Making the Scene
On Slow Sanchez
Residents Gravitate to the Fresh Air and Friendly Ambience

By Matthew S. Bajko

At least once a week, Dave Olson walks down Sanchez Street to get some exercise. Usually he heads out on Friday morning or Sunday afternoon, when he might catch an impromptu concert along his path from Day to 24th Street.

“I enjoy the amble,” says Olson, who has lived in Noe Valley for 11 years, the last three on Day Street.

Based on the many families, runners, and walkers he encounters, Olson is not alone in his admiration of the mostly flat, pedestrian-friendly corridor.

“The sense I have is people are glad it is here,” he says. “When I go out early in the morning at 7 a.m., there are very many runners and fast walkers on Sanchez Street.”

Sanchez between 23rd and 30th streets is one of 13 streets closed in mid-May in the second round of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency’s Slow Streets program. The aim is to provide safe spaces for bicyclists, joggers, walkers, and children to get exercise and fresh air during the health crisis.

Cars must steer clear 24/7. But delivery vans, postal trucks, and residents’ vehicles still have access. People can also still park on a Slow Street but are asked to use adjacent streets as thruways.

The SFMTA stresses that those who are walking, running, or biking on a Slow Street do not have exclusive right-of-way over motor vehicles. They must still take pedestrian safety precautions while in the roadway and crossing at intersections.

Transit officials intend to keep the Slow Streets program going at least until Covid-19 subsides, likely sometime in mid to late 2021. Additional Slow Streets are planned, but their rollout has been tied up in the city’s appeals process. (A resident has filed several complaints saying the SFMTA failed to obtain the proper environmental review.)

Still, on Sept. 25, the city announced it was ready to implement another Slow Street in Noe Valley, on Duncan Street from Sanchez to Valencia.

Meanwhile, residents have been flocking to Sanchez Street, particularly on weekends. Musicians of all ages and genres have also been taking advantage of the Sanchez at Our Feet. A walker crossing on Clipper looks north toward 24th Street, while cyclists and strollers travel in their own lanes on car-free Slow Sanchez. Photo by Beverly Tharp

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Let’s Eat Out—Outside
Noe Just Starting to Sample Parklet-Style Dining

By Liz Highleyman

Compared to other neighborhoods like the Castro and the Mission, Noe Valley has been slow to build new infrastructure for outdoor dining in the wake of Covid-19. But many restaurants are offering outdoor seating—some for the first time.

This summer, the city began issuing free permits for expanded dining on sidewalk, parking lanes, and streets. Only two restaurants along the 24th Street commercial corridor have taken advantage of the program, but the new setups

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Love Finds a Way
Wedding Radiates Joy Throughout Neighborhood

By Megan Wetherall

At 2 p.m., on Friday, Sept. 4, Patrick Boocock and Natasha Gupta emerged from their home as husband and wife, having just been married in their living room through a ceremony online.

Flanked by two other couples (and dear friends), they began their bridal walk from their one-bedroom apartment on 24th Street at Diamond down to NOVY restaurant, where they celebrated in the sunshine with spanakopita, to the delight of passersby.

Gupta, who bedazzled in a floor-length white sequined gown and flowing veil, was amazed by the response.

“When we started walking down, we didn’t expect anything to happen,” she said. “But then people all over the neighborhood started honking and waving. People were so excited, taking photos of us, asking, ‘Did you just get married?’”

Little girls hopped up and down with glee, yelling, “Look, it’s a princess!”

For Bocock, “it felt like a ray of hope

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13
Approaching 30th Street. Northbound train #2135 is seen in this view south along a main line for Southern Pacific Railroad. Holly Park is in the background.

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Days of Spooktacular Past. Before Covid19 struck true fright and distancing among Noe Valley folk young and old, there were gatherings at the Town Square where princesses, bunnies and hot dogs vied for attention at the main stage during Spooktacular 2019.

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Hi everyone! Thanks so much to all of you for supporting me and donating to the March of Dimes. Together, we have raised $14,715 for healthy moms and babies! (That puts me as their 26th highest individual fundraiser in the country!)

As promised, I have memorized 1,500 digits of pi.

I really wish we could have all gotten together to enjoy pie and pi this year, because your passion and encouragement really inspire me. Since the pandemic prevented us from doing that, I’ve recorded a video with some very special distant witnesses, and plenty of camera-panning to show that I’ve truly done this from memory. There’s even a second video at a different angle available upon request, for the extra thorough:

Here’s the link to my recitation: https://youtu.be/_jsx5q7IMBY

Thank you so much for helping me achieve this feat of supporting nonprofits and babies. I’m so grateful that you helped me honor my younger brother Jonah’s memory this way.

Lila Chen
Noe Valley resident

Congratulations, Lila! The Voice was proud to feature you and your remarkable feat here and in our April 2020 issue.

Diamond Street Still Leaking

Editor’s Note:

For several years, a stream of water that appears to originate from 1008 Diamond St. has been flowing down Diamond to 34th Street. The building that has been identified to be the source was undergoing renovation, but all work ceased a few years ago. The runoff is constant and presents a clear hazard to pedestrians, as mud and moss accumulate on the wet sidewalk, which then becomes exceedingly slippery.

Many residents have contacted the city about this hazard through 311 and Supervisor Rafael Mandelman’s office, and on Sept. 15 a DPW worker pressure-washed the sidewalk. While this is helpful, it is a short-term solution. The stream continues, and the mud and silt will accumulate again.

An aide to the supervisor, Jacob Bintliff, wrote in an email on Aug. 3: “Site analysis has confirmed that the source of this seepage is natural groundwater, which was accidentally disturbed during the construction activity. The neighbor we’ve been talking to mentioned this leak has been going on for at least a year now. For better or worse, we have learned that it is actually the property owner’s legal responsibility to manage groundwater and capture seepage. This particular owner has been non-responsive, and DBI has been issuing violation notices, and these are now escalating to monetary fines. Just this morning I checked in about this, and we are now referring [it] to the City Attorney’s unit, who deals with vacant property abatement.”

While it is satisfying to know a city agency is pursuing this, I recommend that residents call 311 and contact our supervisor about this hazardous condition. Additionally, I would recommend avoiding the west side of Diamond Street while walking.

Phyllis Van Hagen
25th Street
The Noe Valley Voice • October 2020

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Get ready to VOTE, San Francisco!
Be on the look out for your ballot in the mail in early October.
Return your ballot to:
- the outdoor Voting Center in front of Bill Graham Civic Auditorium (open starting October 5)
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Ready, Set, Vote!
Nov. 3 Election Looms Large
By Tom Ruiz

Noe Valleyans are preparing for the election of our lifetime. The good news is Michael Choi, voter outreach manager for the San Francisco Department of Elections (DOE), has confirmed to the Noe Valley Voice that all existing Noe Valley polling stations will remain up and running for Tuesday, Nov. 3.

The DOE also expects to be fully staffed with poll workers. For those who wish to vote using the mail-in ballot the State of California authorized to send to all registered voters, the DOE will make available red ballot drop-off boxes at each polling station.

One thing voters using mail-in ballots should consider—besides getting them in before the election—is the signature question. Your signature will be compared with the one that is on file with your voter registration form or any other signatures you have used on voter records with the DOE. If the signature is unable to be verified, DOE will send the voter a letter with step-by-step instructions on how to resolve the issue. In the March primary, 136 ballots were challenged due to signatures not matching.

For those who want to vote in person, the DOE will be opening an early voting center on Oct. 5 through Election Day. In a change from the usual location in the basement of City Hall, the early voting center will be outside the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium at 99 Grove St. From Oct. 31 through Nov. 3, DOE will also provide ballot drop-off locations at the Bayview and Excelsior branch libraries, as well as at Chase Center.

DOE encourages voters who vote by mail to do so early so their ballots can be authenticated and counted.

Any San Francisco voter can check the progress of their mail ballot by going online to sflection.org/voterportal. Voters can also register to vote by going to registervote.ca.gov. Finally, voters can sign up to receive notifications on the status of their ballot by email, text, or voice message at Wheresmyballot.sos.ca.gov.

In terms of local races, the challenge to State Senator Scott Wiener by 25-year-old activist Jackie Fielder will be a key contest, along with local propositions providing rent relief and affordable housing (Propositions I and K). Four SF Board of Education contests also are pending, with 10 candidates vying for the four available seats.

Regionally, Prop. RR would increase the sales tax by 1/8 cent in San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties to provide ongoing support for CalTrain. There is a full slate of statewide propositions. Notably, Prop. 22 would amend recent legislation to allow Uber, Lyft, and other drivers to remain as independent contractors rather than being treated as employees with state-mandated benefits. Prop. 15 would change provisions of (the 1978) Prop. 13 by allowing large commercial properties to be reassessed every three years with appropriate increases in their property taxes, with the new additional funding going to schools and local communities. Cash bail would be replaced with individual risk assessments under Prop. 25.

In early October, the state of California will mail ballot information pamphlets to all registered voters. Our DOE local voters pamphlet will soon follow. Ballots will be mailed to every registered voter on Oct. 5, the same day early in-person voting begins downtown at Civic Center’s Bill Graham Auditorium.

On Election Day, 588 polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. DOE will provide the first returns on its website at approximately 8:45 p.m., which will be the initial tally results of all the mail-in ballots received before Election Day.

The great waiting period then commences as “We the People” determine our President, representatives, and the future course of the country.
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Plywood Expressions. Some public canvases remain available on 24th Street for work such as the above, photographed in July. Photo by Jack Tipple
Residents Embrace Slower Sanchez

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

greater connection today during a stressful time in our community today,” writes Christopher Keene, the site’s administrator.

Kay Illenden, her husband, Mike Konwinski, like to take their toddler Rory for walks along the street, especially on weekends. The couple, who live on 25th Street, will even pack Rory into his stroller and walk him during the week while they are on conference calls.

“We have taken him out for months when the air is good,” says Illenden, who consults on workplace strategy. “We will watch other kids on their bikes. We have the playground at Douglass Park for the kids, but there isn’t much green space in the neighborhood. This is a fun thing to do on the weekends.”

They would normally head to the Presidio for food pickup on Sundays, or stroll along 24th or Valencia Street. But since the health crisis began, Illenden says, the family has changed their routine.

“There are so many nice places on 24th Street, but you don’t have the space like this here on Sanchez to be socially distanced from other people,” she says.

Konwinski, a software engineer for a biotech company, likes to run along Sanchez Street and the Tenderloin. “It is really important for mental health to have a place like this,” he says. “It is nice to be outside and see community.”

 Drivers Respectful

Housemates Megan Kavanagh and Rhina Muse, who moved to 27th Street near Castro in January, have also taken advantage of slow Sanchez.

“I would run on Church Street before, but it was always crowded with ears and the Muni trains. Running along here I can be around people because there is more open space,” says Kavanagh, an executive assistant at a tech company, who jogs in the mornings. “It is nice. I like it.”

She says she hasn’t had any issues with vehicles in the street, except she did witness one weird interaction where a driver didn’t see a person walking.

For the most part, she says, “I feel drivers are pretty respectful. They let people cross at the intersections.”

Muse, who works in human resources, likes the ease of Sanchez, as the city has allowed businesses to construct in the street, such as the one Noe Café has built at the corner of Sanchez and 26th streets.

“We were just talking about that all these parklets should stay,” says Muse. “Granted, it would mean less parking. But San Francisco isn’t known for having nice outdoor seating, so it is nice to be able to sit in a parklet.”

Songs Fill Food Bank

Musician Gil Guillermo has lived at the corner of Sanchez and Duncan streets since April and on weekends has been hosting free concerts for passersby. He plays a variety of music, from jazz to folk rock.

Guillermo started playing during the local Carnaval over Memorial Day weekend and has since invited friends to perform. One concert in June raised $1,100 within 90 minutes for the San Francisco Food Bank. It was donated in tips by people who stopped to listen to the music.

He has fielded complaints about noise from two people. But the response from most has been overwhelmingly positive,” says Guillermo, who has lived in Noe Valley the past three years.

“It has been really gratifying to me, he says. “People tell me it has made such a difference in the neighborhood.”

Mission District resident Adee Horn, who used to live in Noe Valley, has been coming back to enjoy the concerts. “I am a big fan of the slow streets all over the city,” says Horn. “I hope they stay this way even after the pandemic is through. It is much better for the community.”

Ring Their Bell

A few doors down at 1430 Sanchez St., the residents have installed “The Noe Bell” in the top of their garage door (look for the neon rainbow light border). When pressed, the bell plays music. The selection when this reporter stopped by was “Hail Holy Queen” from the 1992 movie Sister Act, filmed at St. Paul’s Catholic Church nearby on Church Street.

“Over 15,000 buttons pushed since March ‘20,” boasts a sign on the house. Musician Rado Randriamamonjy started performing in front of Noe Café in early August and has since invited friends to join him in the outdoor concerts.

“It is nice to be playing for people after staring at the walls of my house for months,” says Randriamamonjy, who has performed in the past at the Noe Valley Food Bank. It was donated in tips by people who stopped to listen to the music.

Farmers Market

A banner marks the spot on Sanchez near Duncan where bands such as Down by Law perform masked jazz on weekends.

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have proven popular. “Everybody loves it,” says Mike Almohadi, the owner of Diamond Cafe, which added a parklet in early September. “People feel more comfortable sitting far away from each other when there is more space.”

Saru Sushi Bar, on 24th near Vicksburg, has constructed eight outdoor booths in the parking lane, each seating two to four people. Since they were built a month ago, the booths have been full on weekends, says Saru staffer Jeannette Deng. NOVY, at the corner of 24th and Sanchez streets, has allowed diners to eat takeout meals at its outdoor tables since June, but has decided not to offer table service or create additional infrastructure.

“It all comes down to labor and what we can handle to be able to give everyone a nice experience,” says co-owner Kathryn Gianaras. “We just don’t have the manpower to do full service at this point. We’re doing our best to minimize contact right now, just to protect everybody.”

Unlike local restaurants, Noe Valley bars have been quick to build infrastructure for outside service. Under the city’s rules, bars may only serve alcohol outdoors along with food. The Dubliner, the Valley Tavern, and the Peaks all have new parklets. The Dubliner’s outdoor space has been busy on weekends, and a new roof was recently added to the structure.

Indoor Eating Near Approval
San Francisco has been particularly limited since the midsummer surge, and for most cases started rising in July, it even can- celled its timeline for reopening them. Since the city fell into the “mod- erate” orange tier, which could happen around Oct. 1.

But not everyone is eager to start right away. Kathryn Gianaras says she and her sister and co-owner, Kristen Gianaras McCaffery, have decided to take it slow. “We wouldn’t be starting on October 1. We probably give it a couple of weeks or a month, just to see how it goes. We don’t want to start for two weeks and then they shut everything back down,” Gianaras said in late September. “I don’t know if people are too afraid to do indoor dining or if they would be really excited about it. We just want to give it a little bit of time, but we do plan on doing that at some point, especially when the weather starts turning.”

Gianaras McCaffery and her husband, Mike McCaffery, are also taking a wait-and-see approach with their new venture in the former Noe’s Cantina space at the corner of 24th and Church. While they have installed awnings and outdoor heaters, they’re currently in a “holding pattern.”

“There are too many variables to juggle this year,” Gianaras McCaffery said.

“People feel more comfortable sitting far away from each other when there is more space.”
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You live in Noe Valley, where there is an actual video
for everyone, hope that things can still happen.”

The newlyweds first met in 2009 at a business fraternity event at Santa Clara University when Gupta was a freshman and Boocock a senior, though “sparks didn’t fly” until four years later when they met again at a mutual friend’s wedding in Arizona.

“I saw him and thought, he’s cute, I wonder if he’s single,” Gupta recalls with a smile.

Fortunately he was, and after they spent the flight home talking, Gupta in-vited him to be her date at her company holiday party.

“He took two weeks to get back to me!” she laughs.

“It was just a little out of the blue and I was caught off guard,” Boocock says, looking a little abashed. “My friends will tell you I spent that time vetting Natasha, asking around. Obviously, my friends had good things to say.”

That first date was in December 2013 and “we’ve been dating ever since!”

A couple of years ago, they moved in together, choosing a neighborhood they both love, Noe Valley.

When they got engaged in January 2019, they were looking at a long wait to allow for the masterminding of a large Indian wedding—Gupta’s family is Hindu—with 250 people gathering from around the world for a full week of events in Pleasanton, Calif.

Gupta works at YouTube and Boocock at Facebook, and when their companies announced at the end of March they would be working from home indefinitely, they cancelled Plan A and created Plan B, which was to get married in Gupta’s parents’ backyard in Fremont on Sept. 25.

Gupta explains: “It was going to be a small backyard wedding with close family and friends, and then we had to cancel that because of the wildfires.”

With so much uncertainty, the couple decided to go ahead and get married anyway, although they very much hope to celebrate with friends and family later this year, once fire season is over. But in the meantime, as Gupta puts it, “this living room wedding is our wedding.”

They had already converted their living room into a working office for two, so on Sept. 4 they reconfigured it again, decorated it with flowers, and thanks to their technical acumen invited their nearest and dearest to join them virtually using Google Meet.

City Hall had sent them a Microsoft Teams invite and provided an officiant (“a guy in a T-shirt,” recalls Boocock), as well as a “random witness, who never put the camera on” so remained essentially invisible.

“We wanted to save our vows for whenever that [family] wedding does happen,” says Gupta, but they read letters of love to one another and exchanged rings, although Gupta’s was a plastic stand-in, as the real one did not arrive in time.

Once the marriage license was Documented, the officiant said, “I now declare you husband and wife.”

“I hadn’t anticipated that being how we would do the ceremony,” Boocock says, “but it still felt real. I was super nervous that whole morning. It felt special and like a wedding.”

They even slept apart the night before, per Boocock’s mother’s request. Gupta in the bedroom and Boocock in the living room, and he did not see his bride until right before the ceremony.

Gupta admits she was in tears the whole time.

“[I wasn’t expecting it to be so emotional. Looking back I’m kind of sad my parents weren’t actually there... “But he didn’t say, ‘You can kiss the bride,’ right?” Gupta asks her husband, in reference to the T-shirt-clad civil servant. “I think he did,” Boocock replies tenderly, turning to his wife.

Bride and Groom Bring Smiles to Neighborhood

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Newlyweds Natasha Gupta and Patrick Boocock pose on 24th Street after tying the knot via computer at their nearby apartment. Their sidewalk reception was attended by close friends, including matron of honor Samantha Juda and groomsman James Sontag. Photo by Sally Smith

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CINEMA hosts its opening night Oct. 9 and schedule and signup at litquake.org. 8:15 pm; and “Feminist Writers Respond to the 10 am-12:30 pm; “Post-Pandemic Publishing” Oct. 9-24: Zoom workshop with Oscar Hernández, “50 hour reserved for seniors and others who may 10-11 am; noevalleyfarmersmarket.com. Oct. 4-28: Community Music Center hosts an online documentaries. For a schedule, neonspeaks.org. Oct. 1-31: Noe Valley OVEREATERS Anonymous 6015; sfcmc.org. Oct. 4-28: SF Neon hosts “NEON Speaks 2020” featuring virtual tours, discussions, and documentaries. For a schedule, neonevents.org. Oct. 1-31: The New Valley FARMERS MARKET is open from 8 am to 1 pm (8 to 9 am for seniors); masks required, 6 feet distancing. 3861 24th. 248-2141; noevalleyfarmersmarket.com. Oct. 4 & 18: Yoga Mayu offers online classes and darity@gmail.com to receive Zoom meeting link. Oct. 1-31: Resilient Noe Valley offers “EMER- ding by Mathangi Subramanian, Richard May, and 7 pm. noemusic.org. Oct. 19: ODD MONDAYS features virtual meet- ings by Mathangi Subramanian, Richard May, and Michael Nazz. 7:30-9 pm. The Zoom link will be on the Old Mondays Facebook page, or email old- mondays@gmail.com. Oct. 21: The first virtual meeting of Upper Noe Neighbors hosts State Senator SCOTT WIENER and Supervisor Raphael Mandelman. 7-8:30 pm. Rsvp to president@uppernoeneighbors.com. Oct. 24: NOE MUSIC Kids features the second of a three-part interactive performance by the Friction Quartet. 9:30 am; noemusic.org. Oct. 27: The SF HISTORY Association hosts a virtual meeting, with speaker to be announced 7 pm. The Zoom link and password will be sent the day before. sanfranciscohistory.org. Oct. 29: The NOE MUSIC Listening Club features a conversation with flautist and composer Albun Logue-Healt-H. 7 pm. noemusic.org. Oct. 31: Kids and parents are invited to a masked and physically distanced Slow Street COSTUME WALK on Sanchez starting at 24h Street. Sorry, no candy (except what you bring). 3 pm. Resilientnoevalley@gmail.com. Oct. 31: A Temporary Goodbye: Upper Noe Rec Center program staff Charyl/Wolfin, Levi Johnson, and Alvin Torres are leaving Upper Noe to lend a hand at other sites this fall. Their watchful eye at “Day Street Park” will be missed. Photo courtesy Chris Faust.

Rec Center Closed, But Park Open

Upper Noe Recreation Center—that is, the building housing the gym and community meeting rooms at 295 Day St.—closed without public announcement on Friday, Aug. 14, at the end of Summer Day Camp activities.

The park grounds, including Joby’s Run dog park, the tennis court, outdoor basketball court, field, and bathrooms, will continue to be available to the public during regular hours, according to San Francisco Rec and Park officials. The situation remains fluid, but there are no plans to reopen the children’s playground, which has been closed since March.

Meanwhile, Rec and Park has designated 13 other rec centers as either Community Learning Hubs or daycare centers for emergency workers.

All of our recreation staff will be dedicated to staffing these sites until the San Francisco Unified School District resumes in-person learning,” the park department stated in an Aug. 19 press release.

Eight of the sites, including nearby Eureka Valley Recreation Center and Mission Recreation Center, will become hubs supporting distance learning for high-need San Francisco Unified School District students, such as those in public housing, homeless or foster care youth, and English-language learners.

Five other sites, among them the Glen Park Recreation Center, have been reserved for the city’s Emergency Child and Youth Care Program, serving essential workers.

Upper Noe’s program staff have all been reassigned to the learning hubs or childcare sites. “During this time, Upper Noe Recreation Center will be maintained by our operations staff and will reopen for public programming when the City’s health order allows,” the press release said. According to Area 5 Manager Carol Sionkowksi, despite the absence of recreation staff at Upper Noe it will be “business as usual.” Maintenance and gardening staff will continue the upkeep of the grounds and building. The lack of daily oversight, however, is a concern for park visitors and neighbors, who have worked hard to preserve the clean, safe, and attractive community resource. Park users should alert park staff or call 311 if they see any graffiti or safety maintenance issues.

For updates, go to www.uppernoerecreationcenter.com. Current hours at the park are 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

―Chris Faust, Chair, Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

The Noe Valley Voice • October 2020

O C T O B E R  2 0 2 0


A Temporary Goodbye:

Virtually Everything

The next Noe Valley Voice will be the Novem- ber 2020 issue, download the first week of November. The deadline for items is Oct. 15. Please email calendar@noevalleyvoice.com or write Calendar Noe Valley Voice, PO Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Events in Noe Valley receive priority. Thank you.
August Pulse Check
By Corrie M. Anders

The Noe Valley real estate market had its peppiest month of the year in August. Buyers purchased 14 single-family detached homes and 16 condominiums, according to data supplied to the Noe Valley Voice by Corcoran Global Living San Francisco.

The 30 transactions included a $2.7 million condo and a house that topped $5 million. The August activity followed a July with 22 sales and a June with 20, indicating the market was reviving after its springtime bout with Covid-19.

Yet there also were signs of weakness. Home shoppers took far longer than usual to make offers. They also went against (recent) convention and paid less than the sellers’ asking price. At the same time, more homeowners were choosing to put their homes up for sale.

Corcoran President Randall Kostick said he counted 40 listings for detached homes in Noe Valley in August, compared with 28 the same month last year. The August inventory of condominiums was flat as well, with 28 on offer—almost two and a half times that of its counterpart of a year ago (12).

Kostick said the new work-at-home trend had given people the freedom to exchange high-priced houses and apartments for more expansive lodgings elsewhere, often in other states.

Though he did not have specific numbers for Noe Valley, Kostick said more than a third of sellers in a citywide survey his company conducted were leaving the city because they were tired of living in an urban environment.

“And that’s because of Covid,” he said. Some owners responded to the influx of homes on the market by dropping their prices to entice buyers.

Only after the price was slashed from $5,875,000 to $5,375,000—a difference of $500,000—was a deal consummated for what would be the most expensive property sold in August, a modern home in the 4300 block of Cesar Chavez Street between Diamond and Douglass streets.

(And the seller had paid $5.5 million for the house just two years ago.)

The buyer got keys to a four-story building with five bedrooms, five baths, and 4,187 square feet of living space. Along with the obligatory chef’s kitchen came a living room with a walkout deck, glass walls, skylights, a master suite with private deck, a media room with wet bar, gas fireplace, landscaped yard, and one-car garage. Designed by Dominican Mosey Architects, the hillside home offered views stretching from Twin Peaks to the bay.

The owner of August’s most expensive condo also failed to cash in for as much as hoped. The three-bedroom, 3.5-bath unit with 2,297 square feet of living space sold for $2.7 million, 9.4 percent less than the asking price ($2,995,000).

Located in a stately Edwardian in the 1100 block of Dolores Street renovated in 2012, the home featured an open floor plan, skylights, a gourmet kitchen with Gaggenau appliances and Snaileic cabinets, two gas fireplaces, a wine cellar, solar panels, and a deck offering views from Twin Peaks to the bay. Also included: a one-car garage.

A sleek contemporary home on Cesar Chavez Street caught the fancy of a buyer who paid $5,375,000—making it the most expensive purchase in Noe Valley in August. Designed by Dominican Mosey Architects, the house offered five bedrooms, light-filled spaces, and panoramic views of the city.

A three-bedroom condominium in this graceful Edwardian on Dolores Street sold in August for $2.7 million. The three-bedroom unit was spiffed up in 2012 to include: a one-car garage.

Designed by Dominic Mosey Architects, the hillside home offered five bedrooms, light-filled spaces, and panoramic views of the city.

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Meet the Flores Kids

By Katie Burke

Mari, Oliver, and Lumi Flores are making the most of these wild times, participating in language, art, and music classes and lots of sports. Parents Susan Brim and Adrian Flores, both San Francisco emergency room doctors, also know a thing or two about leading busy lives.

The family lives on 27th Street. This summer, they visited their Bear Valley house, where they rode bikes and swam and kayaked in the lake, and where Mari attended archery camp.

Mari, 12 years old and a seventh-grader at San Francisco Day School, says she and her brother and sister are all doing remote learning at home this fall.

Mari is studying Chinese via Zoom. She also is taking an art class in West Portal, where she says everyone wears masks and practices social distancing. Oliver, 8, and Lumi, 6, are enrolled virtually at Miraloma Elementary, where Oliver is in third grade and Lumi is in first.

Oliver takes Spanish outside of school. His favorite school class is art. “If you want to, you could make Abraham Lincoln out of pipe cleaners,” he points out.

Lumi, who studies both Spanish and Chinese, says her favorite school subject is writing. “I like to write stories, when you can do the words and pictures,” she says.

She notes, “I’m still learning to read with my grandma, but I know how to read big chapter books.” Grandma and Grandpa (on their mom’s side) live only two blocks away on 28th Street. “When the virus wasn’t there, me and Oliver used to go to our grandma’s house and watch some TV,” says Lumi.

All three kids are taking guitar classes over FaceTime. Mari likes to play “Waltz” by Niccolò Paganini. Lumi likes “Perpetual Motion.” Oliver prefers the classic “Go Tell Aunt Rhody.”

The Flores family is active in sports. Mari is in her fourth year of synchronized swimming. Lumi likes playing soccer and basketball. And Oliver plays all positions in soccer, basketball, and baseball. (Dad coaches Oliver’s soccer and baseball teams.)

As for their local food faves, Mari says she likes Kama Sushi and Casa Mexicana. Oliver is a fan of Bernal Heights Pizzeria and Casa Mexicana. Lumi likes all three.

Oliver also likes making pizza at home.

How do the kids see themselves in a few years?

Mari says she will live in San Francisco or Hawaii, and will be a doctor, actor, interior designer, or lawyer. A public defender spoke at her school in early 2020 and inspired her. “Sometimes people get falsely accused and don’t have the means to defend themselves,” she says.

Lumi will be busy, alternating three careers. “One day I’m going to be a teacher. Then two days or maybe three or four later on, I’m going to be a doctor, then an artist,” she says.

She will live in a “regular, small, maybe purple house that I can paint in—a house that I really like,” she says. “It’s going to be in San Francisco, but I might move to Boston because my cousins live there.”

“I’d probably be an artist because I like drawing,” Oliver says.

During the pandemic, Oliver has missed his friends. “[Sheltering in place] is kind of hard, because no one wants to play with me since they have other things to do,” he says of his siblings, “like guitar and Spanish and Chinese.”

Lumi misses her friends too, and her teacher.

Mari has good advice for getting through these Covid times. “When something big like this happens, everyone needs to cooperate with each other and work together to make it better,” she says.

Oliver agrees. Lumi adds, “Wear masks.”

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

Friends of Glen Canyon Park Contact: Jean Corrier, 584-8576 Address: 140 Turquoise Way, SF, CA 94131 Plant restoration work parties, Wednesdays mornings and third Saturday of the month.

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

Friends of Noe Valley (FNV) Contact: Todd David, 401-0625 Email: info@friendsofnovevalley.com Website: www.friendsofnovevalley.com Meetings: Two or three annually. Meeting Dec 4, 7 p.m., Umpqua Bank, 3938 24th St.

Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center Contact: Chris Faust Email: info@uppernorerecreationcenter.com Website: www.uppernorerecreationcenter.com Meetings: Email or check website.

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

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

Juri Commoners Contact: Dave Schweiguth, 415-6290 Email: dave@schweiguth.com Website: meetup.com/juri-commoners meetings: Most last Saturdays, 9-noon.

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

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

Noe Neighborhood Council Contact: Liz Ray or Matt McCabe, Co-founders Email: info@noenighoodcouncil.org Website: noenighoodcouncil.org Meetings: Quarterly at Salz Brعن Library, 451 Jersey St., with date published on website and Nextdoor.

Noe Valley Association—24th Street Community Benefit District Contact: Debra Niemann, 519-0093

Noe Valley Farmers Market Opens Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Tuesdays, 3 to 7 p.m., 3861 24th St between Vicksburg and Sanchez.

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA) Contact: Rachel Swann, 225-7743 Email: info@noevalleymerchants.org

Noe Valley Parent Network An e-mail resource network for parents of preschool thru 8th Grade.

Noe Valley Parents, San Francisco Listserv Contact: noevalleyparents@yahoogroups.com Subscribe: noevalleyparentsubscribe@yahoo.com

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

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

Resilient Noe Valley Contact: Antonioette or Jessica Email: resilientnoevalley@gmail.com Newsletter:@resnepd Website: http://eepurl.com/ycrODs Website: www.resilientnoevalley.com

San Francisco NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Team) Contact: Noe Valley NERT Neighborhood Team co-coordinators Maxime Faussil, mfausil@yahoo.com; Carole Roberts, carole_roberts@kiolc.com Website: https://SF-Live.org Meetings: See website for free trainings scheduled throughout the year.

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

Stand Up San Francisco Contact: Laura Shapiro, Phylla Ball Paul Silverman Email: info@standupsf.net Website: standupsf.net Meetings: At offices of members of Congress weekly.

Upper Noe Neighbors Contact: Olga Milan-Howell, 756-4455 Email: President@UpperNoeNeighbors.com Meetings: Board meets on third Wednesday. Upper Noe Recreation Center, 295 24th St. Call to confirm.

All phone numbers are in the 415 area code, unless otherwise noted.
produced its second Noe Music Kids event on September 12. While the first event featured a story of resiliency, this one centered on the theme of community and support. The event, titled “Brave Together,” aimed to inspire the children with tales of courage and the power of connection.

**Wiener and Mandelman to Speak at UNN**

The neighborhood association Upper Noe Neighbors has made quite a coup. Both State Senator Scott Wiener and District 5 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman are set to attend the group’s next meeting, held via Zoom on Wednesday, Oct. 21.

UNN President Olga Milan-Howells says each will talk about the “state of the state”—in Mandelman’s case, the state of the city.

“Senator Wiener will address the fires raging throughout California, his long-term vision for building sustainable communities, and how to end California’s severe housing shortage,” says Milan-Howells. Mandelman has promised to update us on the Covid response and the homelessness crisis in the city.

Milan-Howells says everyone is welcome to attend the meeting, which will run from 7 to 8:30 p.m. To receive the link, send an email to President@Upper-NoeNeighbors.com.

**Johannes Loved Clara**

Noe Music continues its fall 2020 virtual season with performances for classically minded listeners big and small in October.

The Delphi Trio will play pieces by Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms on Sunday, Oct. 11, at 7 p.m. That’s in Tomkins on cello, and Allegra Chapman on piano. For details, visit synergyschool.org.

Presented by A Heart for the Arts, this interactive program on musical teamwork presents its second Noe Music Kids event on Saturday, Oct. 10, at 10 a.m. Children will learn about “Animals Around the World” through music and stories. Suitable for ages 3-6.

**The Return of Odd Mondays**

After eight months on hiatus due to Covid-19, the Odd Mondays series will resume virtually on Monday, Oct. 19, 7 to 8 p.m., with an exciting lineup featuring three authors.

Mathangi Subramanian will read from her Lambda Literary Award nominated novel *A People’s History of Heaven,* written by a Polio survivor who has been vocal about the need for a universal healthcare system.

Benne Sprung will read from *Lies With Man,* due out next spring. As a child, Sprung was sexually abused by a family member, and her memoir is a powerful testament to surviving trauma and finding one’s voice.

Shane McCrae will read from his new book, *Bone.* McCrae is a renowned poet and essayist known for his work on issues of race and politics.

To find the Zoom link for the event, go to oddmondaysnoevalley@gmail.com.

Copies of books by the authors will be in stock and on display at Folio Books, 3957 24th St. For pickup at the store, email orders@foliosf.com or call 415-275-1839.

**Animal Blessings Available**

Oct. 4— or the Sunday closest to it—is the day set aside by many churches for the blessing of all creatures great and small. St. Francis, patron saint of animals, died on this day in 1226. This year, the festival is being held at Holy Innocents Episcopal Church on Oct. 3.

Holy Innocents Episcopal Church on Fair Oaks Street usually holds the annual blessing in its sanctuary. This year, Rev. Jane McDougle, the vicar at Holy Innocents, is taking it to the streets, Slow Sanchez Street to be specific.

McDougle will bless the critters at 30th and Sanchez from 2 to 4 p.m. “Everyone is welcome,” she says. “You don’t have to be a member of Holy Innocents, a Christian, or religious at all.”

You do have to bring an animal, however, and that may include “all sorts—stuffed animals, photos of animals, even real animals.” She asks the animal’s name, sprinkles holy water, and says a blessing. “I say a little prayer giving thanks for the animal and the experience in the human’s life—and for good behavior and long happy lives.”

There is no fee or donation. Muzzles or carriers are up to human discretion, but be mindful a variety of animals may be on hand. For more information, go to holyinsfs.org.

**One Door Closes, Another Opens**

Benne is another name for sesame. Benne is also another name for Douglas on Sanchez. Although Douglas the store and cafe is closed, co-owners Michael Molesky and Maggie Spicier have a new venture in Benne, brokering great food from excellent restaurants around the city, such as Pizzaria Delfina, Nopalito, Mr. Jia’s, and Aralima’s.

Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Molesky, Spicier, and staff pick up meals from these restaurants and take them to pickup locations around town. The new Noe Valley spot is Omnivore Books on Food, at 3885 Cesar Chavez St. After ordering specific dishes at benne.com, folks can pick up their food at the bookstore between 4 and 6 p.m. The meals are cooked and just require warming or finishing. This reporter bought a khao mun gai kit for two prepared by Nari restaurant in Japantown. There were four courses including sipping broth, delicious chicken-fat rice, ginger-poached chicken, and a cucumber-cilantro salad. (A fiery sauce was used sparingly.)

The restaurants and menu vary day to day. Omnivore was chosen in Noe Valley because, Spicier says, “We’ve been huge fans of [owner] Celia Sack and the shop for years.” To receive a weekly menu, go to eatbenne.com and sign up for the Benne newsletter.

**Necessity Is the Mother**

Bernal Heights Outdoor Cinema tends toward the dramatic. For its first 16 years, BHOC screened movies by local filmmakers in parks and on the walls of buildings in Bernal Heights. This year, the festival is holding two nights at a pop-up drive-in theater in the Alemany Farmers Market at 100 Alemany Blvd. The third night, the grand finale, will be online at the BHOC website.

The drive-in will be open two Fridays, Oct. 9 and Oct. 16, and films will be screened from 8 to 9:30 p.m. Admission is free but it’s first come, first parked. Registration is required, on Evenbrite.

Outdoor viewers will see a total of 24 short films (up to 20 minutes in length), including dramas, comedies, animated films, documentaries, and music videos. Also on the bill is a five-minute film of dancers from Alonzo King LINES Ballet, performing from their homes around the world.

The Best of Bernal Finale Tuesday, Oct. 27, will screen the audience winners from the first two nights, at the website bhoudoorcine.org. Go there to find a link to the Evenbrite registration.

**A Film Showing**

A film showing members of Alonzo King LINES Ballet dancing from their homes around the world will be part of this year’s Bernal Heights Outdoor Cinema, taking place Oct. and at a “drive-in” at the Alemany Farmers’ Market.

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**Short Takes were compiled and written by Richard May.**
The Kintis family, including (from left) Dimitra, George, Yianni, and Fotini, has taken over Church Produce. Their customers are smiling as much as they are.

The Kintis family, including (from left) Dimitra, George, Yianni, and Fotini, has taken over Church Produce. Their customers are smiling as much as they are.

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**Falling Into Autumn**

**By Mazook**

**WEATHER OR NOT:** Most Noe Vallions were thankful that the 22-mile-per-hour winds on Sept. 19 were a sign that the forecast forecast of high pressure and warm temperatures meant that, for at least one week, we would not have the strange signs, including one aglow at the Muni stop at Castro and 24th streets. This year, the Noe Valley Weather Bureau has stopped forecasting the famous signs.

**EARTHER OR NOT:** Most Noe Vallions felt like aliens as they struggled to understand the strange signs, including one aglow at the Muni stop at Castro and 24th streets. This year, the Noe Valley Weather Bureau has stopped forecasting the famous signs.


**HARVEST TIME:**

A small sign this month: the season of seasonal produce is upon us. The produce on display at your local Farmers Market includes a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Whether you're looking for apples, oranges, or kale, the Farmers Market has it all. Don't miss out on the opportunity to support local farmers and enjoy fresh, nutritious produce! **Thanks for the share, Mazook!**
MORE BOOKS TO READ

Fiction on the Fly

Almost seven months into the coronavirus epidemic, the Noe Valley S Analytic Library is closed to the public. However, our generous librarians, Denise Sanderson and Catherine Starr, are continuing to send along their new book and film recommendations.

Among this month’s standouts are a book on the American caste system by Warmth of Other Suns author Isabel Wilkerson, an anthology of essays for middle schoolers about everyday heroes, and a kids’ comic book on manners called Smell My Foot? (Adults will appreciate that one, too.) Note: The annotations are by Noe Valley Voice bookworm Karol Barske.

The San Francisco Public Library also is offering a new curbside pickup service, SPFL to Go, at six branches around the city. Eureka Valley, Excelsior, Marina, Merced, Mission Bay, and the Main Library. The service will be available at three more branches by mid-October.

To place a hold on a title, go to spfl.org/spfl-to-go and find the item and the branch you wish to borrow it from (sadly, not yet Noe Valley). The library will let you know when the book or film is ready to pick up. Before you go, check the website to verify the branch hours for pickup.

If you need assistance with the process or have questions about your library card, call 415-557-4400, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Or wander around spfl.org, the library’s website. There you’ll find diversions for readers of all ages, including storytimes, book clubs, and virtual events.

CHILDCARE & SCHOOL-OVERVIEW

In Matilda Woods’ tale The Hero Next Door is a short-story written and illustrated by Cozbi A. Howard, a mouse and a squirrel learn they can be friends and use teamwork to help injured monsters.

In Bethanie Deeney Murguia’s Ages 3 to 7. Ages 7 to 12. Breakfast: A Celebration of Plants, everything you ever wanted to know about plants is in this book, written and illustrated with collage art by Thao Lam Ages 5 to 9.

In Gemma Carlin Johnson’s Journey to the Stars, a darker and a lighter brother train for a fencing competition Ages 8 to 12. Fighting Words, by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley, is a novel for middle grades about two sisters dealing with sexual abuse. Ages 9 to 13.

In Nicanor’s Gate, by Eric A. Kimmel with illustrations by Vivien Milderken, focuses on the tiniest of microbes. Ages 8 to 12.

In Black Brother, Black Brother by Jewell Parker Rhodes, a darker and a lighter brother train for a fencing competition Ages 8 to 12.

In Songs of My Mother’s People, by Clementine Ford, and illustrated by Minnie Dowd, stories about two sisters dealing with sexual abuse. Ages 9 to 13.

ADULT FICTION

In Emma Jane Unsworth’s satirical Grown Ups, 30-something Jenny McLaine finds herself coming apart at the seams, in real life and on multiple forms of social media.

The Living Dead, by George A. Romero and David Kranitz, centers on a horrifying outbreak of zombie plague.

A Basque detective hunts for the man who killed her, a madman committing ritualistic murders in The Noe Valley S Analytic Library in California.

In The Aunt, by Sirshendu Mukhopadhyay, four friends reunite and deal with everyone wanted to know about plants is in this book, written and illustrated with collage art by Thao Lam Ages 5 to 9.

Everything you ever wanted to know about plants is in this book, written and illustrated with collage art by Thao Lam Ages 5 to 9.

In Girach Mai’s S talked about how they have embraced their differences. Five kids from different backgrounds talk about how they have embraced their differences. Five kids from different backgrounds talk about how they have embraced their differences. Five kids from different backgrounds talk about how they have embraced their differences. Five kids from different backgrounds talk about how they have embraced their differences. Five kids from different backgrounds talk about how they have embraced their differences. Five kids from different backgrounds talk about how they have embraced their differences.

In the 2020 documentary Chichinette: The Accidental Spy, about two sisters dealing with sexual abuse. Ages 9 to 13.

In Shirley Jackson in the 2020 drama The Haunting of Bly Manor, a baker and activist who created the Quaker Oats logo, and “dreamer” who has been deported to Guatemala makes his way back to California.

ADULT NON-FICTION

Illustrator Grant Snider’s light-hearted I Will Judge You By Your Bookshelf explores bookishness in all its forms, and even has proofreader’s marks.

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents, by Isabel Wilkerson, examines the unseen system in America that works to keep people in their place.

“Mother: The Life of Ruth Asawa” tells the story of the artist who had her studio in Noe Valley.

In Elliot Ness and the Mad Butcher: Hunting America’s Deadliest Unidentified Serial Killer at the Dawn of Modern Criminology, Max Allan Collins and A. Brad Schwartz describe the detective’s final case.

ADULT EBOOKS

Three generations of Bengali women tell their stories in the humorous The Aunt Who Wouldn’t Die by Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay.

Home Baked: My Mom, Marijuana, and the Storing of San Francisco is Alia Volz’s tribute to her mother, the local baker and activist who created the underground Sticky Fingers Brownies.

LeSly M.Y. Blume’s Fallout, The Hiroshima Cover-up and the Reporter Who Revealed it to the World was released on the 75th anniversary of the August 1946 bombing.

DVDs for ADULTS

The documentary John Lewis: Good Trouble tracks the lifelong struggle for civil rights of the late U.S. representative.

Elizabeth Moss stars as horror writer Shirley Jackson in the 2020 drama Shirley.

Five kids from different backgrounds talk about how they have embraced their differences.

A 98-year-old Jewish woman recounts how she worked undercover during World War II in the 2020 documentary Chichinette: The Accidental Spy.

HOURS

Noe Valley S Analytic Library* 451 Jay Street, 385-5797
Sun: Mon 10am-7pm Tues 10am-9pm Wed 10am-9pm Thurs 10am-9pm Fri 10am-9pm Sat 10am-5pm

Mission Branch Library* 300 Bartlett St., 355-2800
Sun: Mon 10am-7pm Tues 10am-9pm Wed 10am-9pm Thurs 10am-9pm Fri 10am-9pm Sat 10am-5pm

Glen Park Branch Library* 2825 Diamond St., 355-2694
Sun: Mon 10am-7pm Tues 10am-9pm Wed 10am-9pm Thurs 10am-9pm Fri 10am-9pm Sat 10am-5pm

Eureka Valley–Harvey Milk Branch Library* 2263 Mission St., 355-8806
Sun: Mon 10am-7pm Tues 10am-9pm Wed 10am-9pm Thurs 10am-9pm Fri 10am-9pm Sat 10am-5pm

*Note: In compliance with city health orders, all San Francisco libraries have been temporarily closed to the general public. For updates, go to www.sfpl.org.

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DON’T MAKE THE CRISIS EVEN WORSE!

WITH LOCAL RESTAURANTS AND SMALL BUSINESSES ALREADY ON THE BRINK, PROP i:

INCREASES TAXES that impact small storefront leases, putting yet another burden on local businesses fighting to survive.

allows costs to be passed on to small businesses and struggling tenants.

FUNNELS MONEY into a City Hall slush fund with no safeguards for how politicians spend the money.

AD PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE FOR SAN FRANCISCO ECONOMIC RECOVERY, NO ON i SPONSORED BY THE SAN FRANCISCO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COMMITTEE MAJOR FUNDING FROM:
1. CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS’ ISSUES MOBILIZATION PAC ($200,000)
2. EQUITY RESIDENTIAL ($150,000)
3. HUDSON PACIFIC PROPERTIES INC. ($150,000)
FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES ARE AVAILABLE AT SFETICS.ORG
The Swann Group’s Featured Listings

Just Listed

729 Congo Street | $3,685,000

256 Fowler Avenue | $1,998,000

3428 22nd Street | $1,998,000

394 Fair Oaks Street #3 | $1,695,000

323 Church Street | $1,695,000

3426 22nd Street | $1,495,000

All properties feature outdoor living space. Connect with our team to learn more or schedule a tour.

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