity. ■

ADULT/TEEN EVENTS

An Evening with Mary Jo McConahay: The author of *The Tango War: The Struggle for the Hearts, Minds, and Riches of Latin America During World War II* will discuss how, in 1942, the U.S. kidnapped more than 6,000 ethnic Japanese, German, and Italian residents of Latin America to exchange them for U.S. civilians caught behind enemy lines in Europe and the Pacific. Wednesday, March 27; 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

SF Shakes Presents The Comedy of Errors: Shakespeare on Tour performs the 1594 tale of chaos and confusion caused by two sets of twins, for audiences of all ages. Enjoy the show on the library's outdoor patio, weather permitting. Saturday, March 30; 2 to 4 p.m.

American Gothic Literature Series: The first of a planned three-part series will celebrate Women's History Month by discussing Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Saturday, March 9; 4 to 5 p.m.

Introduction to Research Databases: Learn how to use the JSTOR and Academic Search Complete (EBSCO); open to all, but recommended for upper-level high school, community college, and university students. Monday, March 11; 2 to 3 p.m.

Noe Valley Knitting Circle: Meet to knit or crochet on the first Saturday of the month; the library has supplies to practice on, but bring your own yarn and needles if you're working on a project. Saturday, March 2; 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

ATA's Reel Cinema: Artists' Television Access (ATA) screens the 1981 film *The Willmar Eight*, about eight bank employees who picket their employer in small-town Minnesota. Tuesday, March 5; 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Adult Craft Night: Make cork coasters of your favorite neighborhood using maps of San Francisco; all materials provided. Sign up by calling 355-5707. Wednesday, March 6; 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Friday Matinee: The library screens the 1966 film *Fahrenheit 451*, based on the book by Ray Bradbury. Friday, March 8; 2 to 4 p.m.

eReader and Online Resource "Drop-In": Bring your mobile device or laptop, library card and PIN (and passwords) to a workshop about the SFPL's databases, Kanopy for streaming films, Flipster and RBDigital Magazines, and OverDrive and Axis360 for eBooks. Tuesday, March 12; 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The Great Books Discussion Group is sponsored by the non-profit Great Books Council of San Francisco. For more information, contact Elena at eschmid@sonic.net. Wednesday, March 13; 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Noe Valley Book Discussion Group explores *My Antonia* by Willa Cather. Copies of the book are held at the circulation desk for checkout. Wednesday, March 20; 7 to 8:30 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 sfpl.org.

MORE BOOKS TO READ

A Bevy of Books

A memoir by *Monty Python* star Eric Idle, a novel about a comic-book author who solves mysteries, and a children's book about a helper who made pies during the Montgomery Bus Boycott of the 1950s are among the recent arrivals at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library noted by Branch Manager Denise Sanderson and Children's Librarian Catherine Starr.

To check on their availability or on the library's collection of CDs, DVDs, and eBooks, call 415-355-5707 or drop by the Noe Valley Branch at 451 Jersey St.

Meanwhile, there's still time to see the Noe Valley segments of the 1-inch-to-100 scale **Model of San Francisco**, the colorful wooden replica made by WPA artists in 1938 and exhibited today by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in partnership with the San Francisco Library. It will be on display through March 25. For more information, visit the San Francisco Library online at sfpl.org.

Adult Fiction

❖ *Evening in Paradise* is the second posthumous collection of short stories by Lucia Berlin, whose *Manual for Cleaning Women* was a finalist for the Kirkus Prize in 2015.

❖ A darkly comic send-up of high society, *French Exit* by Patrick deWitt follows the (mis)fortunes of a widow and son who sail from New York to Paris with their cat.

❖ A comic-book writer becomes involved in a murder mystery in *The Frame-Up*, the first of two Golden Arrow Mysteries by Meghan Scott Molin.

❖ After a plane crash in the Colorado Rockies, a woman searches for clues about her daughter, in *Freefall* by Jessica Barry.

Adult Nonfiction

❖ *You Can't Go Wrong Doing Right: How a Child of Poverty Rose to the White House and Helped Change the World* is a memoir by Robert J. Brown, an adviser to every president since John F. Kennedy.

❖ In *Let Me Tell You My Story: Refugee Stories of Hope, Courage, and Humanity*, writers, photographers, filmmakers, and artists document the lives of refugees from the Middle East and Africa.

❖ Antony Spawforth's *The Story of Greece and Rome* spans six millennia, from the late Bronze Age to the seventh century.

❖ *San Francisco: 60 Local Creatives Bring You the Best of the City* is a guide to the art, music, food, shops, and nature spots in neighborhoods throughout the city.

eBooks

❖ In *Listen to the Marriage* by John Jay Osborn, a San Francisco couple tries to repair their relationship.

❖ Laurie R. King and Leslie S. Klinger are the editors of the short-story collection *For the Sake of the Game: Stories Inspired by the Sherlock Holmes Canon*.

❖ *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life: A Sortabiography* is a memoir by a founding member of *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, Eric Idle.

❖ Neil Gaiman's four essays in *Art Matters: Your Imagination Can Change the World* examine the importance of creativity.

DVDs

❖ Claire Foy stars as Lisbeth Salander in the 2018 thriller *The Girl in the Spider's Web*, continuing the series based on the Steig Larsson books.

❖ The 2017 historical biopic *Mary Shelley* tells the story of the woman who wrote *Frankenstein*.

❖ *The Sisters Brothers* (2018) stars John C. Reilly and Joaquin Phoenix as assassins who chase a gold prospector in 1850s Oregon.

❖ The 2018 documentary *Love, Gilda* features performances, home movies, interviews, and audiotapes made by the late *Saturday Night Live* star Gilda Radner.

Children's Fiction

❖ After a girl has lost her dog, she finds another one in the picture book *Found*, written by Jeff Newman, illustrated by Larry Day. Ages 3 to 7.

❖ In *Don't Touch My Hair!* by Sharee Miller, a girl tries to keep everybody's hands off her fluffy curls. Ages 3 to 8.

❖ A group of young animals enjoy their differences and similarities in *I Just Like You* by Suzanne Bloom. Ages 4 to 8.

❖ *The Princess in Black and the Science Fair Scare* is the latest in a series written by Shannon and Dean Hale, with illustrations by LeUyen Pham. Ages 5 to 8.

CHILDREN'S EVENTS

Puppy Dog Tales: Children can read to canine Stanley and reading specialist Rebecca in this SPCA program offering help in reading, vocabulary, and grammar. For ages 4 to 7, but older kids welcome. Call 355-5707 to reserve your spot. Saturday, March 16; 4 to 5 p.m.

Children's Literary Talk: Nidhi Chanani, author of the graphic novel *Pashmina*, discusses the challenges of pursuing an art career within a community focused on STEM; live drawing follows. For children ages 7 and up. Thursday, March 21; 4 to 5 p.m.

Toddler Tales: Join Miss Catherine for books, singing, chants, and small movement every Thursday, 10:15 to 10:45 a.m., and 11 to 11:30 a.m. Ideal for children ages 16 through 36 months.

AAC Conversation Club: Users of Alternative and Augmentative Communication devices, including Dynavox, QuickTalker, Tobii Sono Flex, and Talk Bar, meet to explore new topics. For more information, contact KrisMoser@aol.com. Mondays, March 4, 11, 18, and 25; 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.

❖ *Garbage Island* by Fred Koehler describes "the nearly always perilous adventures of Archibald Shrew." Ages 8 to 12.

❖ Two girls in middle school hide their affection for one another, in *One True Way* by Shannon Hitchcock. Ages 9 to 12.

❖ Death is on the loose in a small town, and three kids must stop it, in *The House in Poplar Wood* by K.E. Ormsbee. Ages 10 to 14.

Children's Nonfiction

❖ *Fearless Mary: The True Adventures of Mary Fields, American Stagecoach Driver*, written by Tami Charles and illustrated by Claire Almon, is about a trail-blazing woman in the 1890s. Ages 4 to 7.

❖ The story of an African-American woman who worked at NASA is told in *Counting on Katherine: How Katherine Johnson Saved Apollo 13*, written by Helaine Becker, illustrated by Dow Phumiruk. Ages 5 to 9.

❖ Read about an Alabama woman who baked pies to feed the protesters in *Pies From Nowhere: How Georgia Gilmore Sustained the Montgomery Bus Boycott*, by Dee Romito, illustrated by Laura Freeman. Ages 6 to 9.

❖ *Kid Scientists: True Tales of Childhood from Science Superstars* is part of the "Kid Legends" series written by David Stabler, with illustrations by Anoosha Syed. Ages 9 to 12.

Annotations by Voice bookworm
Karol Barske

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Hum a Few Bars

By Michael Blake

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | A | B | B | I | A | R | M | S | B | O | B | A | | | |
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| C | A | R | D | I | N | A | L | V | I | R | T | U | E | S | |
| O | L | E | G | O | N | E | S | O | A | S | T | O | | | |
| E | R | R | A | D | M | A | N | | | | | | | | |
| B | A | L | T | I | M | O | R | E | O | R | I | O | L | E | |
| A | M | I | F | A | U | N | A | | | | | S | N | O | B |
| S | O | F | T | E | S | T | R | O | T | T | E | R | S | | |
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| C | H | R | I | S | T | O | P | H | E | R | W | R | E | N | |
| | A | L | E | X | A | | A | N | A | | | | | | |
| T | H | E | N | O | D | N | I | C | | N | O | L | A | | |
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| A | W | O | L | | U | N | | | | S | E | L | L | | |
| R | I | S | E | | M | A | P | S | | A | R | Y | A | N | |



A WPA model of San Francisco in 1938 is on display through March 25 at the Noe Valley Library and other library branches throughout the city. Photo by Pamela Gerard

BRANCH HOURS

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

**UPPER
NOE
REC
CENTER**



Dodgeball throwers carefully select and pick off the few remaining opponents in the Upper Noe gym. Eighty players from the Varsity Gay League squared off each Monday night in February. Photo courtesy Chris Faust

Register in March for Classes and Camp

Put on your running shoes. The race starts now to sign up for Quick-Start Tennis, Shred-n-Butter, Theater for Mini-Players, and dozens of other classes offered by the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department at Upper Noe Recreation Center. Registration for Spring Activities begins on **March 2** at 10 a.m. Visit sfrecpark.org to add courses, which run from March 16 to June 1.

Summer Camp registration opens **March 16** at 10 a.m. Early birds, please take note, the registration process for camp now requires you to be physically present in line. "Saving spots" with chairs or other items is not permitted.

Call 415-970-8061 for the complete scoop, or drop by the rec center office at 295 Day St. Find out more about classes and events, and about the stewardship committee for the park, at www.noevalleyreccenter.com.

UPPER NOE REC CENTER SPRING SESSION MARCH 16 – JUNE 1, 2019

Check www.noevalleyreccenter.com for updates.

MONDAY (Center closed; outside activities only.)

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

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Open Gym | 6:30-8:30 p.m.* |
| Auditorium Free Play | 2:30-5 p.m.* |
| Petite Bakers (ages 3-6) Drop in or register | 10-11 a.m.* |
| Rec-N-Tot Soccer | 10-11 a.m. |
| Simply Fun for All | 10-11:30 a.m. |
| Pickleball (all ages) | 12:30-3:30 p.m. FREE |
| Feldenkrais | 1-2 p.m. |
| Soccer | 4-5 p.m. |
| QuickStart Tennis (ages 8-13) | 5-6 p.m. |
| Soccer | 5:30-6:30 p.m. |
| Tennis Intermediate/Advanced (18+) | 6-7 p.m. |
| Yoga-Vinyasa (18+ all levels) | 6:30-7:30 p.m. |
| Adult Boot Camp | 7:45-8:45 p.m. |

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

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Open Gym | 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.* |
| Auditorium Free Play | 3-4 p.m.* |
| Pilates intermediate (18+) | 9:30-10:30 a.m. |
| Pilates all levels (18+) | 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. |
| Qi Gong for Seniors (55+) | 1-3 p.m. |
| Little Kickers (ages 4-7) | 4:30-5:30 p.m. |
| Karate Kids (ages 6-12) | 5:30-6:30 p.m. |
| Tennis beg/intermediate (18+) | 6-7 p.m. |
| Drop-in Volleyball (18+) | 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE |

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

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Open Gym | 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 6-8:30 p.m.* |
| Auditorium Free Play | 9:30-11 a.m.* |
| Petite Bakers (ages 3-6) Drop in or register | 10-11 a.m. |
| Movin' & Groovin' (ages 2-4) | 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. |
| Pickleball (all ages) | 12:30-3:30 p.m. FREE |
| Argentine Tango, advanced (55+) | 1-4 p.m. Drop-ins welcome. FREE |
| Volleyball -- Girls Beg. (ages 7-9) | 4:5-5:30 p.m. |
| Theater -- Mini Players (ages 5-6) | 4:30-5:30 p.m. |
| Zumba (family) | 5:30-6:30 p.m. FREE |
| Yoga-Gentle Hatha (18+) | 6:45-7:45 p.m. |

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

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Open Gym | 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.* |
| Auditorium Free Play | 1-4 p.m.* |
| Pilates intermediate (18+) | 9:30-10:30 a.m. |
| Pilates all levels (18+) | 11:30 -12:30 a.m. |
| Shred-N-Butter (ages 6-13) | 3:45-4:45 p.m. |
| Volleyball League -- Girls Intermed. (ages 10-14) | 4-5:30 p.m. |
| Karaoke for Adults (18+) | 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE |
| Drop-in Volleyball (18+) | 6:30-8:30 p.m. FREE |

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

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

SUNDAY (Center closed; outside activities only.)

*Hours are subject to change.

**WORD
WEEK
2019**

**13th Annual
NOE VALLEY
WORD WEEK 2019
Friday, March 8
through
Saturday, March 16**

9 great events

**Local authors
reading and
signing books**

All events are free!

for details, see:
friendsofnoevalley.com
OR
**Noe Valley
Word Week on Facebook**

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ZEPHYR PROUDLY CONGRATULATES OUR 2018 TOP PRODUCER TEAMS



Pictured far left: **Real SF Properties** (#1 Companywide Team). Pictured left to right, starting from top row: **The Gullicksen Group** (#1 Pacific Heights Team); **Domain San Francisco/Marin**; **Team Howe** (#1 Noe Valley Team); **Amy Clemens, Alec Mironov, & Tyler Mende**; **Joan Loeffler & Jim Beitzel** (#1 Upper Market Team); **Spiro Marin** (#1 Marin Team); **Team Honda SF**; **Tanja Beck & Scott Rose**; **SFNorth**.



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