



# THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

## Rising Voices Reading List Posted

Read to Keep Your Mind at Peace and Your Heart Strong And Open

By Jack Tipple

You’re quite welcome to read this stellar edition online at noevalleyvoice.com. But consider that you may be getting too much blue light exposure already. And we continue to provide this old-school, tactile method of communication. Behold! Words printed on paper.

Your nearby neighbors and some not so close have provided a wealth of written material in the forms of poetry, short fiction, essays and informative columns for this edition. There are offerings here that will engage you with their humor, and pathos. All the stuff of aligning with the real world, made right here, and not far from downtown Noe Valley.

When you’re ready to turn out the reading light we hope you’ll consider that your time with these pages was well spent. They’re only words but they can provide the alchemy you need and encourage you to greet tomorrow knowing it’s going to be a great day.

“Be your brightest!” a friend has advised. Read on to find some of the fuel to allow yourself to shine. ■



“You’re My Blue Sky.” This view of the long forever was taken in June from Diamond Heights. Downtown San Francisco seems like it exists in another land entirely— and that’s actually true. If Noe Valley doesn’t have it, you probably don’t need it. From house plants, to auto repair, to olive oil and so much more. Shop and play locally.

Photo by Sally Smith

## Welcome to Neo Valley

By Bill Yard

*Editor’s Note: Writer, editor and friend Bill Yard died in July of this year. We had been working on an introduction to reprinting some of his columns written for the Voice in the early 1980s. We honor him by carrying out the plan. This first piece was published in the December 1979 / January 1980 issue.*

The other day the rainy season came back to Neo Valley with a vengeance, washing the dropped scoops of butter brickle and the roaches and the belated thoughts of suntans into the gutter at 24th and Castro.

I ducked into Finnegan’s to nurse a screwdriver and wait it out. On days like this, the bar fills up early, acting as a screen over a drain, so the less ambitious among us aren’t washed away.

Carlos the plumber walked in and pulled up a stool. His real name is Carl, but a long time ago he figured out that a Third World surname was a good prop. He bought a Heineken’s and adjusted the “Question Authority” button on his shirt.

“What’s up, man,” I asked. “What’d you do today?”

“Well,” he replied, “this morning I decided to put up some phony notices on the bulletin board at the Meat Market. I wrote one about a one-bedroom flat for rent at 25th and Sanchez. Victorian, hardwood floors, fireplace, deck, no deposit, kids and pets okay, the whole fantasy.”

“How much was the rent?”

“One seventy-five,” he said.

That explained the riot police and tear gas I’d noticed earlier that afternoon.

I got up to take a leak and check my progress on the pool table’s chalkboard. There were only seventeen people in front of me so I figured I’d have another screwdriver and hang out.

A few weeks ago somebody named Hallinan brought his entourage to Finnegan’s to further his campaign for District 5 supervisor. Well drinks were 25 cents cheaper, beer was 50 cents and the candidate got up and made a little speech and hocked bumper stickers.

Only problem was, they covered the pool table with hors d’oeuvres. Hallinan thereby alienated at least thirty voters who otherwise might have been in his camp. Hors d’oeuvres on the pool table at Finnegan’s is indicative of the changes in Neo Valley the last few years.

When I got back to the bar, I noticed a young “earth mother” type sitting on the other side of Carlos, a tear running off her nose into her double gin-and-tonic.

I nudged my friend: “What’s wrong with her?”

“Same old story,” he replied, sipping the last of his beer. “Her old man got a job washing dishes at the Acme a couple weeks ago. Now he’s got pink hair, he’s lost forty pounds...” ■



**Jog Early and Often.** Members of the Noe Valley Run Club gather for a group portrait featuring their new club hats. Whether you’re fast on your feet or slow, Sanchez Street is the place to go Friday mornings. More on page 4.

Photo by Vicki Powell

MORE NEO VALLEYS BEGIN ON PAGE 7





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The World as We Know It

Editor:

We live in a world that is full of love, hate, fear, control and power. Not everyone likes all those things but in some small ways they are essential to humans surviving on the earth and working together as a team or alone. Also, the world we live in now is not always full of love and hate. There is also poverty, homelessness, and unfair ruling over others. Everyone has their own tragedy or back story or past that they will always carry guilt for or for what happened to their loved ones they lost on their journeys. Some people are doing what they think at the time is right, not knowing that it is the wrong thing to do, but the blame should not always be on them one hundred percent of the time but on the peers pressuring them to do it.

Lucia May Cornelius  
*Lucia is a sophomore at Mission High School and lives on Hoffman Avenue*


Running Strong

Editor:

We're up to about 17 attendees now and very much appreciate being able to use Slow Sanchez St. for our big group of runners. We started a weekly run to help keep us sane during Covid lockdowns. Since 2020, people have joined, left and come back again. We're so excited our little club is growing in Noe Valley and spreading the good vibes. We also love the most important part of running, the post-run coffee at local cafes. We're all about just getting out there and giving it a go!"

Vicki Powell  
*Sanchez Street*





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LETTERS 58¢



**Do the Sanchez Sprint.** Members of the Noe Valley Run Club jog up Sanchez Street. They currently meet at 6:45 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. on Friday mornings. Those who start early loop back to pick up the runners who need a little extra sleep at Noe Cafe at 7:30.

Photo by Vicki Powell

Land of Vinaigrette

Editor:

What happened to altruism? There was a time when the majority of us really cared about what was best for our Neighborhood, our State, our country, our humanity, rather than what was good for us personally. We've allowed profit to take precedence over planet.

What happened to respect and kindness? There was a time when strangers smiled and greeted each other on the street. You could leave things in your car or on your front porch without fear of damage or theft. You did not expect to be assaulted just because of the color of your skin.

What happened to trust? There was a time when no one had to worry about identity theft, or being scammed on your phone. Good Samaritans offered help without expectation of return or fear of retaliation or lawsuit.

What happened to truth? At some point, many of us have confused it with opinion or a blatant lie. Common sense does not seem so common any more.

What happened to America as a land of opportunity and the American dream?

America was supposed to be a melting pot of different cultures. Now, it's more like a vinaigrette— you shake it up and everything blends for awhile, but eventually it just separates again. And if the American dream did once exist, for many it is now a nightmare— more dead than alive and well.

Brian Soo Hoo  
*7th Avenue*

Keep on Smiling

Editor:

Thanks for all you do, *Noe Valley Voice*. I really enjoy reading our neighborhood paper!

Linda Lavelle  
*Clipper Street*

*Editor's Note:*

Thank you Linda for your kind words and your generous financial donation! It's the support from people like you that sustain our efforts now and have since 1977.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

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Photo by Jack Tipple

That's the Breaks

It's summertime and most of the regular *Noe Valley Voice* features and columns have this month off. They'll be back with the September edition. The *Crossword* by Michael Blake, *Crime Report* and *Cost of Living*, *Short Takes*, *Store Trek*, *Library Books* and *Mazook's Rumors* will all return then tanned, restored and ready.

We hope you enjoy this edition of mostly creative writing, essays and observations. Many of you may recognize some of the names of the writers who have contributed in previous January and August editions.

One of those needs special mention: Bill Yard missed the deadline this time by taking the radical step of dying (R.I.P.). But with a wealth of his writing already in the *Voice* archives, and an agreement worked out via email, his editor has carried on with the plan without the introduction Bill had agreed to write.

Bill penned a column titled *Welcome to Neo Valley* in the late 1970s and early 1980s. With humor and pathos, his vignettes of life in this neighborhood are presented again in these pages for perhaps a new readership and a memory lane visit for those who knew the Noe Valley of decades past. Long time residents will recognize the names of some of the shops and venues that once graced 24th Street and environs such as Finnegan's Wake, Accent on Flowers and Hopwells.

We miss many of those places and we miss Bill. But life goes on and the presses and internet search engines continue to roll. And as long as we're granted the time to rise and work and publish again, we'll see you right here in September.

And Bill, if you're reading this, all is forgiven, but I'm still pissed that you're gone.

JT

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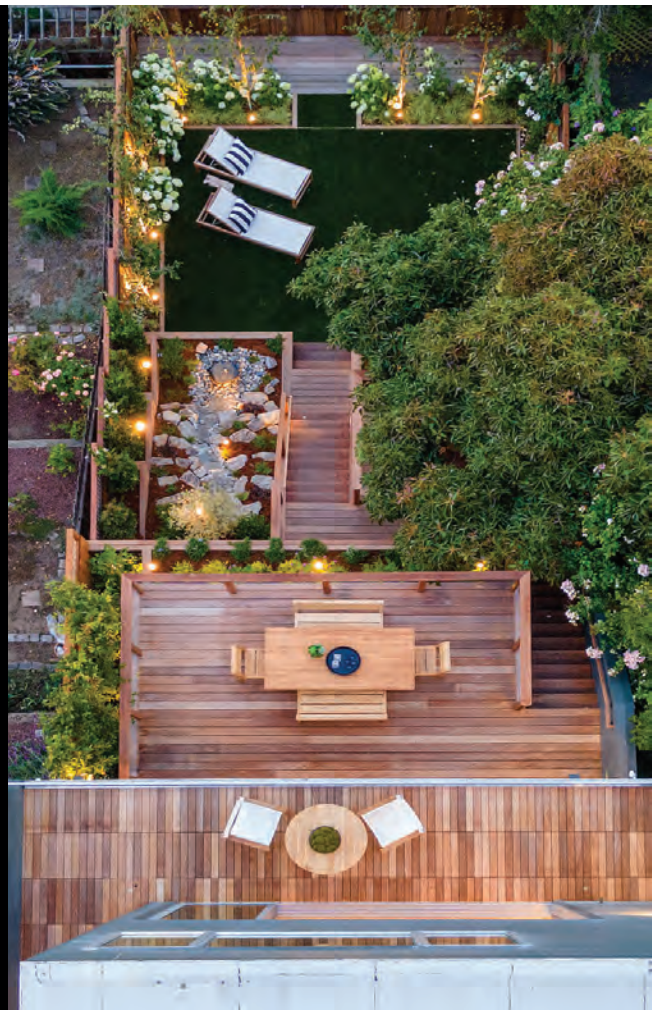
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# RISING VOICES

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## Welcome to Neo Valley

By Bill Yard

### The Empire Strikes Out

Joey came around the corner, heading up 28th Street. He did not look at the fence of weatherbeaten grape stakes, the gate or the stone path beyond, leading to the cottage. He did not deliver there anymore.

Again this summer he'd gone to work for Surf Super, delivering groceries to Neo Valley customers. And again as the summer waned, his thoughts diffused towards the plans and events of adolescence in autumn, but sometimes... sometimes he would think of his friend in the cottage on 28th Street. He had met her in June, had delivered her groceries each week after that, and was surprised to feel her change during that time, and turn to him to speak, first in carefully bound phrases, later in the nearly ravenous crescendo of the despondent. And of course, he didn't know what to say in return.

At first she merely met him at the door, pressed a couple of quarters into his hand and took the bags, not looking back. Until one day when the great ragged cat that shared the tiny house took his chance and bolted through her legs, out the door and over the neighbor's fence.

"God damn cat," she slumped, then quickly, "What's your name?"

"I'm Joey." He felt as if maybe he should go.

"I'm Sylvia. It was nice of you to help me look for my cat, Joey. More coffee?"

In short order he learned that she lived alone, that she worked, whether as a cocktail waitress or as a freelance typist or as a seamstress, as little as possible, and that the furnishings of her small and irregular home, from the chimes above the window box to the oak and corduroy couch, were made by hand.

Except for the thick blue rug on the kitchen floor, she said, and the tomcat, who came with the apartment. "And they'll be here when I leave," she promised. "You see, the cat has liver problems, but the carpet is hydraulic. It grows longer, day by day. He must rub his belly on it so it does not outgrow its strength. Or so he can withstand the needles in his gut."

Joey realized he did not know the definition of "hydraulic," so with a proper speech in respect of Sylvia's hospitality, he walked back into the night. "Don't worry about the cat," she called after him. "He'll be back. And so will you."

Now of course she was absolutely correct. In the following week, as he approached her door with the usual two brown bags, he felt the gaze of the tomcat from her windowsill, the long black tail snapping silently and the eyelids sagging under the weight of the animal's dependence upon her.

But Sylvia was a pleasant despot, at least until Joey mentioned that he had registered for the draft.

"Don't go," she said. "My father," she began, then sank into the view from her kitchen window. "He came home a little over ten years ago. At first, we were ashamed to admit... He changed so much. On a summer evening, he would have worked on the car. He would have chased my mother to the end of the world with his greasy arms and her giggling. But that all went down the tubes. He knew he had been lied to and had gone against his better judgment and had gone over there anyway. Even though he taught us there could never be a justification, a rationalization for taking a life.

Her words stumbled off into her cigarette smoke.

She picked them up again, however. She was obviously feeding them into the machine of her heart. It was clearly unpleasant, like herding cattle into chutes...

"The night of the first thunderstorm, you see, this was back in Pennsylvania. The fireflies disappeared and I heard the slaps, and my mother crying. Then he came outside, gripping the porch railing.

"When he grabbed my wrist, I smelled the booze. I smelled the booze, Joey, then he took me downstairs to the basement."

"Don't you see," she said shivering, "he wasn't like that. He didn't start out that way. But they had twisted his act of cowardice and told him it was courage, this killing for the profit of men who ride in the back seats of limousines, this... when he lacked the guts to stand up and say, 'No, I won't. It stops here and now, beginning with me.'"

☆☆☆

Joey did not understand, but was crying with her now, partly from her story and partly from the image to which he had drifted, of his own father, kneeling only yesterday in the aisle at St. Paul's, kneeling with head bowed, and it had occurred to Joey at the time, I never

saw him kneel for nobody else.

But when the next Monday came and Joey went out on his deliveries, there were no bags for the old wooden cottage on 28th. He finished his rounds, ran to the gate and approached the house, too quickly, stumbling to his knees on the broken steps. Her door was open a couple inches.

Inside, the strange cavern had exploded to the dimensions of the empty rooms. The white plaster walls ached

without her weavings. The scents of her perfume and her bitter coffee had abandoned the living room. And above the window box where chimes once split open crystals of music, a cloud of silence had gathered.

But on the kitchen floor, ignoring the transitory peace that was drowning in this dwelling's bile, the aging tomcat waited, rubbing his belly on the center of the ever-growing rug. His purr smeared across the silence. ■

Bill Yard most recently lived in San Diego. He was by his own account, known to hide inside old Coltrane tracks, hike alone, and somehow scratch out a living. Good fortune often tracked him down, despite his best efforts.

This piece was originally published in the August 1980 edition of the Noe Valley Voice.

## Bill Yard 1951 — 2022

William (Bill) Simeon Yard, Jr., born July 6, 1951, passed away on June 30, 2022 at a hospital in San Diego, CA. He grew up in Washington, Pennsylvania, and was preceded in death by his parents, William Simeon Yard, Esq. Katherine (Kay) Louise Yard (Chaney), and his sister (and life-long best friend) Jane Ann Dostalík (née Yard (Mike Dostalík). Jane Ann was 8 years older and left us just two months before her brother.

In the early 1970's, Bill moved to San Francisco, and worked installing glass from 1972 to 1981. In 1979, he fathered Samantha Yard (Antoine McNamara) who he raised with his second and third wives, Karena Goldfinger and Lisa Camozzi.

As with many aspects of his life, Bill had a peripatetic educational journey, including George Washington University and San Francisco State, graduating with a B.S. degree from St. Mary's College in 1991.

Bill spent most of his professional career working as a scientific writer and editor with his longest stint at Genentech, notably contributing to the FDA approval of Rituxan, an antibody medication that would extend his own life for over a decade after being diagnosed with non-hodgkins lymphoma in 2010.

His most beloved intellectual pursuit, however, was creative writing, and he contributed poems and short stories to *The Noe Valley Voice* throughout his lifetime, starting in 1979 and most recently in the January 2022 issue.

Soon after his cancer diagnosis, Bill left the Bay Area and moved to Latin America and fell in love with Ecuador where



Bill with six-month-old granddaughter Sophie in 2013.

he spent the majority of the last decade of his life, briefly teaching English and relentlessly learning Spanish. In 2014, he met his wife Victoria Condór and became stepfather to her four daughters, Melissa, Emily, Estefanía and Salomé.

Bill reinvented himself many times throughout his life, but never relinquished his love for animals (especially cats), the San Francisco Giants, teaching, writing, music, and expressing love in all its forms. He was quirky, silly, intense, flawed and loving. He fought his demons like the rest of us, sometimes winning and sometimes losing, and he was consistently generous, especially near the end, desperate to provide his stepdaughters with opportunities only available to them in the U.S.

With this in mind, a GoFundMe account for his stepdaughters will soon be established in his honor; if you feel moved to contribute. Either way, please read his stories. They are his proudest legacy.

— Samantha Yard





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# RISING VOICES

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## Welcome to Neo Valley

By Bill Yard

### The End of the Animals

He'd run out of empty pages, and she'd used up her purples and reds, so they were heading to Colorcrane for crayons and a notebook when Alicia spotted the dog.

"Look, Daddy!" The dog crawled out from under a card table in front of Real Foods. A man stood beside the table, holding a clipboard, talking to an old woman. They looked up and smiled when Alicia squeaked and ran toward the dog. Mark followed his daughter and wondered, where did she get that stain on her dress? "What a nice little girl," the man with the clipboard said. Then he asked Mark, "Are you a registered voter?" Alicia squinted up at her father: I must set an example, tell the truth, he thought.

"Yes."

While the dog licked her and she giggled, Mark listened to the man with the clipboard, and did not look at him. The man spoke of the rights of animals. He talked of objects in far-away experiments, and a list of species, dissolving in the throes of man's search for certainty. Mark watched his daughter, playing with the dog, and thought, she's torn her new tights.

The wind shifted, and a pungent scent came to Mark from Ver Brugge's and he wanted to ask the petitioner, does this document apply to invertebrates? Think of oysters. Somewhere, men are prying

them open, placing hard grains of sand into the soft parts within. From this injustice, pearls are born. Mark thought of a string of pearls, glistening on a woman's neck, moving quietly with her, soaking the heat from her flesh and holding it.

He looked up from the necklace of pearls, but he could not remember her face. Instead there was his own reflection, in the window of Real Foods.

"I'm sorry," He handed the pen back to the man with the clipboard. "Let's go, Ali." He began to walk, but the girl ignored him.

She was kneeling on the sidewalk wrestling with the dog. One of her ballet slippers had fallen off, and now she and the dog played tug-of-war with it, while she laughed and the dog growled with gentle ferocity, the slipper clamped between his teeth.

That morning Mark had watched her, brimming over with energy, so he had set out overalls and sneakers for their afternoon of errands. But she had insisted on the slippers, the tights and the dress. They had argued, over breakfast, in the big dark house way up on Diamond.

Years ago the house had overlooked meadows teeming with crickets and muddy springs and thick gnarled bushes tumbling all the way down into a place no one had ever called Neo Valley. It was a place with paths only a little girl could find and run along, looking for rabbit

holes or frogs. If she heard her daddy calling to her, from above and far away, she could ignore him. Now, the animals were all gone, but the big dark house remained, and Alicia had promised to be careful in her new clothes, and her father had finally given in. And now her dress was stained and her tights were torn, and there were teeth marks in her slipper.

"Alicia!"

The dog dropped the slipper and crawled back under the table. The man with the clipboard stopped talking to the old woman and looked up. The old woman turned, leaning on her cane, and stared at Mark. He realized she had seen the animals, along paths he could never find, and she had not disturbed them. She watched him, his uncertainty betrayed.

Then Ali's gaze, as clear and steady as the old woman's, reached him, and he felt the blood that had rushed to his temples drain off into new and unexplored directions.

Alicia climbed into his arms and up to her favorite perch, atop his shoulders.

From there she could see over the crowds and beyond the traffic, farther

even than he could. She held him tightly around the neck, her little hands clasped beneath the stubble on his chin, and she looked up and down 24th Street, taking stock of her world.

He carried her through the herd of cars backed up outside Bell. He wanted some tapers to burn that night, with the oysters and the wine and the rest he had bought. With candles and laughter he would light up the big dark house, for a special woman who was visiting, whose face he could never forget, not since the day he had called out to her and she had heard him, and then ignored him.

They reached the sidewalk and Ali scrambled down. She could smell familiar secrets lurking inside Common Scents.

She ran into the shop ahead of her father, searching for the small soaps, carved into bears and ducks and alligators, like the ones that the woman who was visiting had given her. Alicia would lay in her bath and wait for the animals to dissolve, night after night, into the warm and quiet water.

First published in the July / August 1983 Noe Valley Voice



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Night Shark by Jack Tipple



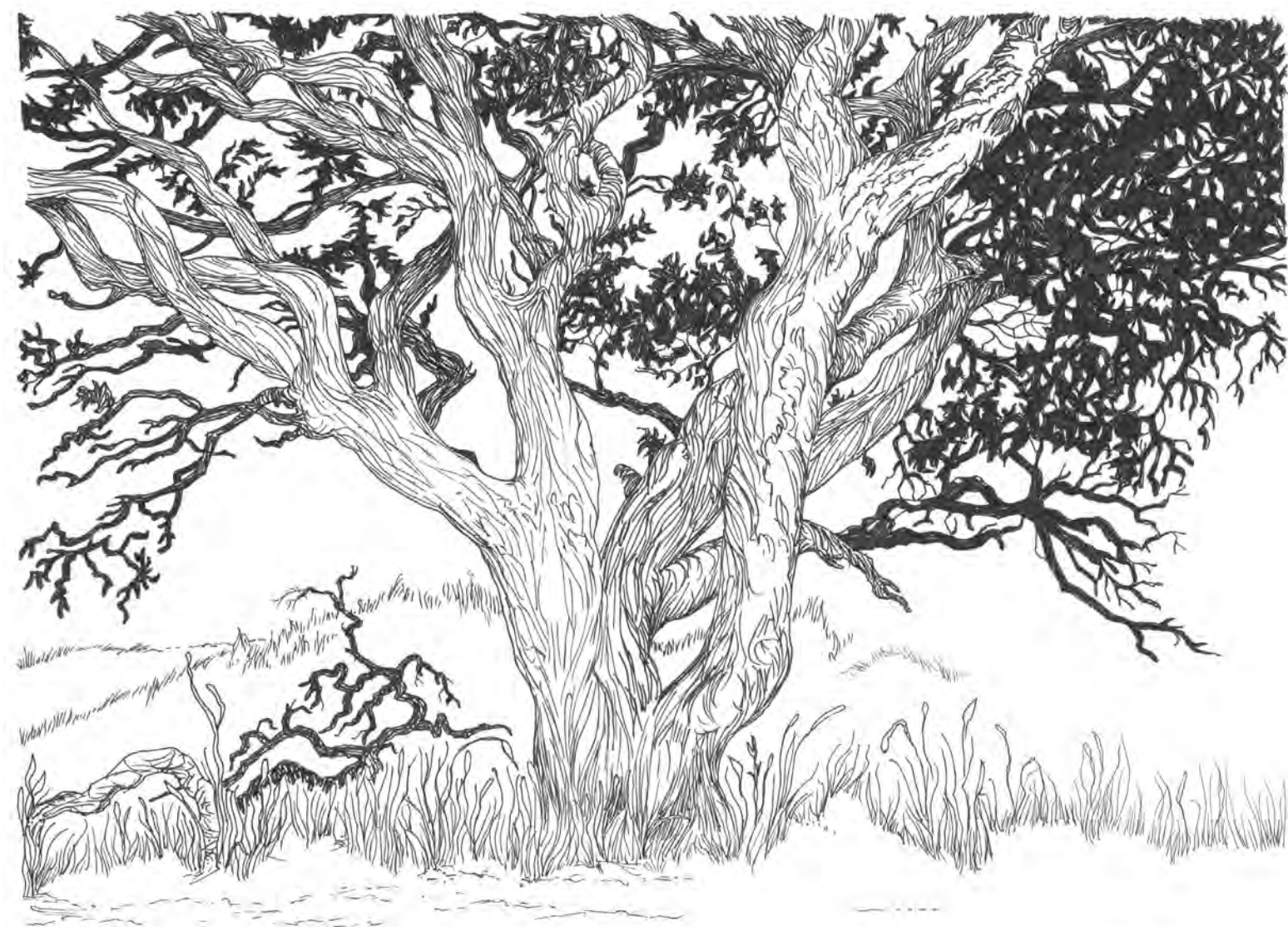
Buddha Grid Mandala by Henry Sultan

Thirteen local artist are displaying their work from 1 to 4 p.m. on three Saturdays — August 6, August 13 and August 20.

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# RISING VOICES

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# Welcome to Neo Valley

*By Bill Yard*

## The Reprieve

Stepping from the post office, into the afternoon sun, Charlie did not know which way to turn. He had the money for flowers, or for a few beers at the bar, but not both.

The bouquets lined up outside the flower shop swayed easily in the wind. Then a car pulled into the space beside them, and a man and woman got out. Charlie knew them both, and liked them, and he envied them together.

“Hey, Charlie,” the man said as they passed, “are you goin’ into Finnegan’s?”

“Later,” Charlie replied, thinking, I have to consider this for a minute. He crossed the street and sat on the concrete bench next to Hopwell’s.

One morning, years earlier, at dawn, stumbling back to Neo Valley from a party in the Mission, he strolled through the J-Church easement between 21st and 22nd. Tentatively, watching his feet, he began to step along the gleaming steel track. Then he glanced up and lost his balance.

Waves of color tumbled town the old concrete wall. Thousands of purple and yellow and orange flowers sprouting from convoluted vines opened for the sun. He'd never noticed them when he rode the J to work. But standing between the tracks, his breath the only sound, he'd been startled by the colors and the dozen or so honeybees floating and climbing among them.

The image of that morning teetered and fell back into his memory. Charlie sat on the concrete bench and thought again of the woman who was coming to dinner, in a few hours. He caught himself fidgeting with his mustache while he thought.

He didn't know her well, so he'd mumbled when he invited her over. He'd inserted the question as casually as possible into a lull in their chance conversation one night at the bar. She looked at her watch while he waited beside her for a bartender he soon hoped

would never come.

“Same thing, Charlie?” the bartender asked.

Charlie nodded and asked her, "Would you like another?" but she shook her head. Just when he figured she'd let his invitation fall, she grabbed a napkin and a pen and turned to look at him. "Dinner sounds great," she said. "Fish is my favorite, by the way. What's your address?"

On the concrete bench, pulling his collar up to keep out the wind, Charlie knew that a beer or two would make it easier to look her in the eye. Instead, he walked across 24th Street and into Accent on Flowers. He chose a crowded, chaotic bunch of simple flowers, with daisies and an aster and others whose names he did not know. While the clerk wrapped them, Charlie counted his change and said, "One more thing" He picked out a rose, still tightly curled into a blood-red bud, and asked the clerk to wrap it separately. Then, cradling the packages in his arms against the wind, he left the store and walked to Castro and climbed the hill to his one-bedroom place on Alvarado.

Although the sun still hung in the sky, Charlie's apartment faced east. Maybe she'll brighten up this dump, he thought, awkwardly perching the bouquet, with the rose at its center, in a jar of water on his table.

She was a dancer. He'd seen her practice once, balancing on an imaginary streetcar track, uncurling her fingers and reaching out and leaping, without watching her feet, and never falling off. Tearing lettuce for their salad, Charlie remembered the way the sweat glistened on her temples.

He was slicing mushrooms, waiting for the doorbell to ring, when it occurred to him that flowers were blind. So they cannot see the choreography of colors that tricks the bees into prolonging the plants' survival, but causes men in one-bedroom apartments to the hurry the

flowers' fate.

He'd finished the salad and laid out the plates, and thrown the dirty socks into the closet and was just about to change his shirt and clean the mustache trimmings from the sink and stick the copy of Playboy in a drawer, when the doorbell rang.

He opened the door and somehow looked into her eyes, and she smiled. "Hi! I brought some wine."

Charlie blushed. "Make yourself at home I still have to, um—"

“Relax,” she said. I’m early.” She wandered through the apartment, glancing at the titles of his books, running her finger over the dusty, rippled surface of a painting. “Did you do this?” she asked.

"I got it at a garage sale last week.

Haven't had time to frame it."

When he brought out the salad, she was looking at a photograph on his desk. "Is this your lover?"

"Sister," he replied, and the ease with which she'd asked, without either jealousy or relief, just simple curiosity, unnerved him. "I mean, I'm not, um, at least right now—"

“Here,” She’d noticed his distress, and took a corkscrew from her purse. “I’m not very good with these. Would you mind? I’ve been out in the sun and I’m thirsty,” she explained, although both of them knew she didn’t have to.

Relieved, he began to open the wine while she turned to look at the photo again. “Ah, I see the family likeness now. Except you have more lines around your eyes.”

"I'm getting old, I guess."

“Oh, yeah,” she laughed, “practically dying on the vine,” and he saw that there were lines around her eyes too.

“Do you mind if I take off my shoes?  
Charlie, this is a nice little place. I mean,  
from what you said before, I expected...  
” She stopped when she saw the flowers  
on the table, and sat down. “Beautiful. Do  
you have a garden?”

“Oh, no. You know the shop on 24th Street, next to the Mitre Box?”

It turned out she'd bought a pot of mums there only that morning.

\*\*\*

Through the salad and the halibut and the strawberry ice cream, along the way somewhere, Charlie forgot to watch his words, and he began to tell her a little about himself. Then it was her turn, and he listened. They talked about parents, alive and dead, and loves, lingering and lost. They laughed about a foolish friend they had in common, and argued over a movie they had both seen. And then she asked if he'd seen the new film at the Castro and he'd shook his head, and she said, "Neither have I," and Charlie realized that, the whole time, he had been looking her in the eye.

“Well,” she finally said, “I have a rehearsal first thing tomorrow.” Charlie nodded, also feeling the warm fatigue of the evening settling in. He started to yawn, and didn’t try to conceal it, and she yawned too and, for the last time that night, they both laughed.

As he closed the door behind her he realized that they had not planned a future date. But it seemed beside the point. Well, there was that movie neither of them had seen. Charlie looked at the dishes and said to himself, I'll deal with these in the morning. He turned off the light and dropped into a deep sleep.

At the break of dawn, sunlight filled his apartment. The tightly curled petals of the rose began to unfold. When Charlie went to clear the table, he saw the rose standing in the middle of the bouquet and thought, I forgot to give this to her.

Gracefully, he leaned over the table to smell it. ■

First published in the  
July / August 1984 Noe Valley Voice



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# RISING VOICES

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## Kiss The Wind

By Grace D’Anca

Kiss the wind without guilt.  
It chills and pants at the back door  
with wild tiger cats waiting for scraps.  
Pop open the purple umbrella and dance  
in no-rain to percussion in your head  
while another withers more and more.

Capture the essence of beauty in a cup  
with a broken handle, spiderwebs  
on the windowsill, though another  
sees only snakes and petrified trash.

House your dreams in a hoosier  
in the back room that looks on the cyclone  
tree the troubled child climbs  
no matter what voice calls to him.

Imagine. Survive the embittered anima.  
Jitter and jump on Saturday mornings  
when the house is vacant. Slide the hallways  
on slippery feet. Fling doors open. Dare  
to be ebullient while the albatross flies.

Kiss the wind through battered red shutters  
your mama rescued from a train. She always  
saw possibility and muted her ears  
to the wailing.

Laugh out your belly button  
so hard you spit  
snort through your nose  
unembarrassed.  
Sometimes that’s all there is.

Praise the ocean, reject  
mistaken memories  
regrets that stop time.  
Tiptoe and stomp in honor of living  
inspite of moribundity.

Be kind  
and wish for wonder.

Minnesotan Grace D’Anca came to S.F. in 1967  
in pursuit of the arts. Performing with Bay Area  
theater and dance groups in funky theaters, men-  
tal health facilities and youth lock-ups, she got in-  
terested in audiences and became a creative arts  
therapist. Her poems have appeared in The  
Racket Journal, San Francisco City College creative  
writing collections, The Noe Valley Voice, and Com-  
munity Living Campaign writing anthologies.

## Rehearsal

By Grace D’Anca

Would she plant another garden then.  
He would eat only garlic, onion and  
potatoes from their first garden. Would she  
plant  
Bougainvillea to climb the fence, papery  
petals  
falling like haiku and a tulip tree to  
bloom stoically in the fist of winter  
when each day becomes minutely lighter.

Would she paint the rooms soft pastels  
with shocking sherbet trim.  
Would she put lace curtains over the mun-  
dane blinds  
and hang her bodacious art without reserva-  
tion.  
Would she wax the kitchen floor so slick  
the grandchildren could see their faces in it.

Would she get two rambunctious kittens  
for entertainment  
a dog for endless love  
and a reason to go out.  
Would she rise early  
put on comfortable shoes  
and stay out all day.  
Would she turn on the porch lamp  
and light every room  
to welcome her home.  
Would she wear magenta  
purple, chartreuse  
and paint her nails black.

Would the monsoon of sandpaper tears  
tear troughs of grief down her cheeks.  
Would the days have too many seconds  
too much nothing  
between awake and sleep  
would naps be narcotic  
would culture gluttony be insulation  
from the isolation of the deafening  
serenity of the house.

Would she regret trying to hang onto the  
threads  
of her life now  
not knowing when.

## Children’s Visit

By Daniel Raskin 2018

Toys in their chest shuffle  
Props, hunger for young players to take the  
stage.  
Tins and pans clamor against each other  
In a bottom kitchen drawer,  
Cymbals in a drum set, eager for fresh air.

Lettered cubes outline paths across a rug,  
Floppy dolls lie upside down on sofa’s arm  
rest.  
Plastic cups, funnels and squeeze bottles  
Strand in emptying bath tub.

Picture books flip their pages, leaves in a  
breeze.  
Words plead give me voice. Couch readies  
for story time.  
Sleepers cuddle fuzzy animals.

Portable crib strains against latches,  
Longing to unfold and settle into the carpet.  
Telephone near the babies’ room  
Has an anxious rash around its jack.  
Don’t ring tonight, please,  
The babies are here.



Daniel Raskin has three grandchildren. He lives in  
Bernal Heights. Daniel writes with the Older  
Writers’ Laboratory, at the Bernal Library, the  
MERI Center at UCSF and Laguna Writers.

## The Bridge

By Jody Reiss

For someone with AIDS who  
died by suicide at 33 in 1993

I am parked overlooking the ocean  
as it gathers to become the bay.  
It’s a dreary afternoon,  
rain turning to drizzle turning to calm again.  
And as I look across at the cars crossing the  
bridge,  
I too feel my calm shatter and churn  
and then subside again to calm.  
What were his thoughts as he drove?  
What was he wearing?  
Old tattered clothes, expendable,  
or the new ones he’d just bought that spring?  
Did he have on sexy underwear?  
Did he carry some small memento, some  
memory trace?  
of Israel, the university and the army and the  
Israeli lover?  
of the DC internship, the organizing of tens of  
thousands to come and march?  
of San Francisco, the tiny urban park he grew  
with stolen water  
until the city gave in and saw that it  
blossomed?  
And when he parked, was his mood gloomy or  
defiant?  
Did he walk quickly looking over his shoulder,  
or stroll, taking in each sensation?  
Was he calm, was he angry, did he cry?  
Was he proud, a hero’s pride?  
And how long did he stand looking out at the  
city?  
Did he smile, say a prayer, ask forgiveness?

Jody Reiss, San Francisco native and long-time  
Noe Valley resident, spent 18 years working as an  
AIDS social worker in the early days. She has  
written Looking Back: AIDS Tales and Teachings,  
available for \$10 at Lulu.com Bookstore section.



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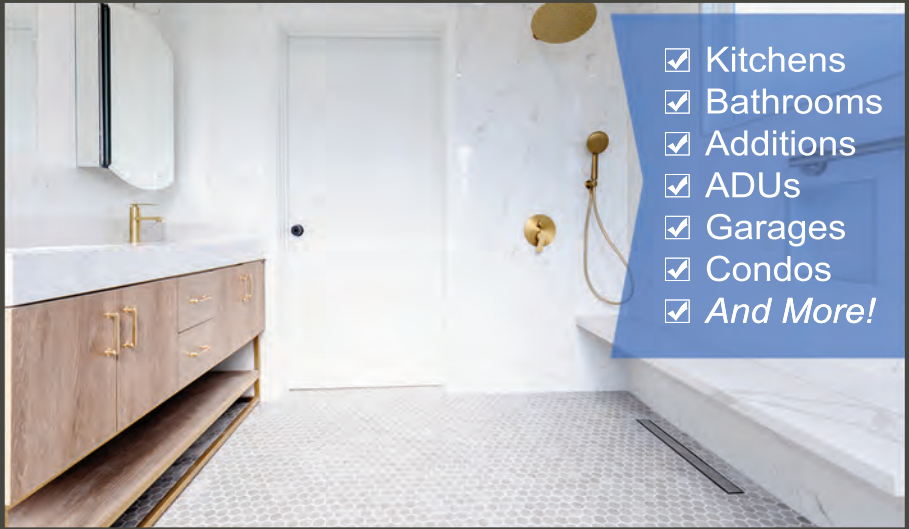
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I'm a San Francisco native and have lived in Noe Valley for 18 years. I work as a landscape maintenance contractor and my crews and I regularly service many Noe Valley gardens. This spring, after 60 hours of training, I completed the UC Master Gardener education program and received my Master Gardener certification.

My home garden is my personal laboratory: a space for me to experiment with plants, veggies, fertilizers and pest controls. I've had my share of failures (aka: an opportunity to try again ) but also a number of amazing triumphs (aka: "Wow, that worked!").

One tremendous success is my Meyer Lemon tree, named Edith, in honor of my home's previous owner. When I moved in, Edith was scrawny and unattractive; she produced a lemon or two...when she felt like it. But after years of proper care, Edith has become a star: fragrant blossoms, shiny leaves and a year-round bounty of plump, juicy fruit. Perhaps Edith and I can inspire you to consider your very own lemon tree.

The Case for Lemons

Compared to other citrus, lemons are perfectly happy in our relatively cool climate. These trees can be planted now, in summer, but in temperate Noe Valley they can really be planted any time of the year. While most fruit trees are deciduous, the hard-working lemon keeps its foliage and produces fruit year round. The lemon tree's sweet blossoms will attract pollinators (bees, butterflies, etc.), which will benefit all nearby fruit trees, flowering plants and our neighborhood ecosystem. Most of all, having luscious lemons at your fingertips is pure joy.

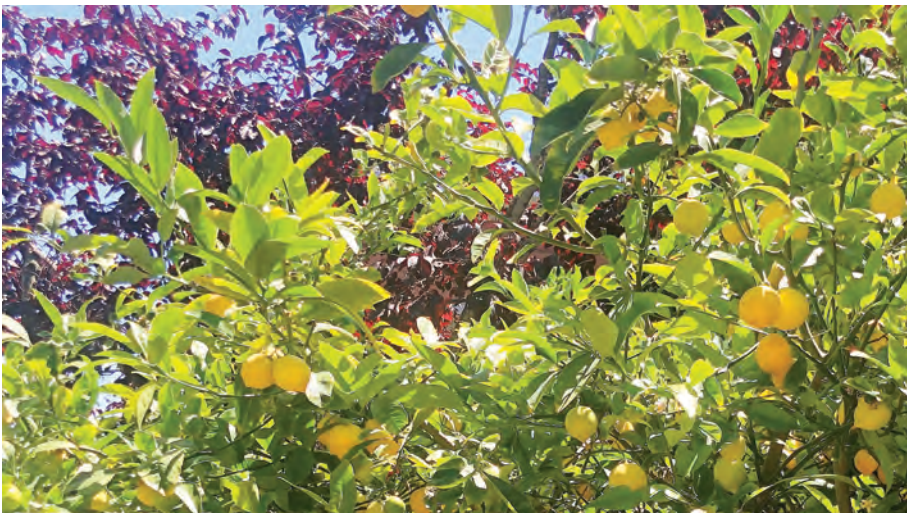
Standard or Bush, Full-Size or Dwarf?

Most lemon varieties come as a "standard" - a traditional tree with a trunk, or as a "shrub" - a multi-branched bush. Varieties are also available either as "full-size" or "dwarfs." At maturity, full-size standards can grow to 30 feet tall and wide, while dwarfs reach about half that size.

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Noe Valley Gardens  
My Lemon Tree: Pure Joy

By Greg Montana



Edith the Meyer Lemon tree.

Photo by Greg Montana

After a few years, pruning and thinning may be needed to accommodate your space, keep fruit within reach and reduce overly dense foliage.

Three Common Varieties

Improved Meyer – The term "improved" implies that this variety is more disease-resistant than earlier Meyers. The lemons are thinned-skinned, juicy and sweet. They produce year-round, even as a young tree. Edith is a Meyer shrub is now at 30+ years and measures about 6 feet tall and wide.

Eureka is the common grocery store lemon, produces year-round but the tree can be thorny and susceptible to insects.

Lisbon is similar to Eureka but with heaviest production in the fall.

Where To Buy?

Lemon trees are usually available in

five and 15-gallon containers. Plants in larger containers are more mature and therefore will be more expensive. You can usually find Lemon trees at nurseries, farmer's markets and big box stores throughout the spring and summer. Choose a plant with healthy, green leaves, signs of new growth and an upright, sturdy growth pattern.

Location Matters

Lemon trees need plenty of sun so select a location that gets the most sunlight throughout the day and it

should be protected from the wind. Planting in the ground is great – but a large container will also work. Tip: put your pot on wheels so you can move it around as sun patterns change.

Care and Feeding

For the best output, lemons require two basics:

Water – Lemon trees need moist, not soggy, soil - particular in their early lives. Your soil type – sand, clay, other - will inform how much water is best and a consistent irrigation schedule is ideal. Edith (who is planted in clay soil) began to thrive when I installed an automated drip system.

Fertilizer - Maintain a regular fertilizing program to keep your lemon tree healthy. They love organic nitrogen fertilizer in the winter and again when spring arrives. Citrus trees occasionally exhibit chlorosis, the term for yellowing of leaves. This is usually the result of zinc or iron deficiencies and can be addressed with an organic, liquid chelated iron micronutrient fertilizer in the spring.

Most all plants contribute their own unique beauty and gifts to a well-curated garden. But some plants elevate their rewards with gifts that enhance your home, your lifestyle and your senses. That's what Edith and all lemon tree can do, and it's pure joy. ■

Resources: For more on Lemons:  
<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/GARDEN/FRUIT/citrus.html>

By G. Montana; edited by Maggie Mah;  
UC San Mateo/San Francisco Master Gardener

Visual Observations

by Judith Levy-Sender



Local artist Judith Levy-Sender illustrates cards featuring poems and aphorisms by writers and philosophers. She lives in Noe Valley.



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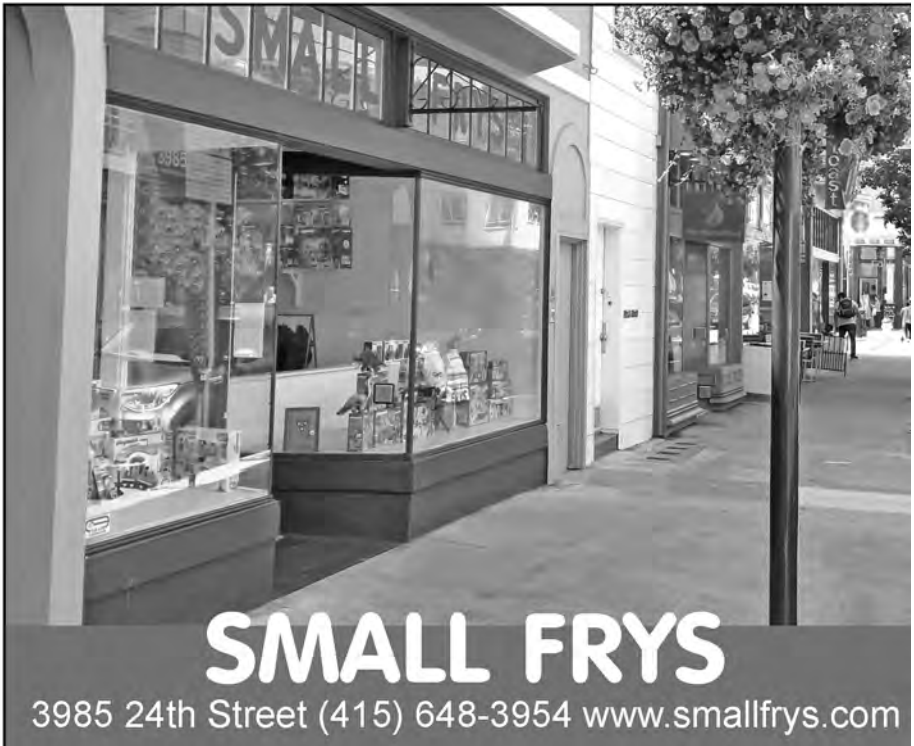
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# RISING VOICES

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## Dementia Caregivers Support Group

By Nancy Evans

The first Monday of each month  
We gather in the conference room.  
We, the fallen and the captured,  
Felled by another's infirmity,  
Prisoners of compassion  
And a love  
That will not let us flee.  
Weary but comforted  
By our shared experience,  
We report conditions and events,  
triumphs and tragedies,  
Fumbles and stumbles  
at home and in the real world,  
Strategies for coping with  
a slow-moving tragedy  
of unknown duration.  
Our stories bring tears and laughter  
and gratitude for understanding  
our common and unique new worlds.

Nancy Evans is a health science writer and editor, a 31 year survivor of breast cancer and a women's health advocate. Her latest book, Long Ago Poems and Other Words is available on Amazon.

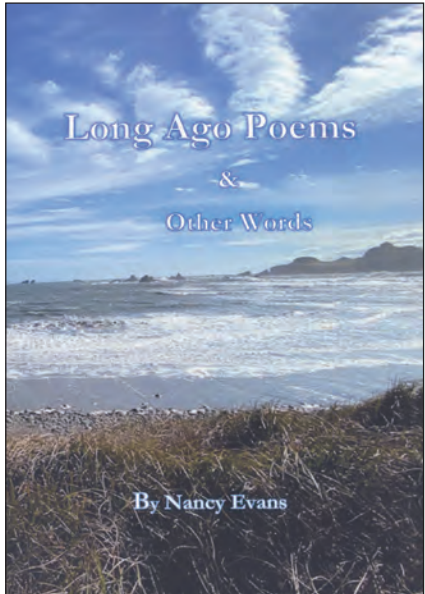


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“A good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving.”  
—Lao Tzu, sixth century BC Chinese philosopher



During the past couple pandemic years, many of us urban dwellers became more connected to the bird life around us. In the first months of staying at home, when things were so quiet, bird sounds really stood out and piqued people's interest. Audubon Magazine reported in August 2020 that American sales of birdseed and supplies increased 50–80% in the five months of forced isolation. Citizen scientists in Canada added more than a third more observations to bird tracking apps like “eBird” (created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology) in 2020. There was an astounding 900% increase in bird lists submitted worldwide to the Cornell Lab in the first few months of the pandemic. It's hard to quantify the improvement in quality of life, but for many, awareness of birds contributed to our mental health and survival.

I've learned a lot more about birds since March 2020, adding to the solid foundation my father provided early in my life. I've learned more about very common birds. The familiar caw caw of the American Crow is something even the person least likely to be a birder can identify. This song is often how I know I am seeing a crow and not a Common Raven. Both are corvids, they appear very similar in form, and are often described by how they differ from one another. But if you don't see them side by side how are you to distinguish that one is smaller, or has more feathers over its beak? By listening. Ravens make more of a rattle, it is throaty and not as clearly defined. But, not so fast. The crow has many possible sounds—up to 20, they can even cluck. I've been able to distinguish three.

RISING VOICES  
fiction, poetry, essays, nonfiction • the noe valley voice

Getting to Know Corvids in the Time of Covid

By LisaRuth Elliott



Illustration by Jack Tipple

There is the standard cawing mentioned above, the everyday, all-purpose voice of a crow. I consider it a very clear, defined sound. Then there is the “raised voice” call of a number of crows at once when they are telling neighborhood cats sitting underneath their tree, for example, to “Get out of town!” This alert call can go on for some time. It's basically a racket, and will draw the most disinterested observer outside to see what the heck is going on. My neighbor's walnut tree is a great place to witness this. Then there is the sound the crow makes when

taunting hawks. Oftentimes, this occurs very high up in the sky, and can be hard to hear, but audible if the chase is nearer to the height of the top of a building. This sound is almost a meow! You might think you are hearing a cat.

While some days it seems the only birds in the sky are the black forms of crows, or pigeons, this year it seems I am seeing a variety of juvenile birds. Earlier in the spring I also noticed more birds gathering nesting material than I had seen in previous years. It is possible that this comes in the natural

sequence of things: You start identifying what birds look like, then you start recognizing the sounds specific birds make, then you know where to expect certain birds to show up, then after some time you notice how their behavior changes over the seasons.

In any case, I think there are two juvenile Anna's Hummingbirds exploring the back garden. They do not have purple gorgets—or patch of throat feathers—and while they could be female (who only have tiny bits of sparkle on their throats), in my experience it is rare to see two females flying together. Today I got a closeup look at one of them, and it looks as if the mature feathers have not yet grown in. They also hover at various levels around the yard, almost on fact-finding missions, probably also feasting on the abundance of insects in the yard. These are not the behaviors of the resident male Anna's I've come to know: Shooting straight through from yard to yard, zooming down to feed at the feeder, sitting on favorite perches. I'm hoping, instead, these are his progeny, getting to know the area after having fledged a nearby nest. That would mean we now have a family of hummingbirds, a bouquet or a shimmer or a hover or a glittering or a tune of them! A lovely way to describe them and to mark their urban survival story, at a time when those of us who have done so mark our survival of this world pandemic.

LisaRuth Elliott is inspired by place. The stories and landscape of San Francisco, of Yelamu and its creatures, inform her life and work. She is an avid birder, writer and editor, visual artist, community historian, urban farmer, and lecturer at Bay Area universities.



Silvia Zeng

Pete Brannigan



Wondering Where You'll Move If You Sell Your House?

If you put a pause on your home search because you weren't sure where you'd go once you sold your home, it might be a good time to get back into the market to sell and buy. Today's real estate market appears to be undergoing a shift, but we do not yet seem to be in a buyer's market which is generally defined by supply and demand, where more than 6-months of supply is sitting on the market. In Noe Valley, we currently have 2 month's supply of inventory on the market as of this writing. But in other markets, the supply of homes for sale is increasing which means you may have a better chance of finding a home that will meet your current needs. We can help you find a home in San Francisco or refer you to a trusted colleague in another market who would be able to best assist you.

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Flight 2022 — A May Day Prayer

By Michael C. Bloom

“May Day, May Day...this is flight 2022, Come in. Over!” I scream into the mic. I look over at my cargo, one human soul. My shadow made manifest.

“Can you land this plane!?” he yells at me at the top of his lungs.

“This is ground control, Flight 2022.” a voice crackles over the radio. My young passenger exhales a sigh of relief for a second, then looks nervously back at the fog ridden space outside. A total white out. I have to pull myself together, and be calm.

“Ground control this is Michael Bloom, Captain of the Apocalypse, come in – over.”

“Go for Ground Control!”

“We seem to have lost use of all our instruments.”

“Yeah, that happens in the Triangle sometimes. Not to worry, just hold tight. You’re about to hit K-Space.” Funkadelic’s “Maggot Brain” suddenly came playing out of the microphone. I let go of the mic, and as it hangs there, I realize we are weightless. Looking over at my passenger, I see myself, at my wedding 11 years earlier. So

happy, so hopeful. Then the ground began to shake and erupted into a violent earthquake. As the guitar solo explodes into space, all my friends and family were erased suddenly – and my bride became a flaming corpse. I hear the crowd screaming for more blood, and the scene fades to white - then I realize I am looking out the cockpit window.

“What day is it?” is all I can summon to ask my young passenger, realizing I have just nodded off from a lack of oxygen, as the plane is collapsing in descent.

“Today?”

“May Day!” I yell back into the microphone.

I ask and answer my own question, as we lock eyes and he slowly says, “May 1st.” Then suddenly I am transported to sixth grade in rural Pennsylvania. My teacher saying, “Today is May Day. What is May Day?” he asks. I raise my hand, and he calls on me, “Michael!”

“May day is a call for help. I saw a movie called Hurricane Fighter Plane, and they were about to crash, calling out...”

“It’s Beltane! Who fucking cares? We’re

about to die!” my only passenger yells at me; or am I yelling at myself? Then I realize - it’s not that we are about to die...it’s that we’re already dead, I think and screech.

“Belenus is the God of Beltane. Belenus fucking cares!” I grasp the controls with all my strength and pull upward toward Heaven asking, “What’s your name again kid?” as we spiral out of control.

“Matt.”

“Matthew?” I snicker as I think about it all. “Matthew May Day – Matthew 5:1” Suddenly the controls take their own direction, and the clouds part into sunshine. I take a breath in shock, and then look at Matthew. He’s transformed into a woman, with wings, like an angel, but with an Egyptian headdress.

“It’s actually Ma’at, not Matt.” I hear him say as his voice turns into a woman’s. “I am eternal justice.” She says as she holds a pair of golden scales in her hand. Suddenly she drives her hand into my chest and rips out my heart. She places it on her scales, as it is still beating. She pulls a feather from her headdress and places it on the other scale. “If your heart is heavier than my feather, you will be dinner for

my pets (a hungry looking pitbull and a vicious drooling hyaena lay at her feet). As the scales begin to move, ever so slightly, I feel dizzy.

“Is there anything I can do to save myself?” I ask as my heart drops faster on the scales.

“Name that tune.” She says cunningly and winks at me, as her hounds begin to bark. “What’s your birth song?” she asks me.

I am beyond comprehension and ask myself, “What is my birth song?”; like a customer asking what comes on the burrito. It’s right there on the menu.

“Maggot Brain.” I answer with all my strength. “Maggot Brain is my birth song.”

Ma’at stares at me in astonishment. “You son of a bitch!”

I wake up. ■

Michael C. Bloom is a resident of Twin Peaks, a congregant member of the Swedenborgian Church in El Cerrito and witness to the Apocalypse of Susan Taubes.



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In 1980, when I first moved to San Francisco and was jogging around my Richmond district neighborhood, I saw a sign that read: Mr. Louie's Kung Fu and Tennis Shop.

Out of curiosity, I stepped inside. In front was a small room displaying tennis equipment. In back was a large rectangular room in which a group of young men were pacing back and forth, kicking and punching with military precision. On the side of the room, watching distractedly, was a short, muscular man, who turned out to be Mr. Louie.

I joined the studio for about a year. It was a real melting pot – black, white, Asian, Latino, male and female, everyone from young children to people in their 50s.

Ron Louie was born in China and arrived in California at age 12. He grew up helping in his family's restaurants, and worked as a chef in San Francisco until he was almost 50. Then he quit to pursue his passion – kung fu.

His students were in awe of him. Even in his 60s, he was the strongest person in the studio and the most proficient in all the weapons – swords, spears, nunchucks. He had a chest like Charles Atlas and arms like Arnold Schwarzenegger

He couldn't remember names, so he made up nicknames for everybody. A boy who was big for his age he called "Big Guy." A tall boy became "Overgrow." A short boy was "Half Grow." He called me "Mr. Reporter." Then he'd laugh, "I don't know why I call everyone Mister. You should only call people Mister if they have money."

Newcomers were treated to the Mr. Louie test. First he would hold out an iron bar parallel to the ground and challenge the newcomer to try it. No one could hold it longer than Mr. Louie.

Then he'd say, "If I were to hit you like this." He would hold his fist one inch from the visitor's upper arm and strike him. The visitor would keep rubbing his arm the whole time he was there. My arm was sore for several days.

He would cook food on a burner and watch TV while people were training. Sometimes he'd shout, "Bend your knees! You're as straight as a bamboo stick!" He liked to spout Chinese proverbs, such as "You can't make an old cow climb a tree."

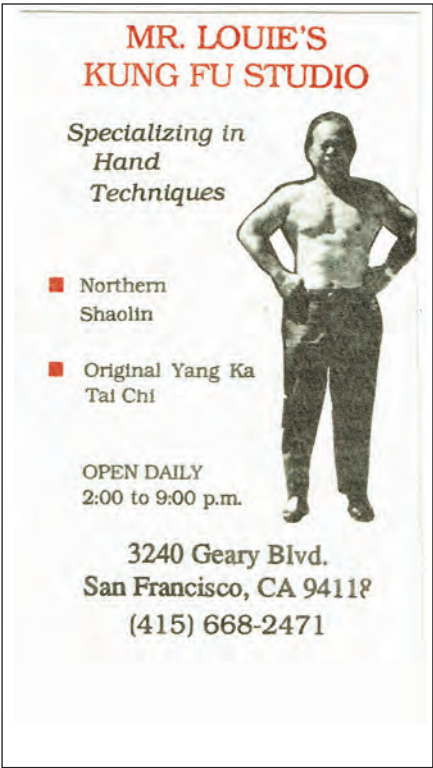
He drove a slow old truck, and when other drivers would insult him, he'd get

# RISING VOICES

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## Remembering a Kung Fu Master

By Max Millard



Ron (Mr.) Louie's business card above and obituary at right. A tribute written by his students is at far right.

**Ronald Louie**  
Martial arts instructor

EXAMINER STAFF REPORT

A memorial service for Ronald Louie, martial arts instructor and father of tennis star Peanut Louie Harper, will be held Sunday.

Mr. Louie, 70, died last Friday in San Francisco.

A native of China's Guangdong province, Mr. Louie arrived in this country in 1935. He worked as a chef for 20 years before the kung fu master opened his own studio here.

Mr. Louie was was active in community affairs and often did lion dances and martial arts demonstrations for associations and charities throughout the San Francisco Chinese American community.

Survivors, in addition to his daughter, include his wife, Alice, and children Arnold, Marcie, Ronnie, Cici and Marisa, all of San Francisco.

A wake will be held, starting at 6 p.m. Saturday, at Cathay Mortuary, 1212 Powell St. Services will be at 1 p.m. Sunday at the mortuary.

Memorial contributions to the UC-San Francisco Cancer Research Fund are preferred.

He scorned Chinese doctors. He said, "Some of my friends, 10 or 15 years ago, they were all bums. Now they're acupuncturists. They cheated to pass the state exam. If I want someone to die, I send them to a Chinese acupuncturist."

Mr. Louie might have lived to a hundred if his cancer had been caught in time. Instead, he died in July 1992 at the age of 69. He kept teaching until a week before the end.

Afterward, I made one last visit to the studio and saw Marcie. I asked, "What do you miss most about him?" She said, "His outrageousness. He was not like the regular Chinese father, who is kind of quiet. He was like the ringmaster in a circus. My daddy would go around looking for action, because he could handle it."

**A message to Mr. Louie from the students**

We your students, who came to you as individuals, now stand together as one to honor you. When we first came to you, you welcomed us with open arms, no matter who we were, what color we were, or where we had come from.

As our sifu, you taught us not only Kung Fu, but also about life. Through your strong will, you taught us to stand up for ourselves. You taught us strength were there is weakness. You taught us compassion where there is cruelty. You taught us that tolerance and forgiveness free the spirit and foster love in all people. You taught us that true Kung Fu spirit lives in the way we conduct all our affairs. You fed us when we were hungry.

We will treasure your teachings and our memories of you with the greatest love, affection and respect. We will honor your wishes by sharing the knowledge you have given us, teaching each other and helping each other until the time that we pass your lessons on to our own students.

May your internal power last for eternity.  
May your great name be known for all time.  
And may your spirit forever burn bright within us and guide us so that we remain true to your teachings and bring honor to you.

With gratitude and respect,  
Your loving students

August 9, 1992.

"Stop the match! Get off the court, Marcie! You don't stand a chance here." She started crying, but she knew he was right. After that, she said, things got a little fairer because people were afraid of Mr. Louie's outbursts.

Max Millard is a retired journalist and teacher in San Francisco. He was on the staff of 10 newspapers and 12 schools in The City, including Alvarado Elementary School in Noe Valley, where he taught for three years



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(vē'vr) v. [Fr.] to live; to experience.

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— M.M. —

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Marcello Oak 1 by Jack Tripple



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## Aging in Place

By Jessica Anderson

He is quite thin now,  
Muscles wasted into stiff sinews  
Over a hundred, Hector is an old man  
Still living at home  
Aging in place as they say  
  
He eats little and carefully nibbles  
A medically prescribed kidney diet  
Every day he munches down the bland food  
The arthritis really slows him  
Even his shoulders hurt walking up the  
endless stairs  
He pauses often to gaze at the maples and  
the roses  
And then he naps on the deck in the  
warm sun  
  
He paces at night  
Sees ghosts and screams  
Gets confused in the dark and needs a  
night light  
Cries when he can't see or  
When he is too cold or  
When he is too lonely  
  
And when he sleeps on his warm plush blan-  
ket  
Soft and easy to rest his bones and snores  
He dreams of his youth  
The expeditions and explorations of the wide  
world,  
The adventures he had!  
He was called the Mayor of Elizabeth Street  
Hector the huge, wandering far from home  
Sometimes all the way to the shops on 24th  
Or chasing rats into the trees on Castro  
Now he lives at home, a cat  
Aging in place as they say

Jessica Anderson moved to Elizabeth Street  
twenty-seven years ago. Her garden, her cat and  
her neighborhood have been central recently.  
Anderson's poetry reflects her patient joy here in  
Noe Valley.

## On My Own

By Helen Dannenberg

the moon has found  
me tonight  
and I have found  
the moon  
in the main room  
shining in  
touching in  
thank you moon  
this unsettling  
evening  
thank you for  
visiting  
for shining where  
I could see  
for another new  
another first  
in my new  
home  
  
He used to call and  
say "Look at the moon"  
Never again.  
  
Now the moon must  
find me  
and I must  
find the moon.  
  
Helen Dannenberg's work can be found in San  
Francisco City College Forum Magazine and in  
the Publications of Community Living Campaign,  
Litquake and Older Writers Laboratory. Previously  
she used spoken word in her choreography

## Invitation

By Sharon Elswit

If you cannot find me here  
go to the top of the Day Street steps.  
If I am not there, look east  
and you will find a half-moon  
in the midday blue sky.  
Reach out and touch the moon  
which I have also touched  
and our fingers will intertwine.



Illustration by Jack Tipple

Stepping off the train from NYC four years ago,  
Sharon Elswit - author of the Latin American, Jew-  
ish, Caribbean, and East Asian Story Finder series  
- discovered the SFPL OWL poetry group, tutoring  
with 826 Valencia, the moon, and one very deter-  
mined bee.

## Bombus Vosnesenskii Has Your Ear

By Sharon Elswit

*(After being stung twice on the same ear two Fridays in  
a row, I decided the bee wanted to tell me something.)*

Yes, the two stings  
were me, same bee  
we women carry the swords  
honed sharper than words  
messengers to bumbling giants, you  
didn't listen when  
flight muscles vibrating I  
murmured I live here, too  
there in the hole around the water pipe  
under the stair I serve the queen  
who birthed me and fifty  
sisters in that May clutch, no  
you do not deserve to hear  
from me whether a child will become a poet  
if I land on her lips, that it's honeybees  
who sting and die, look us up  
and then plant yarrow,  
lavender, blackberries, rosa californica  
and next time, if you are lucky  
you will see me  
worker black with a tuft  
of yellow hair up front, fly  
straight to the anther  
no random Korsakov fancy, this  
is serious survival I  
forage where no other  
has licked before  
colony me flower plum you want  
plums we're fighting  
to be acknowledged here, so  
if your ear hurts hmmmm  
this is no apology



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SAT & SUN AUG 6 & 7	ANNUAL BOOK SALE ! • SAT. 11:00 - 6:00 P.M. & SUN. 12:00 - 5:00 P.M. It's time for our annual clearance sale! All books in the store will be 20%-50% off, so come stock up on cookbooks by your favorite authors. And don't forget to bring bags!
SUN AUG 14	ALI SLAGLE • I DREAM OF DINNER (SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO): LOW-EFFORT, HIGH-REWARD RECIPES • 4:00 P.M. . FREE! These no-nonsense, completely delicious recipes are ideal for dinner tonight—and every single night. As in her New York Times columns, Ali combines readily available, inexpensive ingredients in clever, uncomplicated ways for meals that spark everyday magic.
MON AUG 15	OFFSITE EVENT! MICHAEL W. TWITTY • KOSHERSOUL: THE FAITH AND FOOD JOURNEY OF AN AFRICAN AMERICAN JEW • IN CONVERSATION WITH MAGGID JHOS SINGER • 7:00 - 8:30 P.M. . AT THE JSSCF. JCCSF welcomes beloved culinary historian and chef Michael W. Twitty for a conversation about Black Jewish identity, lived and expressed through food. Joined on stage by Maggid Jhos Singer. TICKETS: jccsf.org
TUES AUG 23	JESS DAMUCK • SALAD FREAK: RECIPES TO FEED A HEALTHY OBSESSION • 6:30 P.M. . FREE! Offering more than 100 inspired recipes, recipe developer and food stylist Jess Damuck shares her passion for making truly delicious salads. Salad Freak encourages readers to discover and embrace their own salad obsessions.
WED AUG 31	MONICA LO • THE WEED GUMMIES COOKBOOK: RECIPES FOR CANNABIS CANDIES, THC AND CBD EDIBLES, AND MORE • 6:30 P.M. . FREE! Create delicious cannabis confections with this user-friendly guide to making THC- and CBD-infused gummies, jellies, soft caramels, hard candies, and more delicious edibles!

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Children’s Fiction

**Pig Makes Art**, by Laura Gehl and Fred Blunt, is part of the Ready-to-Read series. Ages 3 to 5.

A boy who wears unicorn tee shirts dreams of becoming a strongman, in **Strong**, by Rob Kearney and Eric Rosswood, with illustrations by Nidhi Chanani. Ages 4 to 8.

A forgotten homemade robot comes to life when a fifth-grade girl needs a friend, in **Maya and the Robot**, by Eve L. Ewing and Christine Almeda. Ages 7 to 10.

In **Harvey and the Collection of Impossible Things**, by Garret Weyr and Minnie Phan, a stray cat searches for shelter and acceptance. Ages 7 to 11.

**Are We Lost Yet?** is book four of the *Wallace the Brave* series by Will Henry. Ages 8 to 12.

A girl who believes in aliens goes missing in Tae Keller’s **Jennifer Chan Is Not Alone**. Ages 8 to 12.

A 12-year-old girl has an adventure on the high seas, in **The Last Mapmaker**, by Christina Soontornvat. Ages 8 to 12.

Two best friends on the basketball team navigate the changes sixth grade brings, in **Falling Short** by Ernesto Cisneros. Ages 9 to 13.

Children’s Nonfiction

Antoinette Portis’ **A Seed Grows** shows a sunflower grows. Ages 3 to 6.

**Harry Houdini**, by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara and Juliana Vido, explores the life of a man who started out as a trapeze artist. Ages 4 to 8.

**Celia Planted a Garden** is a picture-book biography of a girl who lived on an island off the coast of Maine, by Phyllis Root, Gary D. Schmidt, and Melissa Sweet. Ages 5 to 8.

The long life of a bowhead whale is the subject of **The Whale Who Swam Through Time: A 200-Year Journey in the Arctic**, by Alex Boersma, Nick Pyenson, and Alex Boersma. Ages 5 to 10.

**The Snowy Owl Scientist** by Mark Wilson focuses on a man who has been

MORE BOOKS TO READ

The Books of Summer

Here is the list of new arrivals at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, forwarded to the *Voice* by Adult Services Librarian Jack Tilney and Children’s Librarian Catherine Starr, of the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey St. This month you’ll find novellas by John Grisham, essays by David Sedaris, and “viral” stories by microbiologist Joseph Osmundson. For children, there are books about bowhead whales, silly robots, and best friends on a basketball team.

Summer Stride 2022 for all ages is still swinging through Aug. 31. Sign up at <https://sfpl.beanstack.org> or at any SF library and then keep track of your reading, listening, and learning. After 20 hours of participation, you’ll get a free tote bag.

To put a book or DVD on hold, go to [sfpl.org](https://sfpl.org). You can also check out books at the Noe Valley branch, open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (If you need assistance, call 415-355-5707.) Masks are recommended but not required.

studying owls in Alaska since 1992. Ages 10 and up.

Children’s eBooks, Fiction and Nonfiction

Shinsuke Yoshitake’s picture book **I Won’t Give Up My Rubberband** shows all the things that can be done with an everyday object. Ages 5 to 7.

Silly robot friends exchange knock-knock jokes in **Blippo and Beep: I Feel Funny**, by Sarah Weeks and Joey Ellis. Ages 5 to 7.

**Sharks: A Mighty Bite-y History**, by Miriam Forster and Gordy Wright, reveals the many varieties of the mostly nice creatures. Ages 7 to 12.

A boy who identifies as gay feels out of place in a new school, in **The Insiders** by Mark Oshiro. Ages 8 to 12.

**Just a Girl: A True Story of World War II** is a memoir by Lia Levi, with illustrations by Jess Mason; translated from the Italian by Sylvia Notini. Ages 9 to 14.

Adult Fiction

A lawyer becomes entangled in a caper involving luxury handbags, in **Counterfeit** by Kristin Chen.

In **Nightcrawling** by Leila Mottley, an East Oakland girl takes on the justice system over its treatment of prostitutes.

**Sparring Partners** is a collection of short legal thrillers by John Grisham.

Kali Fajardo-Anstine’s epic **Woman of Light** follows five generations of a Chicano family in the American West.

An artist looks for a second chance at love in **You Made a Fool of Death With Your Beauty**, by Akwaeke Emezi.

Adult eBook Fiction

Set in 1953, **The Lunar Housewife** by Caroline Woods tells the story of a New York journalist trying to expose censorship in the CIA.

**The Omega Factor** by Steve Berry centers on a panel from the Ghent Altarpiece missing since 1934.

Adult Nonfiction

Toby Maloney and experts from Chicago’s Violet Hour bar explain how to make cocktails in **The Bartender’s Manifesto**. Plastic surgeon Harold Gillies is featured in **The Facemaker: A Visionary Surgeon’s Battle to Mend the Disfigured Soldiers of World War I**, by Lindsey Fitzharris.

In **The Pope at War: The Secret History of Pius XII, Mussolini, and Hitler**, David Kertzer details the pope’s actions during World War II.

Caleb Gayle examines the history of Black

LIBRARY EVENTS

Adult Events

The **Noe Valley Knitting Circle** meets on Saturday, Aug. 6, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The library has supplies, but bring your own yarn and needles if you’re working on a special project.

The **Friday Matinee**, on Aug. 12, 2 to 4 p.m., features the 1954 film *Rear Window*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

The **Noe Valley Book Club** meets Wednesday, Aug. 17, 6:30 to 7:45 p.m., to discuss *Run* by Ann Patchett. Get copies at the circulation desk.

Children’s Events

Kids ages 3 to 5 (with an adult) will enjoy **Magnetic Play** with Magna-Tiles, Little Builders, and crayon rubbing on Tuesday, Aug. 2, 10 to 11 a.m. Space is limited; call 355-5707 to register.

All events take place at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library at 451 Jersey St. For information, call 415-355-5707 or visit [www.sfpl.org](https://www.sfpl.org).

slavery and citizenship in a Native American tribe, in **We Refuse to Forget: A True Story of Black Creeks, American Identity, and Power**.

**Virology: Essays for the Living, the Dead, and the Small Things in Between**, by microbiologist Joseph Osmundson, explains the mechanics of viruses.

Adult eBook Nonfiction

**Happy-Go-Lucky** is David Sedaris’ personal take on the pandemic. Linda Villarosa tells why Black people “live sicker and die quicker,” in **Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation**.



Annotations by Voice bookworm Karol Barske

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Flurries of snow whirled through the air. The sky was a bright gray and the ground was a solid, gleaming white. The forest was peaceful and still. The trees stood steadily in place, the leaves barely shifting in the air. The snow was fresh and untouched. It looked like it was a painting that belonged in a palace art display. If Aminah was any good at painting, she would have painted this scene and hung it in the Zalahliyan palace. Her old home. Sometimes, Aminah wished she still lived there. With its tall and mysterious towers. Minarets that pierced the sky. Domes of marble and staircases of gold. Gardens filled with ornate flora. Forests with dense shrubs and obscure trees. However, going back there meant confronting her father. Aminah wasn't ready for that. She knew that she couldn't run from her father forever. One day, she would have to face him. Nonetheless, today was not that day. Today was a day for celebration. Or at least it was supposed to be, but Aminah's brother had decided to dump his lookout duties on her. Which meant she was stuck spending her morning in the forest on lookout while all her friends and the entire village of Chandkapatar got ready for the Sardii festival that night.

The festival of winter, or Sardii, was traditionally the day after the first snow. Everyone gathered in the town square, lit a huge bonfire with dead leaves and a paper with an intention on it. At the palace, it was usually celebrated differently. The palace would be dazzled with light and all of Khubsurat would attend the Sardii ball. It was a time to celebrate the wonders and the tranquility of winter.

"There you are, Aminah. I was looking for you," Aminah turned around at the sound of her name and smiled at her friend, Rabiya.

"Why are you here?" Alishba asked from beside Rabiya. Alishba lived in Chandkapatar with her sisters. Over their time in the

# RISING VOICES fiction, poetry, essays, nonfiction • the noe valley voice

## A Fantasy

By Niah Noorani Rangwala and Naomi Kaplan



quaint village, Aminah and her friends had become close with Alishba and some other residents of Chandkapatar. Like most people, Alishba wasn't in on their little secret. Rabiya shot a look at Aminah, signifying that Aminah needed to think of a lie.

"Oh...you know, I just love...snow," she lied. Alishba gave her a strange look.

"Well, never mind that. Have you heard? The royal family is coming here!"

"The royal family," Aminah repeated slowly.

"Of Zalahliya?"

"No, of Shamsuin. Yes of Zalahliya!" Alishba exclaimed. "This will be incredible! The

whole royal family will be here! Well, everyone except the missing princess and the prince Saif. You know Aminah, you and the princess share the same name. Isn't that funny?"

Aminah gulped. It wasn't funny at all. "I uh... have to go," Aminah took off, Rabiya at her heels.

A little later, Aminah and Neel were walking into the town square to help set up. Neel was droning on about the history of Sardii. Aminah flinched. She could've sworn she had just made eye contact with her

brother, Ahmad.

"Were you even listening?" Neel tapped Aminah on the shoulder.

"No," Neel smiled.

"We're here! Aminah, you might want to look at your surroundings. You look a little green, are you alright?" Neel turned to talk to one of the people handing out supplies. Aminah was given the task of setting up the base of the bonfire. As she walked over, Neel ran up behind her.

"Are you on bonfire?" Aminah opened her mouth to reply when she felt a tight grip on her arm. She whirled around and saw her eldest brother, Ahmad, clutching her arm in a grip tight enough to turn his knuckles white. He was the one that they had left behind when Aminah and her brother, Saif, had fled with the others. Well, he and their father.

"Aminah Akbar!" There was fire in his eyes, burning into her soul. This was why she always felt like a burden to him. He was always angry or dismissive. Right now, he wasn't happy with her. He was never happy with her. Ever. Even when she hadn't run away. "How are you here? What are you? Why-?" He stumbled over his words in a rather unprincly manner. Aminah barely had the courage to meet his eyes. He took a breath and tightened his grip around her arm.

"You need to see Abu. Now." Aminah couldn't let him take her to their father. However, what choice did she have now?

Niah Noorani Rangwala and Naomi Kaplan are two best friends who live in San Francisco. They are going into 7th grade. They love to read and write fantasy and hope you enjoy this story!



Lamisse Droubi has been selling real estate in San Francisco for 24 years, with over \$1.6 billion in total sales, and has navigated many complex market transitions. We are seeing some market volatility, but with the appropriate pricing, presentation, and strategy, a successful outcome is possible. Whether you are buying or selling, having a seasoned partner to guide you through the process is imperative. Let Lamisse and her dedicated team support you in this significant transaction. As a native San Franciscan, raised in Noe Valley, her expertise, transparency, and market knowledge is unmatched.

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