



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

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



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

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

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 sidewalks, 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



Promising Parklet. A new eating enclosure in the parking lane on Diamond near 24th Street airs out before the next day’s morning crowd at Diamond Cafe. Photo by Art Bodner



Reception Procession: Newly married Natasha Gupta and Patrick Boocock, accompanied by wedding party members Charlene Nguyen and Daniel Greene, make their way east on 24th Street to NOVY for a celebratory lunch. Photo by Samantha Juda

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 the hill 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, yelping, “Look, it’s a princess!”

For Boocock, “it felt like a ray of hope

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OPENSFHISTORY



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

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Shifting right into the fall market, inventory will rise as sellers who had planned to sell within the next year or two edge into the market before the election. With new leadership in place, a strong and effective pandemic attack plan, and perhaps the availability of a vaccine, the 2021 SF housing market could be stronger. No one has a crystal ball, but Jessica has already proven her strategy in shifting markets is highly successful. Jessica has navigated difficult markets before. She has been a SF property owner for more than 20 years and has been selling real estate here for close to 15 years. Right now you need her winning guidance and experience.

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SOLD

110 Liberty Street | www.LibertyStreetDream.com



SOLD

SanchezStreetBeauty.com
1504 Sanchez St



SOLD

ValleyStreetDream.com
170 Valley St \$3,800,000



SOLD

DoloresHeightsIcon.com
3841 18th St \$3,450,000



SOLD

SOLD \$380K OVER LIST
100 Gates St \$2,880,000



SOLD

DoloresHeightsDream.com
3655 21st St \$2,900,000



SOLD

MULTIPLE OFFERS
1525 Noe St \$2,600,000



SOLD

\$600K OVER LIST
4273 22nd St \$2,600,000



SOLD

SOLD \$275K OVER LIST
335 Elizabeth \$1,925,000



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Listings



3741 22ND STREET - COMING SOON



680 27TH STREET - COMING SOON



3860 21ST STREET - PENDING



3835-3837 26TH STREET - PENDING

Recently Sold



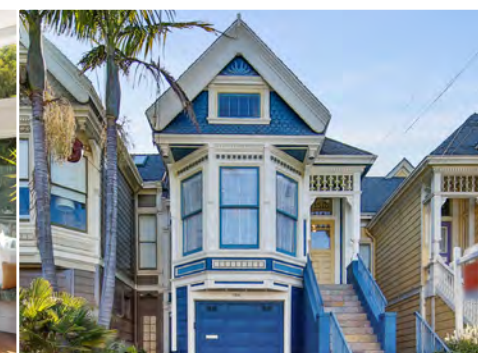
4273 25TH STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$3,860,000



3965 20TH STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$3,150,000



549 28TH STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$3,650,000



1516 CASTRO STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$2,950,000



4335 23RD STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$4,695,000



1232 DIAMOND ST
SOLD PRICE:
\$2,410,000



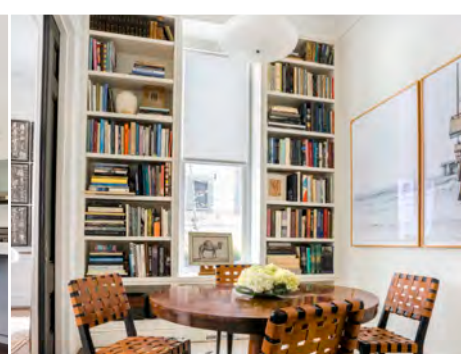
155 CLIPPER STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$3,110,000



1843 CHURCH STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$1,790,000



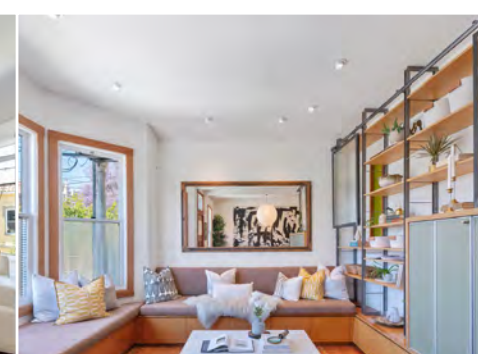
3775 21ST STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$3,060,000



251 WALLER STREET
SOLD PRICE:
\$4,500,000



1812 CHURCH ST
SOLD PRICE:
\$1,900,000



19 BENNINGTON ST
SOLD PRICE:
\$2,325,000



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. *Photo by Art Bodner*

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THE NOE VALLEY VOICE
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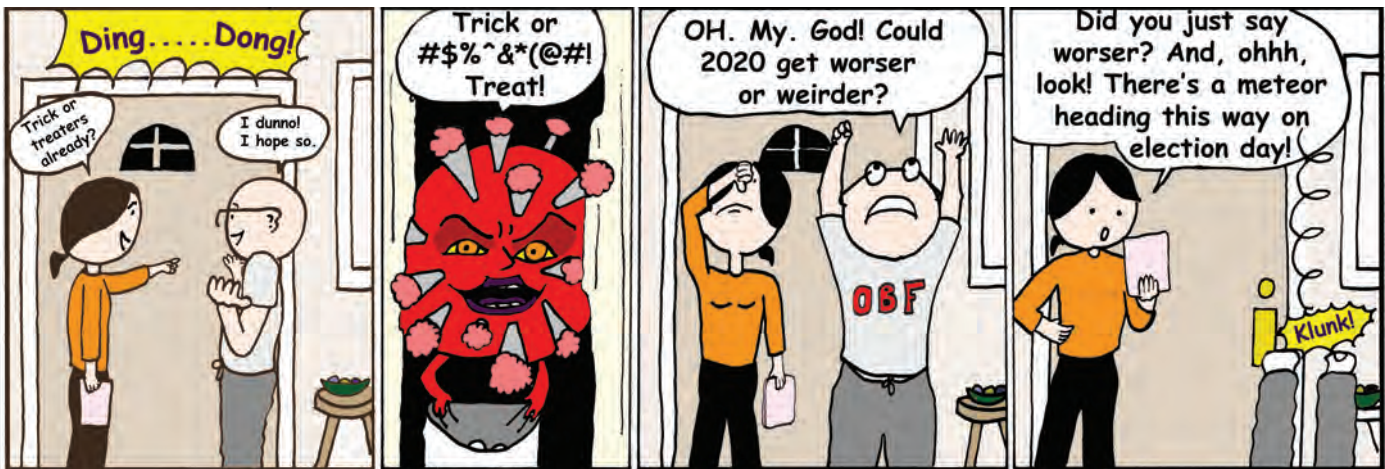
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THE CARTOON BY OWEN BAKER-FLYNN



LETTERS

1,500 Digits and Counting

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 socially 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/_Ix63q73bBY

Thank you so much for helping to achieve this feat of supporting moms and

babies. I'm so grateful that you helped me honor my younger brother Jonah's memory in 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:

For several years, a stream of water that appears to originate from 1008 Diamond St. has been flowing down Diamond to 25th 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 presumably was 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 situation. Additionally, I would recommend avoiding the west side of Diamond Street while walking.

Phyllis Van Hagen
25th Street

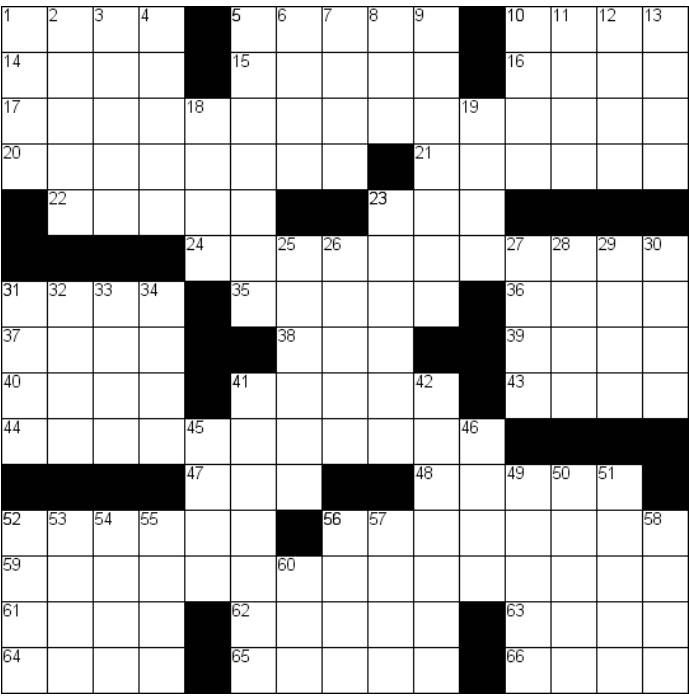
THE CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

While They Were Away

Editor's Note: While restaurants and cafes were closed, they were busy preparing new offerings (at least in Michael's imagination), both in the kitchen and out.

ACROSS

- 1. Tennis great Nadal, to fans
- 5. Sudden invasion
- 10. Equine hue
- 14. Juul, e.g., briefly
- 15. Zoo behemoth
- 16. Busy with
- 17. Slideshow of the owner's travels from the cafe next to Whole Foods?
- 20. Takes a night to think over
- 21. Eschew hair color
- 22. Org with a .org website
- 23. Boy king of ancient Egypt
- 24. New, partially cooked pastry at the cafe on Church and 26th?
- 31. Two Years Before the
- 35. Gin berries
- 36. German automaker
- 37. Civil rights org.
- 38. Not even
- 39. What SF lacked in all of February 2020
- 40. Bygone Swedish auto
- 41. Farm measures
- 43. Frank Herbert classic
- 44. Zipline from the top of Vicksburg to the burger joint on 24th?
- 47. Training place for lieuts.
- 48. Starbucks rival
- 52. Animated film with a sequel subtitled *The Meltdown*



- 56. Tahoe and Aspen, for two
- 59. Free pies for the needy from the shop on 24th near Castro?
- 61. Do a laundry chore
- 62. Affix, in a way
- 63. Invent, as a phrase
- 64. Capital on a fjord
- 65. Eyeglasses, for short
- 66. "___ bien"

DOWN

- 1. Yanks' foes
- 2. Amtrak's 'bullet train'
- 3. Terminates
- 4. Moorehead of *Bewitched*
- 5. Sistine Chapel ceiling art
- 6. Too-too
- 7. Rembrandt van ___
- 8. 12 meses

- 9. Waitress's annoying address to a mixed group
- 10. Pealed
- 11. O on a phone: Abbr.
- 12. "Right back ___!" ("Likewise!")
- 13. Like a busybody
- 18. Apple MP3 player
- 19. Campus mil. group
- 23. "Do ___" (ad for a yellow-green soda)
- 25. What cyclists use to prevent theft
- 26. Stop producing water, as a well
- 27. Difficult
- 28. Waikiki wingding
- 29. Chief Norse god
- 30. "___ kleine Nachtmusik"
- 31. Alan Alda sitcom
- 32. Berry marketed as a superfood
- 33. Popular side dish
- 34. Turkish restaurant
- on Guerrero
- 41. Trips to the summit
- 42. Homo ___
- 45. ___ Flow: 24th Street studio
- 46. Apt anagram of AYES
- 49. Showing good posture
- 50. High male voice
- 51. French composer Erik
- 52. "___ facto"
- 53. Corporate VIPs
- 54. Duke of ___ (1962 hit)
- 55. Regarding
- 56. German battleship Graf ___
- 57. Fast food tycoon Ray
- 58. Nine-digit IDs
- 60. Gratuity

Solution on Page 22
Find more Crosswords at noevalleyvoice.com

CRIME SNAPSHOT

Crime in Noe Valley took a mini-vacation in August. San Francisco Police Department data showed that 63 incidents were reported in the neighborhood's top 10 categories of crime during the last month of summer.

That was a 24 percent decline from the number of incidents reported in July (83) and a 38 percent drop from June (101).

As usual, crimes like package thefts and thefts from vehicles comprised the largest number of incidents. There were 21 reports of larceny/theft in August.

Eleven vehicles were reported stolen on Noe Valley streets—making vehicle theft the second highest category. That was followed by malicious mischief with 10 incidents, all but one of which involved vandalism of property or vehicles.

Overall, there have been 666 incidents reported during the first eight months of 2020.

The numbers shown in our table were culled from the database "A Digital Map of San Francisco Police Department Incident Reports From 2018 to the Present," found under Public Safety at Data.sfgov.org. The *Voice* collected the August data on Sept. 17, 2020.

The city's digital crime map defines Noe Valley as the area bounded roughly by 21st Street, San Jose Avenue/Guerrero Street, 30th Street, and Grand View Avenue/Diamond Heights Boulevard.

To report incidents on your street, call the police non-emergency number at 415-553-0123 or file a police report online at sanfranciscopolice.org. To contact Mission Station Captain Gaetano Caltagirone, call 415-558-5400 or email Gaetano.Caltagirone@sfgov.org. Ingleside Station Captain Christopher Woon can be reached at 415-404-4000, or by emailing Chris.Woon@sfgov.org. In an emergency, call 911.

—Corrie M. Anders, Sally Smith

Noe Valley Incidents Reported January–August 2020

Incident Reports	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	YTD
Larceny/Theft	37	31	29	48	41	49	26	21	282
Burglary	15	15	8	11	20	20	17	9	115
Malicious Mischief	9	13	8	9	2	6	10	10	67
Motor Vehicle Theft	9	8	9	16	9	14	15	11	91
Assault	3	2	1	1	2	1	5	1	16
Robbery	2	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	12
Other Misc.	5	6	3	6	7	4	4	4	39
Fraud	4	6	0	4	3	4	2	3	26
Fam. Domestic Violence	1	0	0	5	2	1	2	2	13
Vandalism	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	5
TOTALS	86	82	58	104	89	101	83	63	666

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- the outdoor Voting Center in front of
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- any ballot drop-off site (see locations and hours at
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Learn more about your voting options at sfelections.org





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www.MattAlexanderSF.org

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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 sfelection.org/voterportal. Voters

can also register to vote by going to registertovote.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.

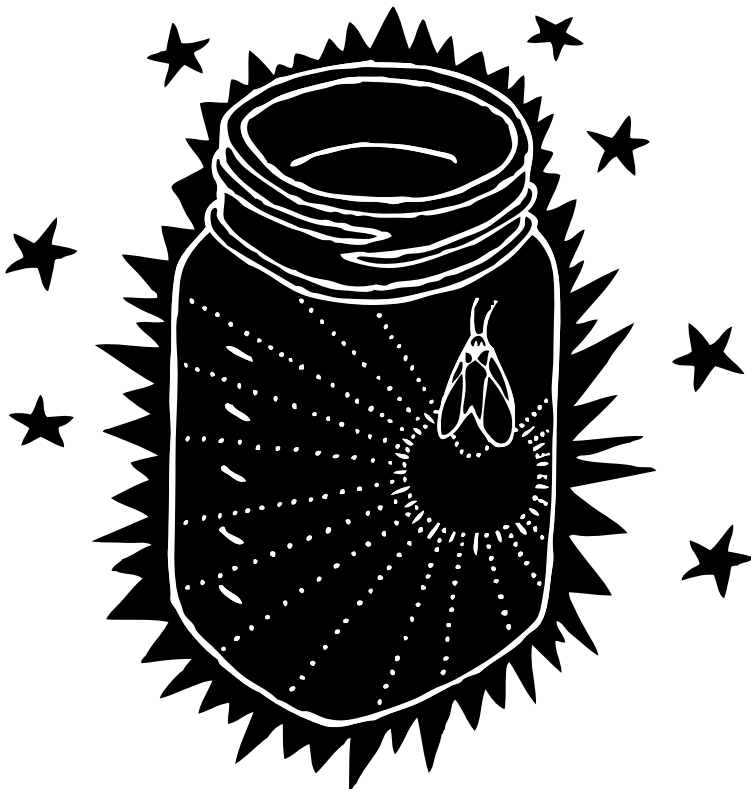
There is a full slate of statewide propositions. Notably, Prop. 22 would amend recent legislation to allow Uber, Lyft, and other drivers to remain as independent contractors rather than being treated as employees with state-mandated benefits. Prop. 15 would change provisions of (the 1978) Prop. 13 by 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

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Residents Embrace Slower Sanchez

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

increased foot traffic to practice their musical chops.

Since late July, on Wednesdays and Sundays from 2 to 5 p.m., the three-man band dubbed the JustFellOutOfA Trio has performed at the corner of Sanchez and Clipper streets across from Lola Gallery and Bethany United Methodist Church. Bandleader Bud Owings plays keyboard, Dan Daglow mans the trombone, and percussionist Pepe Jacobo joins in on drums, doing a repertoire that includes jazz, Latin, and pop music. On any given day, they will attract upwards of 30 people, says Owings, who lives near City College’s Ocean Campus and works as a general contractor when not performing.

“A lot of people are wandering up and down the street,” says Owings, 70, who has called San Francisco home for four decades. “We have had people come out of the church and say, ‘I’ve been typing away on my reports and listening to you guys.’ A lot of people will wander by and stop. It is a good corner because there is a wall there that people can sit on.”

Free Way Has Friends

Fans of the slower pace along Sanchez Street have created a website in support of it, slowsanchez.com, and a companion Twitter account @sanchezslowst. The Friends of Slow Sanchez are looking at raising money to further improve the concept, such as putting up murals at intersections that need signs.

“Over the last couple of months, I have spoken with dozens of Noe Valley neighbors and Sanchez residents. Out of that has grown a conviction that we can use

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

Kay Illenden and her husband, Mike Konwiak, 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 truck picnics 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.

Konwiak, a software engineer for a biotech company, likes to run along Sanchez Street in the evenings after work. “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 Kavanaugh and Rhisa 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 cars and the Muni trains. Running along here I can be around people because there is more open space,” says Kavanaugh, 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 parklets 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



Two dads compare notes while kids line up to start a bike race at the southeast corner of Sanchez and Clipper. Photo by Beverly Tharp

hosting free concerts for passersby. He plays a variety of music, from jazz to folk to folk rock.

Guillermo started playing during the local Carnival 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 Adele 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

Town Square.

He’s grateful for Sanchez, now among the few havens for musicians, what with clubs and other venues closed by Covid.

“I get to be doing something I love for people who need it right now,” says Randriamamonjy. “We all need it. Musicians also need it. We can’t stop playing. We need to be playing as much as people need to hear music.”

Costume Walk for Kids

With health officials asking families not to trick-or-treat this year due to the pandemic, Olson is working with other residents in the Resilient Noe Valley group to organize an informal costume stroll for children the afternoon of Halloween.

At 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, parents and their kids are invited to strut down Sanchez Street starting at 24th Street decked out in their costumes.

“The name we have adopted is Slow Street Costume Walk on Sanchez. It is not a parade, and there will be no candy,” notes Olson. “The idea is to keep it low-key and hope families will just come out to enjoy a walk in costume.”

Olson said the idea came from their realization that past traditions in the neighborhood, such as merchants along 24th Street handing out candy and a Fair Oaks Street haunting on Halloween, would not occur this year due to the health crisis. The group wanted to offer a way families could still safely celebrate the holiday.

“It arose out of our awareness, because of shelter-in-place, kids are not going to be going from house to house on Halloween this year,” said Olson. “We know families in Noe Valley are not eager to send their children out to strangers’ houses and put their hands out for candy. We are aware it is going to feel like a loss.”

To see a map of the new and old Slow Streets, visit [SFMTA.com/SlowStreets](https://www.sfmta.com/slowstreets).



Signs in a window in the 1400 block of Sanchez Street is an encouragement to passersby as well as to artists and activists in the neighborhood. Photo by Corrie M. Anders



Residents gather near “The Noe Bell” at 1430 Sanchez St., which invites the curious to push the button at the top of the garage and hear a tune. Photo by Beverly Tharp



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

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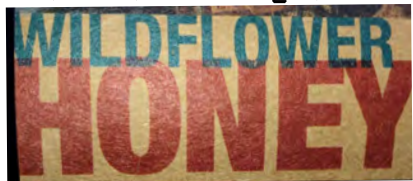


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Outdoor Dining Whets Appetites

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have proven popular.

“Everybody loves it,” says Mike Almuhtadi, 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 Jeanette 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 cautious about reopening since its shelter-in-place order went into effect on March 17. Unlike some parts of the state, the city has never allowed a return to dine-in restaurants and bars, and when Covid cases started rising in July, it even cancelled its timeline for reopening them.

The city’s caseload has come down since the midsummer surge, and for most of September San Francisco was in the red tier, based on the new four-tier system Governor Gavin Newsom introduced at the end of August. Red means “substantial” transmission of the coronavirus.



Customers have started to fill the seats in Saru Sushi’s new parklet, which offers eight booths outside the tiny restaurant at 24th and Vicksburg streets.

It is one level below the “widespread” purple tier.

Although state guidelines allow restaurants in red-tier counties to offer indoor service at 25 percent capacity, San Francisco has continued to ban indoor dining. Speaking at a Sept. 18 press conference, Mayor London Breed suggested that indoor dining would be allowed at reduced capacity once the city fell into the “moderate” 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’d 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.

“We don’t want to announce a timeline that we can’t stick to.”

But Is It Safe?

Over the course of the past six months, it has become clear that most coronavirus transmission occurs in crowded indoor settings and outdoor transmission remains uncommon. According to San Francisco Health Officer Dr. Tomás Aragón, the rise in the city’s caseload has been largely attributable to transmission in crowded households and private indoor gatherings.

A widely reported recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that people who tested positive for the coronavirus were more than twice as likely to say they had frequented restaurants or bars. But the analysis, which surveyed just 314 people in 10 states, did not distinguish between indoor and outdoor dining, leaving a key question unanswered.

So far, the city health department has not reported any transmission clusters associated with restaurants since outdoor dining resumed in San Francisco.

“I think outside dining can be perfectly safe—and I have dined outdoors many times—but there is reason to believe that inside dining would be a higher risk activity, because you have to take off a mask when you eat,” Dr. Monica Gandhi, a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, told the *Voice*.

“We need more data on what it would take to open inside dining, such as ventilation and how far apart people have to be.

“You don’t want to share food,” Gandhi added. “I think people can use the same serving spoon to scoop food on their plates, move away from each other, and eat. But I would not have finger food out in a bowl to grab, or eat off other people’s plates, or use the same utensils right now.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Send an email to:
editor@noevalleyvoice.com

Please include your name and contact information. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.)

Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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 invited 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’ back yard 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 Docu-Signed, 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,



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

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 emo-

tional. 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.



Natasha Gupta gets ready to “walk down the aisle” and wed Patrick Boocock in their living room on Friday, Sept. 4. Photo by Samantha Juda

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Oct. 1-31: Yoga Mayu offers online classes and OUTDOOR YOGA classes, by prior reservation. 4159B 24th. For a schedule, yogamayu.com.

Oct. 1-31: Noe Valley OVEREATERS Anonymous at St. Aidan's meets via Zoom, Monday through Saturday 7 to 8 am. 314-0720 or 779-6273; oasf.org.

Oct. 1-31: The 30th Street SENIOR CENTER's Mission Nutrition program offers takeout lunches for people over 60, weekdays and Saturdays. 9:30 am-1:30 pm. 225 30th. 550-2226.

Oct. 1-Jan. 19, 2021: John Martini leads a virtual tour of Sutro's Glass Palace at the SF HISTORICAL SOCIETY website, sfhistory.org.

Oct. 2-30: Bird & Beckett bookstore hosts Friday JAZZ live-streaming from the shop. 7:30-9 pm. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

Oct. 3 & 4: SF Neon hosts "NEON Speaks 2020," featuring virtual tours, discussions, and documentaries. For a schedule, neonspeaks.org.

Oct. 3-31: The Noe Valley FARMERS MARKET is open from 8 am to 1 pm (8 to 9 am for seniors); masks required, 6 feet distancing. 3861 24th. 248-1332; noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

Oct. 4: Bring leashed or crated pets to the BLESSING of the Animals at Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, 455 Fair Oaks. 2-4 pm. holyinsf.org.

Oct. 4 & 18: Political group ACTION SF hosts virtual meetings, 1 to 2:30 pm. Email actionsfolidarity@gmail.com to receive Zoom meeting link.

Oct. 4-28: The corner of Clipper and Sanchez hosts live JAZZ and Latin music from Just Fell Out of a Trio Wednesdays and Sundays, 2-5 pm. Bud Owings, 415-816-7348.

Oct. 7-28: The Castro FARMERS MARKET is open Wednesdays, 2:30 to 7 pm, with the first hour reserved for seniors and others who may be at greater risk. Noe at Market. pcfma.com.

Oct. 8: Community Music Center hosts an online Zoom workshop with Oscar Hernández, "50 Years of Iconic LATIN MUSIC." 5:30-7 pm. 647-6015; sfcmc.org.

Oct. 9-24: LITQUAKE features virtual readings and discussions, including Kidquake Oct. 9 and 16, 10 am-12:30 pm; "Post-Pandemic Publishing" Oct. 11, noon-1:15 pm; "The Cockettes" Oct. 17, 7-8:15 pm; and "Feminist Writers Respond to the Climate Emergency" Oct. 20, 7-8:15 pm. Full schedule and signup at litquake.org.

Oct. 9, 16 & 27: Bernal Heights OUTDOOR CINEMA hosts its opening night Oct. 9 and "Under the Stars" Oct. 16 at 8:30 pm, at the Ale-

many Market Plaza, and live-streams the "Best of Bernal" season finale at 8 pm on Oct. 27. bhout-doorcine.org.

Oct. 10: Resilient Noe Valley offers "EMERGENCY Preparedness Training for Families" on Zoom. 10-11 am. Sign up: resilientnoevalley.com/events

Oct. 11: Omnivore Books hosts a Zoom cooking demo and conversation, "Eat Something: A Wise Sons COOKBOOK for Jews Who Like Food and Food Lovers Who Like Jews." 11 am. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

Oct. 11: NOE MUSIC features a digital performance by the Delphi Trio of music by Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms. 7 pm. noemusic.org.

Oct. 18-25: The 11th annual SF DANCE FILM Festival features 12 performances streamed on Marquee TV. For the schedule: sfdancefilmfest.org.

Oct. 19: ODD MONDAYS features virtual readings by Mathangi Subramanian, Richard May, and Michael Nava. 7-8 pm. The Zoom link will be on the Odd Mondays Facebook page, or email oddmondays@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 morning of the meeting. sanfranciscohistory.org.

Oct. 29: The NOE MUSIC Listening Club features a conversation with flutist and composer Allison Loggins-Hull. 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 24th Street. Sorry, no candy (except what you bring). 3 pm. Resilientnoevalley@gmail.com.

Virtually Everything

The next Noe Valley Voice will be the **November 2020** issue, distributed the first week of November. The deadline for items is **Oct. 15**. Please email calendar@noevalleyvoice.com or write Calendar, Noe Valley Voice, P.O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Events in Noe Valley receive priority. Thank you.

UPPER NOE REC CENTER



A Temporary Goodbye: Upper Noe Rec Center program staff Cheryl Woltjen, 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 Sionkowski, 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

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IMAGE: SONPHOTO.COM

The Cost of Living in Noe

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



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 Dumican Mosey Architects, the house offered five bedrooms, light-filled spaces, and panoramic views of the city.

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 fat 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



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 feature a deluxe kitchen, skylights, and a deck offering views from Twin Peaks to the Bay Bridge. Photos 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						
August 2020	14	\$1,635,000	\$5,375,000	\$3,047,929	50	99%
July 2020	14	\$1,100,000	\$3,800,000	\$2,122,500	16	112%
August 2019	8	\$1,580,000	\$4,030,000	\$2,847,000	11	110%
Condominiums/TICs						
August 2020	16	\$875,000	\$2,700,000	\$1,542,091	33	104%
July 2020	8	\$1,350,000	\$2,360,000	\$1,692,500	27	103%
August 2019	9	\$1,110,000	\$2,200,000	\$1,744,333	21	116%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
August 2020	2	\$1,985,000	\$2,053,500	\$2,019,250	19	104%
July 2020	1	\$2,675,000	\$2,675,000	\$2,675,000	7	99%
August 2019	2	\$1,775,000	\$2,800,000	\$2,287,500	26	98%
5+-unit buildings						
August 2020	0	—	—	—	—	—
July 2020	1	\$3,850,000	\$3,850,000	\$3,850,000	29	96%
August 2019	1	\$2,525,000	\$2,425,000	\$2,525,000	57	94%

*This 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 *Noe Valley Voice* thanks Corcoran Global Living San Francisco for providing sales data. NVV10/2020

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 Dumican Mosey Architects, the hillside home offered views stretching from Twin Peaks to

downtown San Francisco to the East 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 SieMatic 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. ■

Noe Valley Rents**

Unit	No. in Sample	Range September 2020	Average September 2020	Average August 2020	Average September 2019
Studio	21	\$1,500 - \$2,500	\$2,120 / mo.	\$2,168 / mo.	\$2,537 / mo.
1-bdrm	76	\$2,050 - \$3,995	\$2,780 / mo.	\$2,933 / mo.	\$3,234 / mo.
2-bdrm	100	\$2,650 - \$6,499	\$3,953 / mo.	\$3,872 / mo.	\$4,640 / mo.
3-bdrm	58	\$3,495 - \$32,000	\$6,098 / mo.	\$5,762 / mo.	\$7,450 / mo.
4+-bdrm	16	\$4,750 - \$11,500	\$7,128 / mo.	\$8,146 / mo.	\$12,151 / mo.

** This survey is based on a sample of 271 Noe Valley apartment listings appearing on Craigslist.org from September 3 to 10, 2020. In September a year ago, there were 101 listings. NVV10/2020



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NOE KIDS

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 the pictures.”

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



Mari, Lumi, and Oliver Flores take a break from their school work and art endeavors to pose under a leafy canopy.

Photo by Art Bodner

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.” ■



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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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Al-Anon Noe Valley

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

Castro Community on Patrol

Website: castropatrol.org
Next volunteer patrol training Saturday,
Sept. 9, 2-5 p.m. Sign up via website.
Email: info@castropatrol.org

Diamond Heights Community Association

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

Dolores Heights Improvement Club

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

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

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

Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association

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

Fair Oaks Neighbors

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

Friends of Billy Goat Hill

Contact: Lisa and Mo Ghotbi, 821-0122
Website: www.billygoathill.net

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

Friends of Dolores Park Playground

Contact: Nancy Gonzalez Madynski,
828-5772
Email: friendsofdolorespark@gmail.com
Website: friendsofdolorespark.org
Meetings: See website.

Friends of Glen Canyon Park

Contact: Jean Conner, 584-8576
Address: 140 Turquoise Way, SF, CA 94131
Plant restoration work parties, Wednesday
mornings and third Saturday of the month.

Friends of Noe Courts Playground

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

Friends of Noe Valley (FNV)

Contact: Todd David, 401-0625
Email: info@friendsofnoevalley.com
Website: friendsofnoevalley.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@uppernoerecreationcenter.com
Website: uppernoerecreationcenter.com
Meetings: Email or check website.

Friends of Upper Noe Dog Owners Group (FUND OG)

Contacts: Chris Faust, David Emanuel
Email: info@fundogsf.org
Website: www.fundogsf.org

Glen Park Association

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

Juri Commoners

Contact: Dave Schweisguth, M17-6290
Email: dave@schweisguth.org
Website: 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.com
Address: 584 Castro St. #333, SF, CA 94114
Meetings: Call for details.

Noe Neighborhood Council

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

Noe Valley Association-24th Street Community Benefit District

Contact: Debra Niemann, 519-0093
Dispatch: To report spills or debris on 24th
Street, call Billy Dinnell, 802-4461.
Email: info@noevalleyassociation.org.
Website: noevalleyassociation.org
Board meetings: Quarterly. See website.

Noe Valley Farmers Market

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Email: info@noevalleyfarmersmarket.com

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)

Contact: Rachel Swann, 225-7743
Meetings: Last Thursdays, Old Republic,
4045A 24th St., 9 a.m. Call to confirm.
Website: www.NoevalleyMerchants.com

Noe Valley Parent Network

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

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noevalleyparentsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

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

Progress Noe Valley

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

Resilient Noe Valley

Contact: Antoinette or Jessica
Email: resilientnoevalley@gmail.com
Newsletter signup:
http://eepurl.com/gYuCD5
Website: www.resilientnoevalley.com

San Francisco NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Team)

Contact: Noe Valley NERT Neighborhood
Team co-coordinators Maxine Fasulis,
mfasulis@yahoo.com; Carole Roberts,
carole_roberts@faludi.com
Website: https://SF-fire.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

Contacts: Laura Shapiro, Phyllis Ball,
Paul Silverman
Email: info@standupsf.net
Website: standupsf.net
Meetings: At offices of members of
Congress, weekly.

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Olga Milan-Howells, 756-4455
Email: President@UpperNoeNeighbors.com
Meetings: Bi-monthly on third Wednesday.
Upper Noe Recreation Center, 295 Day St.
Call to confirm.

All phone numbers are in the 415 area code,
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SHORT TAKES

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 8 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@UpperNoeNeighbors.com.

Johannes Loved Clara

Noe Music continues its fall 2020 virtual season with performances for classical music 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 interesting. Brahms was in love with Clara, whose husband Robert went off to live in an insane asylum. All three composed music. None by Robert is on this 90-minute program. Tickets are \$20 at noemusic.org.

Liana Bérubé on violin, Tanya Tomkins on cello, and Allegra Chapman on piano form the trio. Find out more about them at DelphiTrio.com, especially their young artist mentoring work and concerts for the incarcerated.

Also in October, the Friction Quartet



presents its second Noe Music Kids event on Saturday, Oct. 24, 9:30 a.m. This interactive program on musical teamwork lasts 30 minutes. Tickets are \$10 and \$5 at noemusic.org. You'll also find upcoming events there.



Mathangi Subramanian, author of *A People's History of Heaven*, will be Zooming her work at the Odd Mondays series Oct. 19.

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*. Michael Nava, author of the 2020 Lambda-winning mystery *Carved in Bone*, will give a preview of his new book, *Lies With Man*, due out next spring. And last but not least, neighborhood author Richard May will read from his new story collection, *Gay All Year*.

To find the Zoom link for the event, go to Odd Mondays' Facebook page or email 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.

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 26th 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 their place 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 holysf.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 Spicer have a new venture in Benne, brokering great food from excellent restaurants around the city, such as Pizzeria Delfina, Nopalito, Mr. Jiu's, and Azalina's.

Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, Molesky, Spicer, 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 3885A Cesar Chavez St. After ordering specific dishes at eatbenne.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, Spicer 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 Eventbrite.

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 bhoutdoorcine.org. Go there to find a link to the Eventbrite registration.



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

Short Takes were compiled and written by Richard May.



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STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular Voice column profiling new stores and businesses in Noe Valley. This issue, we feature a produce market that planted its seeds two generations ago.

CHURCH PRODUCE
1798 Church St. at 30th Street
415-923-8289
<https://www.yelp.com/biz/church-produce-san-francisco>

It's a family affair at the revamped Church Produce, the corner grocery at the intersection of Church and 30th streets in Upper Noe Valley.

The Kintis siblings, sisters Dimitra and Fotini and their younger brother Yianni, have taken over the market their father first opened in 1978 with a business partner. When George Kintis sold the business in 2008, the family focused on other interests.

But when the store abruptly closed last fall to the consternation of the neighborhood, the younger generation of the Kintis family decided to dive into the retail sector and reopen the market. After a remodel of the interior space that resulted in a new wood floor and ADA-accessible aisles, they opened to customers Aug. 12.

"So far so good," Dimitra Kintis, 32, told the *Voice* on their one-month anniversary. Yianni Kintis, 24, noted that the family "hadn't stepped foot in here since 2008 when our dad sold it."

Still, the family stayed in touch with their longtime customers and knew how vital a resource the grocery was to nearby residents. So when the opportunity to



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. Photo by Pamela Gerard

take back ownership presented itself, the siblings stepped in.

"It was important it stay a produce store because we knew what the neighborhood wanted," said Yianni Kintis, who moved back to Diamond Heights after graduating from St. John's University in New York City in 2018.

He had been working at Laurel Realty as a property manager and was in the

process of getting his real estate license when Covid-19 hit last spring. Fotini Kintis, 28, had also been working in the neighborhood, as an aesthetician at La Tira Wax Studio. Dimitra Kintis left her career as an advertising account executive to help reopen the grocery store.

Assisting them are their parents. Mom Christina helps to prep the store in the morning for opening, and dad George picks up daily supplies of produce at 4 a.m. from the San Francisco Wholesale Produce Market.

"We are trying to get as much organic produce as we can," noted Yianni Kintis.

They are also keeping their prices low, passing on to their customers the savings they get from buying in bulk.

"Our dad has an eye for the best deals and the best-quality produce," said Dimitra Kintis.

The day the *Voice* stopped by, California Hass avocados were on sale for \$.99 each and papayas \$.89 a pound. Bananas were priced \$.59 a pound. Yellow and red bell peppers cost \$1.99 a pound, while red chard was priced \$.99 a bunch.

The store also has a wide selection of oils and vinegars (\$2.75-\$35), with a 34-ounce can of Iliada Kalamata PDO Extra Virgin Olive Oil (\$35) the most expensive item in the store. There is also a wide variety of beans and rice (\$1.29-\$8.99).

In the back right corner is a wall shelf

filled with an impressive array of Bob's Red Mill products (\$2.15-\$12.99). Customers will also find milk, cheese, and other dairy products, and a limited offering of deli meats and bacon.

Among the more unique items the family stocks are a 19-ounce can of Mideast Pickled Cucumbers in brine (\$2.39) and Krinos Taramosalata Greek-style caviar spread (\$6.39 for an 8-ounce jar).

When the nearby food and wine emporium Douglas closed at the end of August, the Kintis family arranged to start carrying breads from San Francisco-based The Midwife and the Baker. Baguettes (\$4) and other loaves like whole wheat or country bread (\$8) are now delivered daily.

"When Douglas announced they were closed, someone pointed out it was their go-to place for the bread. We wanted to fill that void," explained Dimitra Kintis.

Added Yianni Kintis, "We are trying our best to please everyone in the neighborhood. Whatever they want us to carry, we will try to stock."

They will have various products for the upcoming holidays, from pumpkins and gourds to eggnog and cranberries.

"Get your knives ready!" said Yianni. "We are excited for the fall."

Church Produce is open daily from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

—Matthew S. Bajko

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RUMORS

behind the news

Falling Into Autumn

By Mazook

WEATHER OR NOT: Most NoeValleons are hip to the fact that summer doesn’t arrive in San Francisco until some-time around the autumnal equinox, on Sept. 21 or 22. The warm weather lasts a month or so, to Halloween if we’re lucky.

This year, the Noe Valley Weather Bureau (NVWB) is predicting early morning and late afternoon fog rolling over Twin Peaks throughout October. Otherwise, it will be sunny and windy with temperatures peaking in the 70s, then dipping to the mid 50s in the late night and early morning.

Air quality will depend on the status of the forests burning up and down the West Coast.

As you all will recall, on the morning of Sept. 9, our urban village went dark and the sun never shone. There was a thick haze of smoke above, blown in from the fires burning to our north, east, and south.

When I looked out my window that morning, I thought the neighborhood had been whisked overnight to the red planet Mars. It was surreal!

That day, and for a few days before and after, we put N95 masks over our Covid masks and looked at the Noe Valley Air Quality Index to see if we should even go outside (<https://www.iqair.com/us/usa/california/noe-valley>).

Finally, by the equinox, we began to see some relief. The winds and fog blowing over Twin Peaks cleared the air.

At least for a week or so.

☎ ☎ ☎

HAIR TODAY: At the top of male minds was (literally) the 33 weeks of hair that had been growing since the March 17 Covid shutdown of all the barbershops (and salons) in Downtown Noe Valley.

I was personally saddened when I saw a sign last month posted on the window of my barbershop for the last 18 years, Of Barbers and Bears, located at 4137½ 24th St., between Castro and Diamond streets. It read:

“Dear Noe Valley: After 43 years as Noe Valley’s barber, I am closing my shop due to the Covid epidemic. I have loved my time here and the many ‘heads I’ve had the pleasure to know.’ I am looking forward to this new chapter of my life. I wish you all good health and happy lives. Most sincerely, Stephanie Smith.”

Stephanie Smith’s dad, Mike Skoufas, had been my barber since 1974. She took the second chair in the shop in 1977. Skoufas started at Martin’s Barber Shop in 1953, where Saru Sushi is now. In 1977, his shop used to be where the very back of NOVY’s dining room is now (that back door went into the barbershop).

Smith became my barber when her dad retired in 2008. He said to me at that time: “My daughter is the only licensed barber left in Noe Valley, and all the other haircutters have cosmetology licenses, and they can do everything barbers do and more, except shaving. When a barber gets a cosmetologist license, then they become ‘hair stylists.’”

Smith’s shop got its name because she also was an award-winning dollmaker and creator of elaborate clothing designs. Bears were and are her thing. She used to make them in the back room of the shop and exhibit them on the walls and sell them to adoring customers.

“It was time for me. I just reached age 65 and will go on Social Security now and go to Tennessee to visit my daughter and my grandchildren,” says Smith.

“I spent my savings and then was having to dip into my retirement accounts to pay



Red Sky at Morning: At 9:36 a.m. on Sept. 9, smoke and fog combined to block all but the burnt orange rays of the sun. Noe Valleons felt like aliens as they struggled to understand the strange signs, including one aglow at the Muni stop at Castro and 24th streets. *Photo by Bill Yenne*

the bills for six months, and nobody at City Hall could tell me when I might reopen the shop,” she says. “The future of barbering during this epidemic is too uncertain for me. So I gave my landlord 30 days’ notice and moved out.”

She says that soon after she gave notice, she learned the space had already been rented and presumably will be remodeled.

Smith says she is really looking forward to spending some quality time with her family in a very rural town outside of Memphis. “It is a different life in all these rural towns, and they look at things totally different than we urban people. For example, the town my daughter lives in has had a total of 50 Covid cases in the past six months.”

Bye-bye, Stephanie. I will miss you.

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STILL CLIPPING ALONG: At Moe’s Barber Shop & Beauty Parlor is a happy Debbie Rodriguez, who has been cutting hair for the past 44 years, all at the same location: 4008 24th St.

Moe’s has been there for five years. Before that, since the 1990s, the space was known as Mylene’s, and back before that it was the Doll House.

“It has been the strangest time since the lockdown hit and we had to close down on March 15 and were just able to reopen September 14,” Rodriguez says. “Thankfully, I have weathered Covid, and all my customers for three generations now can come back.”

Moe’s co-owner Marcellino Gioia notes, “We have fully complied with the regulations to make everything safe for our clients. All our operators wear masks, and we allow only two customers in the shop at a time, who must wear masks, and we take their temperature before entering. The chairs are distanced 20 feet apart with shields, and we sanitize all the chairs and tools before the next person comes in.”

Gioia says all appointments must be made online, and they don’t offer shaves or beard trims at this time. Their hours are from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

And of course, Supercuts at 4031 24th is snipping away again. The salon opened at the first opportunity on Sept. 1, when San Francisco relaxed its health orders and permitted outside services (only).

Supercuts’ manager Lily Lao says she is so happy the staff has been allowed to come back to work. However, she reports business in general is “not that good.”

She says: “It seems that a lot of men just shaved their hair off or got haircuts at home, so our business is about 75 percent off, the worst it has been since the economy got bad in 2008.”

On Sept. 14, she and the other salons got the go-ahead to offer limited indoor services. But only two customers are allowed inside at a time, so make an appointment online or give them a call.

Supercuts’ current hours are 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

In a related item, Jenny Yang announced

this summer that Trends for Hair salon at 1600 Castro was closing after 15 years. “Evert, who worked in Noe Valley for nearly 30 years, whom many of you know and love, will not be coming back from his time abroad.” For those interested, you can reach Jenny at 415-661-1220, and Candy Rivera at 415-756-5635.

☎ ☎ ☎

A MOVEABLE BEAST: The best un-kept secret in Noe Valley in September was the news The Animal Company was moving a half block from its current location at 1307 Castro, to the corner of Castro and 24th, 4102 24th St., the former location of Charlie’s Corner children’s bookstore.

“We are really happy to make the move,” says Animal Company co-owner Ellen French, who with husband Rick took over the business in 2001, when it was at the corner of 24th and Douglass (where it had been for three decades). They were there for 10 years before moving to Castro Street in 2011.

“We have taken over the space and in the process of moving everything,” she says, “but we have about the same area as we do here [on Castro]. But the building is wonderful. It is over 100 years old and very well maintained by the owner, who is very easy to work with.”

French says she hopes to open the new store by the end of October.

The last word we had on Charlie’s Corner was that owner Charlotte Nagy was looking for a new location, but probably not in Noe Valley, and probably not until Covid has left us.

As to when the doors will be closing at Rabat clothing and shoe store on the corner of 24th and Noe, the answer is probably “soon.” According to owner Patty Woody, she has extended her lease through October and maybe beyond, depending on when a new tenant might move into the space.

“I was able to work out a lease with the landlord, whereby I can continue in possession and pay rent on a percentage of my daily sales,” she says, “and I have a large inventory of shoes that I would like to sell at very good prices.”

Despite the pandemic, “business has been pretty good [these past months], since so many who live in the neighborhood are working from home,” says Woody. “We see a lot of our customers coming in now in the middle of the day as they walk up and down 24th Street with no other place to really go. I have been around here for the last 48 years, and I have never seen that before.”

☎ ☎ ☎

BABY BOOMING: Nancy Guettier is expanding her Nancyland Kids + Baby shop at 3920B 24th into the store next door at 3920A 24th. That will double the size of the shop and open a back hallway that has been closed to the public at least since the early 1970s. In the old days, Common Scents was on the east side (3920A) and Good News magazine shop on the west (3920B).

Guettier says she is very happy she will now be able to expand her infant to toddler clothing and “essential” supplies like baby masks, as well as display kids’ furniture, play tables, and toy chests.

“This is so exciting,” she says. “It’s kind of amazing how I opened up a retail side to the Nancyland and am able to walk to work from my house on Sanchez Street, and how it has grown in the past two years.”

As you might know, Guettier, an artist, video producer, and author of a line of children’s books, added retail to her repertoire after more than 25 years in visual merchandising for GapKids and BabyGap, as well as Pottery Barn.

Also expanding is local watering hole Valley Tavern. It has finished building the parklet in front of 4054 24th St., including television screens for watching all the sports of the fall season.

Food service is essential with your favorite alcoholic drink, and Tavern manager Declan Hogan has recently struck a deal with Patxi’s Pizza, a few doors down at 4042, to offer meal specials on quick dispatch to the Tavern.

“Oh, yes, we are very happy to work with Mr. Hogan on taking orders and delivering the food,” says Patxi’s manager, Michael Trent.

Trent says the most popular pizza at Patxi’s is the Matt Cain (the baseball star used to live in the neighborhood), which is a deep-dish pizza with pepperoni, garlic, cheese, and fennel sausage.

☎ ☎ ☎

UNREAL ESTATE: The 1908 hilltop cottage at 651 Duncan St., the longtime home of Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, was sold last month for \$2.25 million. That number was considered a lot, because the home was only 756 square feet. However, the land it sat on (two parcels) was 5,700 square feet, and it has a grand view of Noe Valley. The asking price had been \$3 million.

Martin and Lyon, who moved into their Noe Valley house in the 1950s, were heroes in San Francisco and around the world, having founded the Daughters of Bilitis, considered the first lesbian rights organization. They also were the first same-sex couple to be issued a marriage license and married by Mayor Gavin Newsom in 2004. Four years later, they became the first same-sex couple to be legally wed in California. Lyon died last year at 95. Martin had preceded her by 12 years (she was 87).

Their courage was an inspiration to all.

☎ ☎ ☎

SLOW AS MOLASSES: There is a movement afoot to keep Sanchez Street a “Slow Street” after the Covid devil has departed. An ad hoc group of “Friends of Slow Sanchez” has formed to explore the notion.

The organizers, Todd David and Chris Keene, got the Noe Valley Town Square rolling a decade ago and now have teamed up with a third partner, Rafael Burde.

“We thought that maybe the people who live on that stretch of Sanchez Street thought making it a permanent slow street was a good idea,” says Keene.

He is conducting a survey at the group’s website, slowsanchez.com. It asks neighborhood residents if they support Slow Sanchez and to rate potential improvements to the street, such as signs or flower boxes or music.

“We have found that 95 percent of those [responding so far] supported the idea, and what was very encouraging, over 80 percent of the people *living* on the slow street were ‘yes’ or ‘maybe,’” said Keene.

In late September, we all got the news the city was going to roll out three more Slow Streets, including Duncan Street from Valencia to Sanchez, and Noe Street from 18th to Duboce. The Duncan extension will make the Sanchez slow-way stretch even farther.

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