



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

The Castro Theatre Returns In All Its Glory

Besides Films and Live Shows, There's Hegarty on the Organ

By John Ferrannini

Weeks after the reopening of the Castro Theatre following a two-year \$41 million renovation, San Franciscans are viewing the historic movie palace with stars in their eyes.

One thing they should know, however, before waltzing over to 429 Castro St.: Online is "the way to go" when purchasing a ticket, said David Perry, a spokesperson for theater manager Another Planet Entertainment (APE).

"The Castro box office is open every show night 30 minutes before doors," said Perry. Since there are no box office hours other than that, tickets to the theater's eclectic mix of films and concerts are best purchased at the website, thecastro.com.

While right now the residency of



On the Red Carpet: It took two years to renovate and restore the Castro Theatre—and the makeover was not without controversy—but city dignitaries and local celebrities happily joined hands in cutting the ribbon at the landmark's Feb. 6 reopening. Photo by John Ferrannini

British singer-songwriter Sam Smith is garnering headlines, there are other exciting events coming soon, said Perry. "I think everyone who lives in the area is anxious to see David

Hegarty rise from the pit to play on the organ for the first time."

Hegarty has been playing the organ

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A Q&A With Health Expert Robert Wachter

The Doctor Is In: Now Offering Tips on Covid, AI, and GLP-1s

By Emily Hayes

Readers may well be familiar with Bob Wachter, MD, professor and chair of medicine at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF).

Wachter, who lives on Douglass Street with wife Katie Hafner and miniature poodle Newman, was a voice of reason about Covid-19 during the pandemic, sharing his personal approach to disease prevention while avoiding being preachy.

Recently, he's been on tour promoting his new book, *A Giant Leap: How AI Is Transforming Healthcare and What That Means for Our Future*.

Wachter interviewed over 100 experts and spent more than a year and a half researching and writing the book.

We caught up with him virtually on Feb. 20, while he was promoting *A Giant Leap* in New York. He was happy to talk about life after Covid, the usefulness of a chatbot's medical advice, and the future of routine primary care in a world dominated by AI.

Note: The interview transcript has been lightly edited for clarity and length.

Voice: What did San Francisco get right during the Covid-19 pandemic and what are some lessons learned for future healthcare crises?

Wachter: I was very proud of San Francisco's response. Unlike many parts of the country, people tended to follow the science—not fall for misinformation or conspiracy theories—and and generally do the right thing. I was also proud of UCSF for responding quickly, growing our partnerships with the community and the Department of Public Health, and generally being a force for good.

We didn't get everything right. The schools remained closed for far too long, because we overestimated the risks to kids and the degree to which schools would be a site of transmission, and underestimated the toll in educational achievement and mental health that closure would take. But overall, San Francisco did quite well, which was reflected in a mortality rate that was significantly lower than most other parts of the country.

Voice: During the pandemic, you often described the steps you personally took to lower your risks related to Covid. What's your advice today for masking and getting vaccine boosters?

Wachter: During the pandemic, the statement that Covid is no worse than the flu was misinformation, a canard. It was massively worse than the flu. But now, it isn't any worse than the flu. I do

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Survey Sparks Boatload of Ideas for Slow Sanchez



Friends of Slow Sanchez members (l to r) Andrew Casteel, Brooke Ray Demko, Emme Klama, Dana Rosenberg, and Yuko Shah are among the many volunteers working to bring joy, safety, and community to the strip of Sanchez from 23rd to 30th Street. Photo courtesy Jack Love

Neighbors Dream of Festivals, Food Trucks, and Flea Markets

By Matthew S. Bajko

A survey conducted by the Friends of Slow Sanchez group is providing ideas for how to activate the street this year. The suggestions run the gamut from game-playing events to

get-togethers for dogs and their owners.

San Francisco transit officials selected Sanchez Street between 23rd and 30th streets for a Slow Street designation at the start of the Covid pandemic in 2020. Doing so closed those blocks to vehicular through-traffic and allowed bikers, joggers, walkers, and children fresh air to turn the roadway into an urban park setting.

Even before the pandemic, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency had identified Sanchez Street as a slow neighborhood street suitable for its Livable Streets program, which deploys various traffic-calming measures to make roadways safer for people walking and biking on them. Six years

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



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Jessica Branson's 2026 sales are on fire. If you've been considering selling, this is not a market to sit on the sidelines. Jessica's latest Noe Valley three bedroom Victorian listing was expertly priced, impeccably prepared, and strategically negotiated — resulting in more than \$1M over asking and approximately \$1,949 per square foot. San Francisco's market has shifted decisively. The AI startup surge has supercharged the city, accelerating sharply this past fall. After several years of social and economic headwinds, San Francisco has moved from the softest market in the Bay Area to the strongest. Significant new wealth is being created rapidly. Demand is materially outpacing supply. If current conditions hold, median house prices are poised to reach new highs in 2026 — potentially exceeding levels last seen during the 2019 IPO boom. Jessica has been selling San Francisco real estate for 20 years — 2026 marks her twentieth anniversary! She is a Noe Valley property owner, a former tech VP with a proven business background, and one of the neighborhood's (and City's) top agents. She continues to set sales benchmarks. Experience matters in a fast market. Strategy matters even more. Call Jessica for a confidential, no obligation valuation —and a chance to see what it's like to work with the best!

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 5:30 PM – Awards Ceremony & Cocktail Reception

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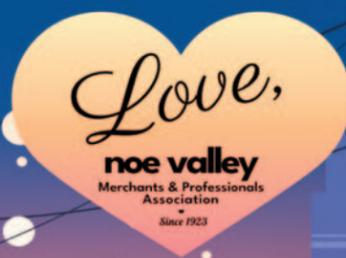
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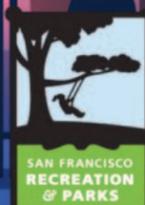
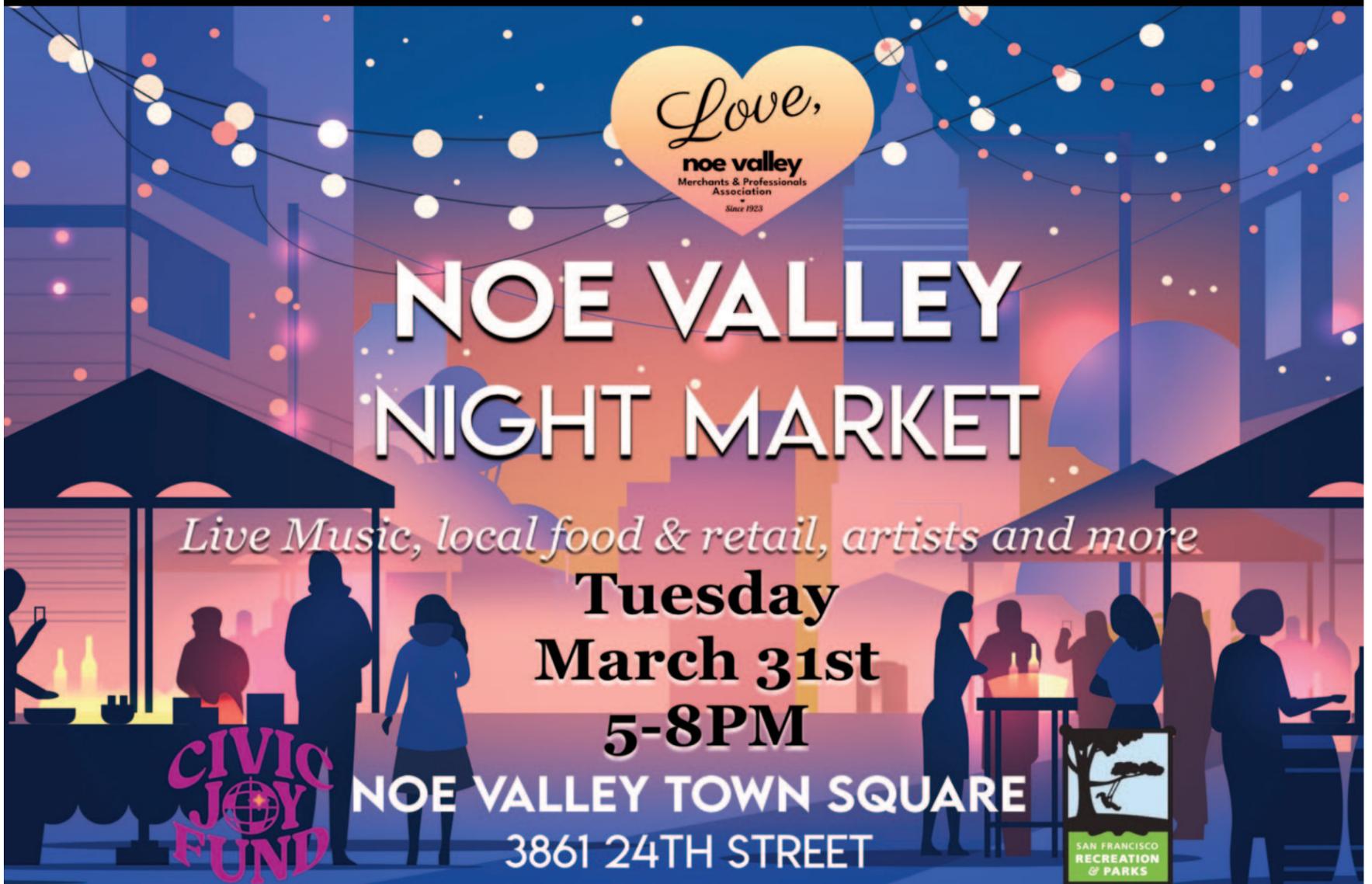


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Good Friday, April 3
Prayer & Meditation, Noon to 3 pm *
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Good Friday Liturgy at 7 pm

Saturday, April 4
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Easter Sunday, April 5

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HOLY WEEK

29
MAR

VIGIL SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 5 PM
PALM SUNDAY - 8 AM, 10 AM, 6:30 PM

2
APR

HOLY THURSDAY - EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, 7 PM

3
APR

GOOD FRIDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION, 7 PM

4
APR

HOLY SATURDAY AT THE EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT OF EASTER
EASTER VIGIL, 8 PM

5
APR

THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD
EASTER SUNDAY, 8 AM, 10 AM, 6:30 PM



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HOLY WEEK & EASTER

@ HOLY INNOCENTS
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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SUN
MAR 29
10 AM

PALM SUNDAY

Hosannas today, and everyday.

GOOD WEDNESDAY

Waiting in silence, love preparing the way.

WED
APR 1
7 PM

THU
APR 2
6 PM

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Love shared in bread and service.

GOOD FRIDAY

Love poured out on the cross.

FRI
APR 3
7 PM

SAT
APR 4
8 PM

EASTER VIGIL

From darkness to light, death to life.

SUN
APR 5

EASTER MORNING

From empty tomb to living hope.

9AM FAMILY SERVICE WITH EGG HUNT

11AM TRADITIONAL

MORE INFO:
HOLYINSF.ORG

NOE VALLEY CHURCH

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Sunday Worship: 10:30 am

Rev. Dr. Peter Choi, Pastor; Dara Phung, Music Director

Lent, Holy Week & Easter Events

Lenten Theme: How to Save a Life

Sermon Series exploring the question:

What is saving your life right now?

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Palm Sunday, March 29

Procession of the Palms

A Worship of Joyful Noise!

Maundy Thursday, April 2

Soup Supper & Communion Service, 6 pm

Easter Morning, April 5

A Worship Celebration with

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Festive Refreshments After Worship.

Eastertide Evensong & Labyrinth Walk

Monday, April 20, 7 pm

Quiet Time of Prayer, Scripture and

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Noe Valley Church is an Inclusive Church, Welcoming to All

CRIME SNAPSHOT

Lowest Monthly Total in Six Years

Noe Valley started 2026 in dramatic fashion. The neighborhood reported the fewest crimes in a single month since the *Noe Valley Voice* began tabling the city's crime data in 2020.

According to the San Francisco Police Department's digital map of incident reports, 53 incidents were recorded in January 2026. That was the lowest number in six years, in the sum of 10 categories that the *Voice* tracks each month. (Google "Crime Snapshot" at NoeValleyVoice.com.)

In a comparison of January 2026 to December 2025, crime fell or stayed the same in eight of the 10 categories.

Still, the "larceny/theft" category remained stubborn, with police logging 22 shoplifting incidents among the 38 thefts in January, all near the Jersey and Castro Street intersection.

There were also five smash-and-grab thefts from vehicles and one stolen license plate. However, car thefts dwindled from four to one after the holidays. And January saw no robberies and only one reported assault.

The only real anomaly was that Noe Valley reported eight domestic violence infractions in January—seven violations of stay-away orders and one breach of a temporary restraining order.

The *Voice* gathered the January data on Feb. 9, 2026, from the digital "Map of Police Department Incident Reports: 2018 to Present," found at

<https://data.sfgov.org/Public-Safety/Map-of-Police-Department-Incident-Reports-2018-to-2025/>

"Noe Valley" in the dataset is bordered by 21st Street, San Jose Avenue/Guerrero, 30th Street, and Grand View Avenue/Diamond Heights Boulevard. Like the SFPD, the *Voice* does not guarantee the completeness of our information, as the data is subject to change as updates become available.

Reporting a Crime

If you witness a crime in progress, call 9-1-1. For recurring or non-emergency problems, call 1-415-533-0123.

For non-violent crimes (e.g., auto burglary, vandalism), file a report online at www.SanFranciscoPolice.org (see "Get Service"). Or call 3-1-1.

Anonymous tips can be texted to 847411 with the key word "SFPD". You also may call Mission Station at 415-558-5400 or Ingleside Station at 415-404-4000.

In general, Mission Station (1240 Valencia St.) covers the northern and central parts of Noe Valley, while Ingleside Station (1 Sgt. John V. Young Lane) covers Upper Noe and areas near Bernal Heights and Glen Park.

Sean Perdomo is current captain at Mission Station (email Sean.Perdomo@sfgov.org). Gerald Newbeck is at the helm of Ingleside (Gerald.Newbeck@sfgov.org).

—Corrie M. Anders, Sally Smith

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.

CRIME SNAPSHOT

Noe Valley Incident Reports December 2024 – January 2026

Crime Category	Dec24	Y2024	Jan25	Feb25	Mar25	Apr25	May25	Jun25	Jul25	Aug25	Sep25	Oct25	Nov25	Dec25	Yr2025	Jan26
Larceny/Theft	44	460	42	26	45	29	44	27	28	31	36	35	33	43	419	38
Burglary	17	243	17	16	13	11	16	6	14	18	16	11	10	9	157	6
Malicious Mischief	3	79	9	4	5	3	2	5	7	6	9	4	6	8	68	2
Motor Veh. Theft	3	109	6	5	6	3	4	7	6	4	9	5	2	4	61	1
Assault	6	32	2	2	2	0	5	2	2	0	4	6	0	1	26	1
Robbery	3	16	0	0	3	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	0
Other Misc	7	117	13	9	8	5	10	2	2	4	4	7	4	4	72	2
Fraud	4	40	0	3	2	3	9	7	4	1	2	11	5	2	49	3
Family D. Violence	1	22	0	0	4	4	3	4	1	1	1	1	3	3	25	8
Vandalism	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
Totals	88	1,122	89	65	88	61	95	60	65	65	82	80	63	74	887	53

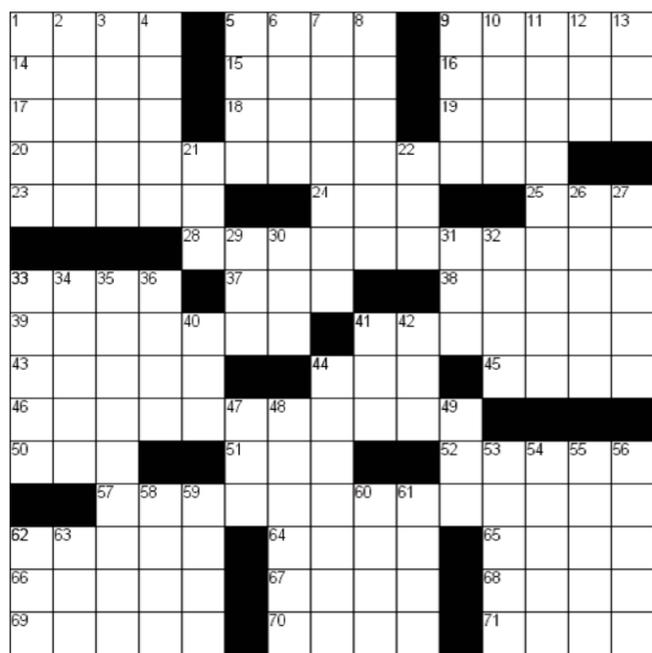
Source: Dataset titled "Map of Police Department Incident Reports: 2018 to Present" at <https://data.sfgov.org/Public-Safety/Police-Department-Incident-Reports-2018-to-Present/wg3w-h783/>. This data includes police incident reports filed by officers and by individuals through self-service online reporting for non-emergency cases. Disclaimer: The San Francisco Police Department does not guarantee the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, or correct sequencing of the information, as the data is subject to change as modifications or updates are completed. The *Noe Valley Voice* scraped the January 2026 data for "Noe Valley" on Feb. 9, 2026. "Noe Valley" on the digital map is bordered by 21st Street, San Jose Avenue/Guerrero, 30th Street, and Grand View Avenue/Diamond Heights Boulevard.
Noe Valley Voice March 2026

THE CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

Was That Named After Him?

ACROSS

- Biblical wise men
- "Everything else" category: Abbr.
- Like sneakers and corsets
- Consort of Osiris
- Mitt Romney's state
- Arctic dome home
- "Sad to say..."
- "Stretch" car
- Directors Ethan and Joel
- Panamanian dictator for whom a Sunset street was NOT named
- "___ inside": chip-maker's slogan
- ___ Can Cook (culinary show)
- Grammy category
- Cuban dictator for whom a Noe Valley street was NOT named
- Prefix for -logical or -crazy
- Assist
- Bird of the pheasant family
- Penalty in hockey or basketball
- Quick look
- Writer Sinclair
- Moreover
- Catches sight of
- 43rd President for whom a downtown street was NOT named
- ID info
- Adam's ale, in Avignon
- "All kidding ___"
- Lincoln's predecessor for whom a Street near Webster was NOT named



- Tolkien protagonist
- Competent
- End a flight
- Detest
- Diner sandwich orders
- Fairy-tale start
- ___-watching: TV viewing spree
- "___ guys like you for breakfast!"
- Necessity
- Cooties
- Open-mouthed
- Scotch product on a roll
- A loooooong time
- Two, in the Mission
- Assistant to Santa
- Relative of "Ltd."
- Get up
- Warsaw natives
- Actor McKellen
- Grok, to a beatnik
- What Purple Air reports on, briefly
- Totals
- Hooligans
- Aspirations
- "Rocket Man" rocker
- Smell
- Gerund suffix
- Horned grazer
- The Book of Mormon faith, briefly
- After "in," clueless
- Extra-ample shoe width
- Condiment at Saru Sushi
- Derisive laugh
- Damia or Green Twig, in Noe Valley
- Silly
- Mobu ___ Studio
- Came to a stop
- Work like ___ (toil)
- Extra
- ___ Beauty, which closed its Geary store in 2026
- "___ la vie!"
- Maryy
- Slugger's stat, for short

DOWN

- Dolphins' home
- Lion in *The Chronicles of Narnia*
- SF ballplayer
- Newspaper edition
- Think (over)
- Put ___ writing
- Russian dog breed
- Designed for group singing

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Solution on Page 21
Find more Crosswords at www.noevalleyvoice.com

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

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

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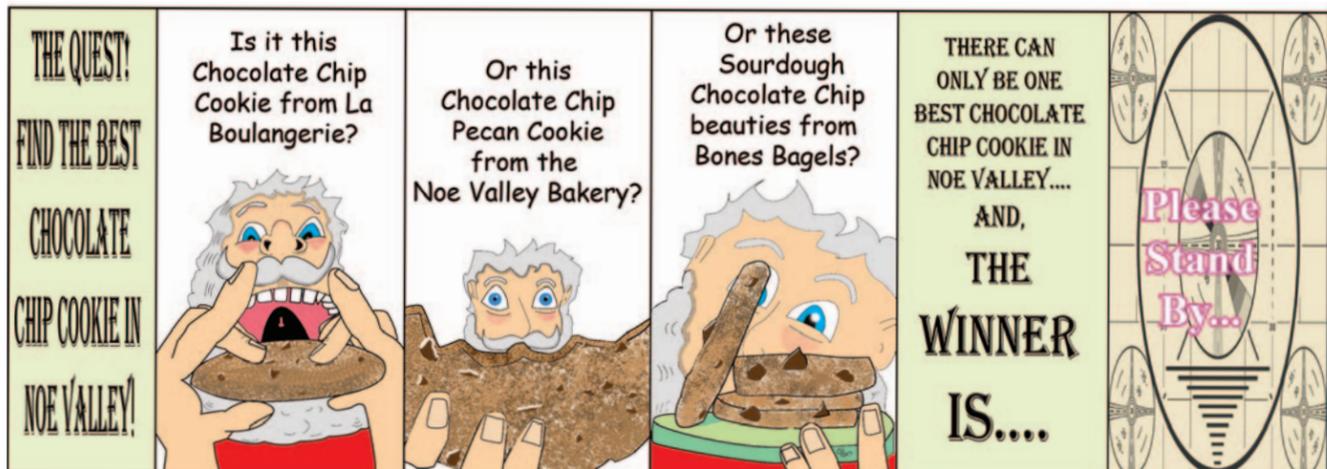
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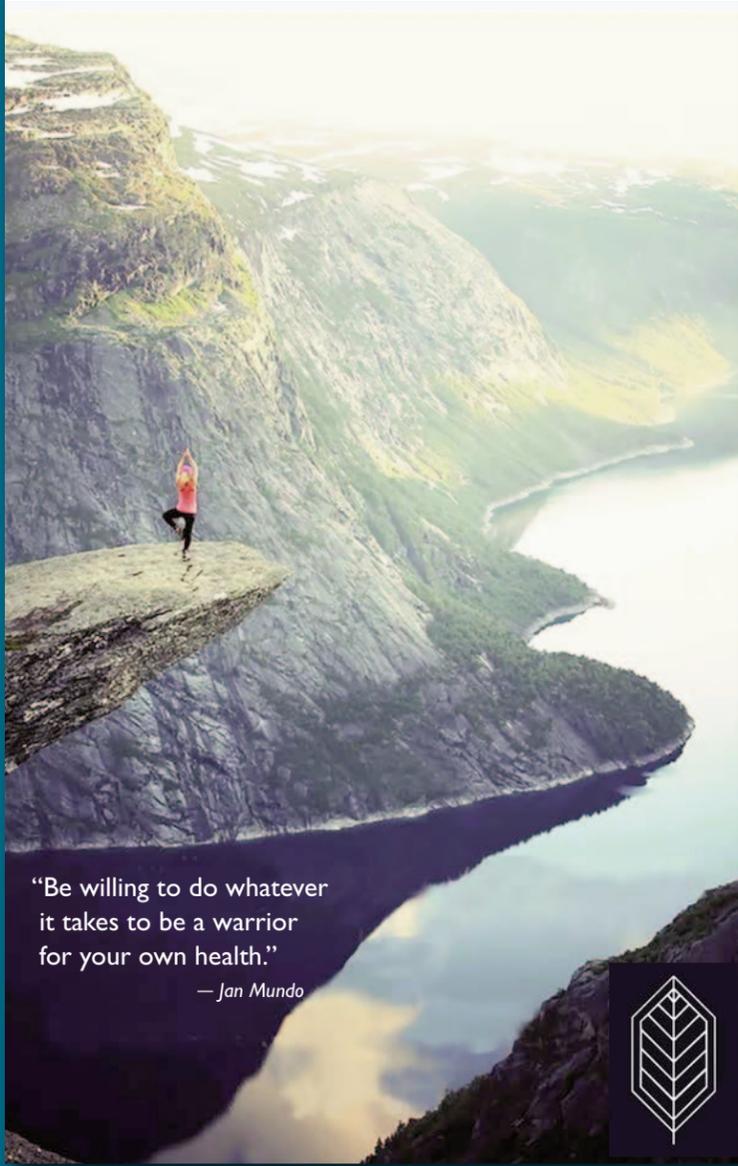
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THE CARTOON BY OWEN BAKER-FLYNN





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Castro Theatre Now in Repertory

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

at the theater since 1976, and the newly installed organ has been built to Hegarty's precise specifications. According to APE Senior Vice President Mary Conde, the new instrument is the world's largest digital symphonic organ.

Hegarty will be playing it publicly for the first time Tuesday, March 17, at Frameline's Trash Talk with John Waters, featuring the 1994 film *Serial Mom*. (The event is sold out.)

Two days later, on Thursday, March 19, the 30th-anniversary Berlin and Beyond Film Festival will be opening its doors at 9:30 a.m.

On Sunday, March 29, a sing-along of *The Sound of Music* will play as a matinee, preceded by Hegarty on the organ. Doors open at noon, and tickets start at \$27.50.

"The experience will be good for the whole family," said Perry.

On Thursday, April 9, *Return to Oz* will be playing in 35 millimeter on the occasion of its 40th anniversary. Tickets are still available from \$27.50, and doors open at 6:30 p.m.

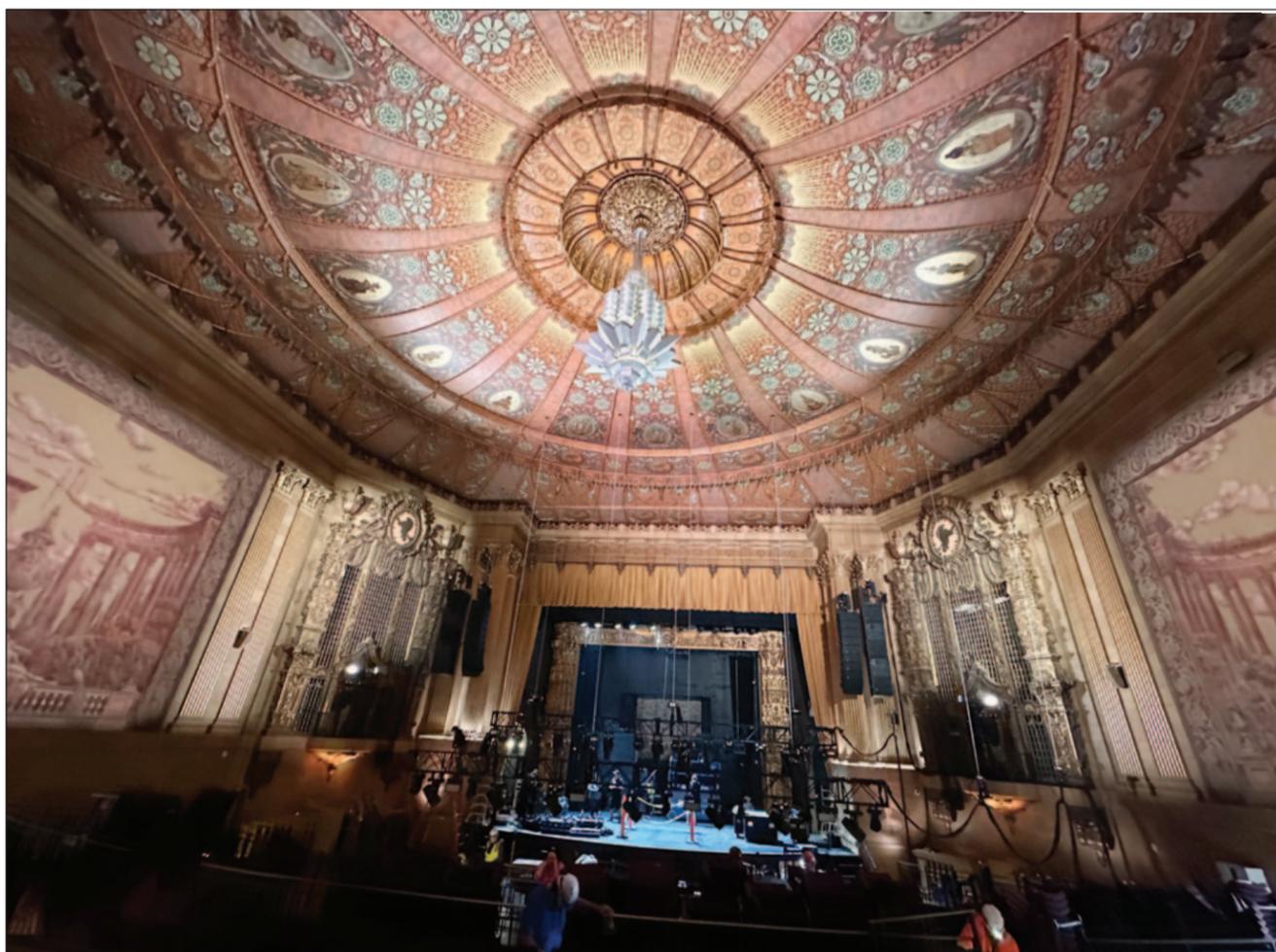
Later in the spring, the San Francisco International Film Festival and the Frameline 50 San Francisco International LGBTQ+ Film Festival will be returning to the space as well.

Opening Night with *Priscilla*

The first film showing at the theater's grand reopening Feb. 6 was *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. The event was also a charity night on behalf of the Castro Community Benefit District.

After the screening, Perry addressed discussion that the sound system in the theater had been subpar.

"The sound for *Priscilla* had nothing to do with the equipment," Perry said, "and everything to do with the fact it's an old film. The sound system is state-of-the-art."



With its freshly cleaned and repaired ceiling and newly hung chandelier, the Castro Theatre appeared ready to welcome fans to the first concert in a 20-night residency by British pop star Sam Smith Feb. 10 to March 14.

Photos by John Ferrannini

Apparently, a worn film copy of the 1994 film had been played that night. Later, a screening of the 2025 BDSM romance *Pillion* had no complaints about the sound, Perry said.

APE spent over \$40 million on the renovation and restoration of the theater after the Outside Lands producers took over management in 2022. The project caused controversy because it remade the space into a multi-use venue. Castro and film activists had lobbied the city to landmark and keep the fixed orchestra-level seats from the early 2000s, to no avail.

Instead, the orchestra level has removable seating on motorized, tiered platforms. The seats are in place when films are being shown but are removed

for concerts.

There are about 150 fewer seats in the new incarnation, Conde noted, in order to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The theater also features movable concession stands, new restrooms, an elevator, and refurbished lighting fixtures and artwork, including a 1937 art deco chandelier restored by the original manufacturer.

During the renovation, while removing a movie screen that had been added when widescreen-aspect ratios were the rage in the 1950s, workers discovered an ornate structure that had framed the theater's original 1922 screen. The elaborate, gold-painted proscenium arch has been completely restored, as have most other elements of the landmark building, designed by San Francisco architect Timothy Pflueger.

Conde said inches of soot and nicotine residue have been painstakingly removed from the art and plasterwork in the theater, and the ceiling now looks like "an Arabic tent with a beautiful silk scarf."

Celebrating a Milestone

There was one other item complicating the renovation this past year. The Nasser family, which stills owns the building containing the theater and two tenants—a coffee shop and nail salon

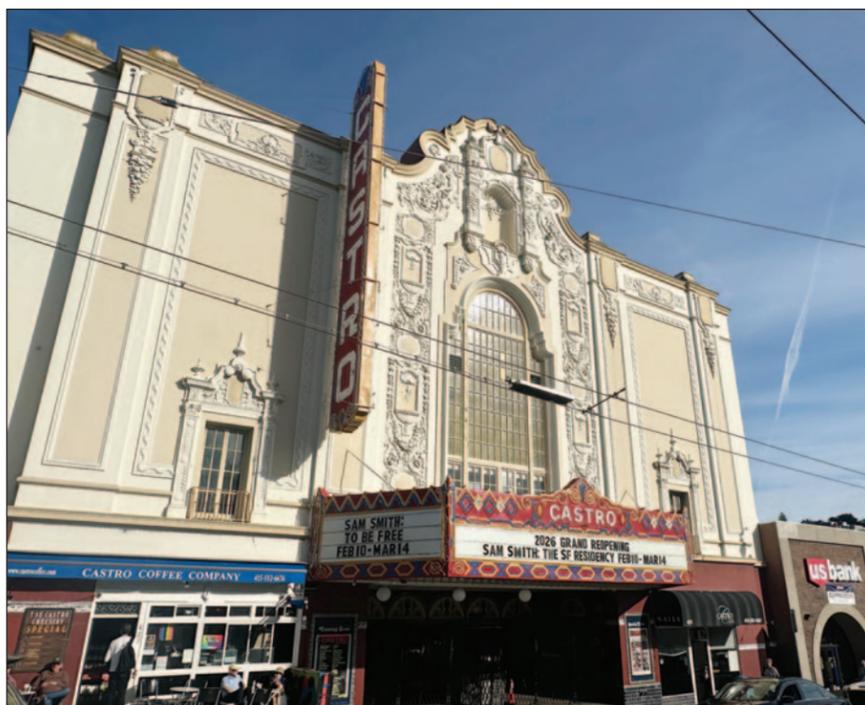
on either side of the entrance—had asked the two smaller businesses to leave. But they and their neighborhood supporters fought for them to stay.

In a deal reached just days before the theater's reopening, Castro Nail Salon and Castro Coffee Company agreed to move to two new locations, one on the same block and the other within a block away. Board of Supervisors President Rafael Mandelman, who as District 8 supervisor represents the Castro and Noe Valley, and Mayor Daniel Lurie were involved with the landlord and the businesses in negotiating the agreement.

At the Castro's official ribbon-cutting before the *Priscilla* screening, Lurie touted the reopening of the theater as a major milestone in the city's comeback from the Covid pandemic.

"For generations, the Castro Theatre has been a symbol of pride for San Francisco's LGBTQ+ community and our entire city," Lurie stated.

"Reopening its doors will honor the theatre's legacy and allow it to continue bringing people together for generations to come. I applaud APE for their renovation of this historic landmark that will help fuel the Castro's nightlife and drive foot traffic to surrounding small businesses. I am thrilled to celebrate its reopening." ■



The Spanish baroque façade and other features of the building designed in 1922 by Timothy Pflueger have been restored in today's \$41 million renovation of the Castro Theatre.

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Resurrection Service
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- San Francisco Police in a non-emergency 415-553-0123
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- District 8 Community Safety Liaison (SFPD) Dave.Burke@sfgov.org
- Graffiti, fallen trees, street cleaning (DPW) 3-1-1 or zerograffiti@sfdpw.org . . . 415-695-2017
- Homeless Services: Street Outreach Services (SOS) medical care 415-355-2250
- Lost or Injured Animals: Animal Care & Control emergency dispatch 415-554-9400
- Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services sfmayor.org 415-554-7111
- NERT Neighborhood Emergency Response Team sfndert@sfgov.org. 415-970-2022 or 2024
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- Pothole Repairs potholes@sfdpw.org **3-1-1** or 415-554-5810
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- Rent Board San Francisco phone counseling 415-252-4600
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 —Alice Walker, novelist, poet, activist (1944)

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Wachter Tip: Try Walking, Then AI

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

wear a mask at work when I see patients, because many of them are immuno-compromised and particularly vulnerable. But I generally don't wear a mask. I'll get an airplane tomorrow and won't wear a mask.

I do get boosters when my time is up for them, because I believe that they're safe and generally effective, in the same way I get a flu shot every year.

If someone doesn't want to get another Covid booster, nor ever wear a mask again, I think that's okay. You're putting yourself at a little bit higher risk than I am, for not getting the shot, but assuming you've had the vaccines before, and assuming (like almost everybody) you've had Covid before, the risk is relatively low.

Voice: *With national figures like HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. questioning the value of vaccines, some people are worried they will lose access to both the Covid and flu shots in the future. How do you respond to their concerns?*

Wachter: What's going on with the federal policy on vaccines is insane. It makes no sense scientifically and has the potential to set us back decades.

Until we have different leadership, or the leadership changes the way it thinks about vaccines, vaccines are at risk—and not only the ones we have today. If they take away liability coverage for the vaccine manufacturers, we could see major backsliding in terms of our ability to come up with new vaccines. So, I share the same concerns. Where this goes is anybody's guess. My guess is it ends up in the courts.

Voice: *There was a recent outbreak of tuberculosis at Archbishop Riordan High School in San Francisco. Should we be taking any precautions against this very old disease?*

Wachter: We see cases of TB sporadically, often in immigrants from places where TB is more prevalent. I worry when we see an uptick in TB that it will become weaponized and become part of the narrative against immigration in the United States.

These days, most people who get diagnosed with TB can be treated. Most people who are exposed to someone with TB can be tested for it, and there are treatments to prevent it becoming an infection, but it's still worrisome.

The fact that we've heard about a handful of cases probably should make you a little more concerned. If you are on the bus or at a bar and someone is sitting there coughing, they can have 100 different things and TB is one of them, though the chances that they're going to have TB are massively lower than a bacterial or a viral infection.

If I had a new cough, would I worry about or be tested for TB? Absolutely not. If I knew I was exposed to someone who had active TB, would I get tested for it and potentially take preventive treatment? Yes, I would do that.

Voice: *We have so much health advice available now, through both traditional media and social media channels. What sources do you trust for health information?*

Wachter: It's gotten harder to figure out what's legitimate news and what is either slanted or misinformation.

What do I trust? I read a whole lot of medical journals and syntheses of medical journal news on sites like Stat,



Robert Wachter, M.D., is the author of *A Giant Leap: How AI Is Transforming Healthcare and What That Means for Our Future*, published in February by Penguin Random House.

Axios, and others. I trust the medical literature. I trust the guidelines of respected medical societies. I trust UCSF. I feel comfortable putting questions into the latest versions of GPT [chatbots like ChatGPT]. They're smarter than anything we've had before in terms of online access to information.

But if you have what we consider to be red flags—severe chest pain, acute onset of shortness of breath, or if one side of your body is weak, or if you are confused and that's not a normal condition for you—you should shut the computer and go see a doctor.

Voice: *We are hearing a lot about doctors using AI medical "scribes" to document visits with patients.*

Wachter: At UCSF, we all have access to AI scribes. They are quite good and wildly popular among physicians. A lot of patients have noticed that their doctors are actually making eye contact and listening to them rather than being grumpy data-entry clerks.

The OpenEvidence [a clinical decision support platform] by a San Francisco company has essentially become the default knowledge base, a "curbside consult" in my pocket, meaning if I have a question for a specialist but it's not big enough to call them in, this tool, which is essentially just like GPT but built for doctors, gives me answers that are mostly correct and useful. It also gives me access to links to the literature of where the answer came from. That has been pretty transformative and may be the most important use of AI in day-to-day health care.

Voice: *With AI, what will happen to the annual office visit with your doctor? Will this disappear?*

Wachter: When you look at the life of a primary care doctor today, it is impossible. One study showed that if a primary care doctor spent all of his or her time doing guideline-appropriate preventive activity for all of their patients, it would take nearly 27 hours a day.

Over time, primary care doctors are going to be taking care of patients with multiple chronic illnesses who are pretty sick. If you have multiple diseases, are on lots of different medicines, or have a new diagnosis of something that's really scary and anxiety-provoking, I don't think you want to have a discussion with a bot. But the basic management of your blood pressure, your cholesterol, your weight—maybe even your diabetes—will be done increasingly through AI.

Voice: *Highlight one or two core messages from your book A Giant Leap.*

Wachter: I work at one of the great healthcare organizations in the world. The people are fabulous, work really hard, and are highly ethical. Yet it's

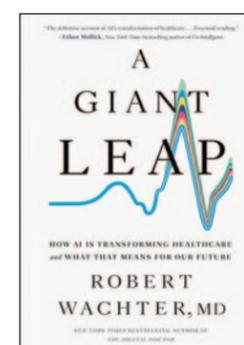
next few years to try to ease that, but it's hard to find them. We're going to have to not only pay them better but also make their working conditions better. AI will help.

Voice: *If you could advise one health habit that Noe Valley residents could adopt right now that would have a big impact on their longevity, what would it be?*

Wachter: More walking. We're in a beautiful part of the city with lots of beautiful places to walk and people should take advantage of it.

A second thing is that new weight-loss medicines [GLP-1s] can help if you are overweight and have had a hard time taking the weight off ... or maybe you are struggling with pre-diabetes or diabetes. These medicines are amazingly effective and relatively safe. The evidence is crystal clear that you can lose 10, 15, or 20 percent of your weight—though if you go off the medication you are back to your baseline weight within months. I wish it wasn't so.

The good news is, if the idea of taking a shot once a week is off-putting, there's now an alternative of taking a pill every day. And the pills are going to get better and easier to take as well. It's going to be a little less onerous to take this medicine for your whole life. ■



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Fury Fun at the Town Square.

Photo by Sally Smith



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Slow Sanchez Sees Garden Grow in '26

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

out from the global health crisis, and the slow street designation has become a permanent feature.

In December of last year, the friends group invited local residents—or anyone, for that matter—to take a 5-minute digital survey on how they were using Slow Sanchez and what types of projects they would like to see along it.

Nearly 240 people responded, and the results were posted online in January at www.slowsanchez.com. (See 2025 Community Survey Results.)

“We put out the survey just to understand how the neighbors we are serving feel about Slow Sanchez and how they are utilizing Slow Sanchez,” said Dana Rosenberg, who became the group’s vice chair in November. “We also asked them what opportunities they wanted to see more of.”

According to the group’s 2025 survey results, 43 percent of the respondents lived within a block of Slow Sanchez and another 32 percent lived within three blocks. Twelve percent lived on Sanchez Street.

Almost three quarters (70%) of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 44 years old. A fifth (19%) were in the 45 to 64 age bracket. Five percent were 65 or older.

Nearly 60 percent said they were part of a family with children at home. Couples accounted for another 23 percent and singles 10 percent.

Rosenberg, a resident of Noe Street the last four years, said the survey takers were clear about one thing. Nearly everyone (97%) said they wanted to keep Slow Sanchez, and 91 per-

cent said they felt it made the neighborhood more vibrant and added value to their daily lives.

Most people, at 68 percent of respondents, said they walked or ran on Sanchez three or more times a week. Forty-two percent said they used it to commute daily via bike or by walking.

What’s Not to Like?

Asked what Slow Sanchez programs interested them most, the survey takers gave enthusiastic support (76%) to events like festivals, block parties, and volunteer workdays; and to having street amenities like trash bins and seating (75%). They also expressed approval for landscaping and tree maintenance (71%), as well as new murals or rotating art exhibits (65%).

Slightly fewer people but still more than half (59%) gave a thumbs-up to safety measures, such as signage, traffic monitoring, or a neighborhood watch group. Over half (55%) endorsed events for children and families, like story times, bike days, and meet-ups for various age groups.

Chess Play and Fix-It Days

The survey respondents also offered more than 100 suggestions when asked to give their own event or community-building ideas.

“I was surprised by the breadth of creativity with some of the responses there,” said Rosenberg, who got involved with the friends group last summer when helping to repaint the “Love Our City!” mural by Amos Goldbaum on Sanchez near 24th Street.

In response to the survey, Rosenberg said, many people called for setting up tables on the street so they could play board games or chess together. Several others suggested having a clothing swap or flea market, or a fix-it day

where people could get help repairing broken household items.

“Because dogs and pets are big in our neighborhood, many folks suggested events around pets,” said Rosenberg, such as parades where people could dress up their pets in costumes.

More Bike Tutoring?

The survey results page at slowsanchez.com lists more ideas, such as plant swaps and crafts fairs; bringing in food trucks or organizing outdoor potlucks; and staging games like street hockey and ping-pong.

Kid-friendly ideas included bike-learning events, outdoor movies, bouncy houses, and educational fairs focused on school subjects like science and math.

“We are in the process of making sense of all this great feedback, so we can implement a calendar of events that reflects the activities folks want,” said Rosenberg.

A recent Friends of Slow Sanchez email newsletter said popular events coming back in 2026 would include Chalk-a-Block Saturdays, last-Friday Happy Hours, the Block Party (on May 16 this year), and the Halloween Stroll.

The email also announced that Brooke Ray “B.R.” Demko would take over as chair of the group’s steering committee.

Demko, who has lived in the neighborhood for 15 years and at Noe and 29th for three, points out that she and Rosenberg are standing on the shoulders of group founders Chris Keene and Yuko Shah, as well as Andrew Casteel, Maricar Lagura, Raphael Burde, Cat Crockett, Steve Wreb, and Trey Guinn.

Many of them will lend advice or pitch in again this year, alongside new team members Emme Klama, Chris Roblee, and Bill Romer, said Demko.



Photo by Jack Tipple

Still, Friends of Slow Sanchez would welcome “a few more doers.” If interested, contact Demko at info@slowsanchez.com.

The Center of the Garden Tour

The group also has teamed up with the Friends of Noe Valley to co-sponsor the organization’s 20th-anniversary Noe Valley Garden Tour, taking place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 16. It will focus on gardens along or near Sanchez Street, with the event proceeds going toward Slow Sanchez’s 2026 Sidewalk Gardens greening initiative.

Anyone who lives on or near Sanchez with a garden that’s easily accessible and who wants to participate in the garden tour should email Linda Lockyer with the Friends of Noe Valley at lindalockyer3@gmail.com.

“Garden submissions are open now for the May 2026 tour. Let’s show off the beauty growing right here around our favorite Slow Street!” notes the neighborhood association on its website at friendsofnoevalley.com. ■



Scavenger Sunset: After a hard day’s work on Church Street, three ravens find peace on Bernal Hill.

Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

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As the rains fell last month and the grass turned a bright kelly green on Billy Goat Hill, we thought of a story the Noe Valley Voice published in March 2008, sharing a great-grandmother's memories of growing up part of an Irish immigrant family a decade or so after San Francisco's Great Earthquake. We hope you enjoy revisiting Agnes Farrell and her childhood in Noe Valley. We did.

Agnes Farrell Shares Memories of An Irish Noe Valley

By Joshua Brandt

The Noe Valley that Agnes Farrell grew up in during the 1920s bears little resemblance to the Noe Valley of 2008. Children skated down streets without fear of automobiles. Horse-drawn buggies still made their rounds. And a full-day trolley ride cost a nickel. Also, the recycling was more thorough.

"About once a week, the rags, bottles, and sack man came door to door, shouting for people to throw down their empties," says Farrell, who has lived in Noe Valley for all but two of her 91 years.

Farrell, accompanied by daughter Monica Curran, will be among the panelists at a March 10 [2008] forum at St. Paul's Parish Center. The event, called "The Noe Valley Irish," is part of the 2008 Crossroads Irish-American Festival and will be an evening of reminiscing and storytelling by longtime neighborhood residents.

Farrell, who was born on Perry Street in the South of Market Area, moved to Noe Valley in 1918, to the family's house at 1316 Sanchez St. Her parents scraped together enough money to buy

the house outright after renting it for several years. The price? \$2,600.

"Well, I guess times have changed," says Farrell with a laugh, noting that her family sold the house in 1964 for \$9,000, and that it has recently sold again for upwards of a million dollars.

Both of Farrell's parents were Irish immigrants, and her dad was in San Francisco for the 1906 earthquake. He often regaled the family with stories of watching the city burn from a perch atop the Noe Street hill.

According to Farrell, the Noe Valley of the 1920s and '30s was predominantly a working-class neighborhood of Irish- and Italian-Americans, with a lot of overlap. There were small grocery stores on every corner, where the shopkeepers knew your name—and your parents' names, should any child get involved in mischief.

Wonzod's was the place for candy "and other necessities," according to Farrell, and Marguerite's was the local ice cream shop. The local butcher gave all the local kids slices of baloney, and the hairstylist worked out of her home a few doors down from the Farrell residence.

Children played "hickey" on the sidewalks, where they skated with one leg in the gutter and the other leg extended. The more adventurous of the children hitched a ride on the produce truck, and would continue on their merry way until the driver started pelting them with potatoes.

The Irish neighborhood was tightly knit in those days, and the mere fact of living in Noe Valley gave one a sense of community.

"I remember all the Irish dances at the Knights of the Red Branch at Seventh and Mission and at the Irish-American Hall at 15th and Valencia," recalls Farrell. "We'd do dances like



Eighteen years ago, Agnes Farrell took time to reminisce with the Voice about her nine decades in Noe Valley. She and other Irish descendents also spoke at a forum held at St. Paul's Parish Center.. Photo by Beverly Sharp

the Stack of Barley, the Hornblower, and the Highlander all night long."

According to Farrell, it cost a mere five cents to take the streetcars to the Beach Chalet to see the Irish hurlers and Gaelic football contests.

The nonagenarian fondly recalls many after-match parties at her Sanchez Street home, where the cops often came by at two in the morning to request a little peace and quiet.

"It was always a great party," reminisces Farrell. "Our next-door neighbor, Bill O'Dwyer, would play the fiddle, everyone would be dancing, and there were always versions of 'When Irish Eyes Are Smiling,' which got more off-key as the night wore on."

Families were large in those days—seven children were the norm, Farrell says. "One of our neighbors had three children, and that was thought to be odd."

Farrell and her late husband, Alvin, a longtime milk deliveryman who was profiled in an (unpublished) *Life* magazine piece, raised nine children in a house they bought on Army Street [3965 Cesar Chavez St.] in 1956.

The family matriarch now has 22 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. Her daughters, just like Farrell, attended schools in St. Paul's Parish, where they received the honorarium "filiae-filia" (literally, "daughter of the daughter").

"Sure, the neighborhood has changed," concedes Farrell. "But some of my neighbors have been here for longer than I have, so we still have a great sense of community."

And when pressed, Farrell says she still can't resist tapping her toes to traditional Irish music. Asked if she plans to demonstrate any of her moves at the March event, Farrell demurs.

"I don't think so. But you never know...the mood might hit me." ■

St. Paul School Principal Jackie Curran was kind enough to give us this update:

"My mom is Monica Curran, and we lived with my grandparents for my childhood. Unfortunately, my grandmother [Agnes Keane Farrell] passed in 2009, and the family home [at 3965 Cesar Chavez] was sold. My parents moved to Petaluma. I am the only relative still living in Noe Valley, and I work at the school that Agnes and Monica attended, St. Paul's... Although the family has moved out of the city, there are 5 (of 9) children, 22 grandchildren, and 36 great-grandchildren" living today.

Thank you, and best wishes to all.

What's in Your Quake Kit?

Sally Smith / Illustrations by Karol Barske

Are you ready for the next earthquake, wildfire, or health emergency? Consider the things you might need in order to live for a week without water or electricity.

Below is a list of items for your home preparedness kit or "Go Bag," suggested by the San Francisco Fire Department's Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT).

NERT holds community-based training programs in basic preparedness and disaster response skills. To find out more, go to the SF-fire.org/NERT website or call 415-970-2024 (the NERT class hotline).

Water: One gallon per person to last 3 to 5 days. (Use bleach to purify it, 2 to 4 drops per quart.)

Food for 3 to 5 days, such as canned or dried soups, beans, juice.

Cooking Supplies: A grill or camp stove, utensils, matches, can opener, foil, plastic wrap, garbage bags.

Clothing: Light and heavy layers for all, stored to stay dry. Include a pair of shoes and gloves.

Safety: Flashlight, radio, batteries, rope, knife, scissors, fire extinguisher, wrench to shut off utilities.

Supplies such as cash, house or car keys, pencil and paper, i.d. cards, insurance info, maps.

Hygiene: Waterless soap, toilet paper, shampoo, toothbrush, sanitary supplies.

Special items for children, the elderly, or people with disabilities.

Shelter: Tent, sleeping bags.

Medical: First-aid kit, medications, KN95 masks, extra pair of glasses.

Pet Supplies, such as food, water, leash, medications, and carrier.

Checklist for the 'Go Bag'

It never hurts to have a "go bag" at home or work or in your car.

- Sturdy shoes
- Flashlight, whistle
- Glasses
- Crank or battery radio
- Food and water
- Cash (\$100 in small bills)
- Basic first-aid, medications
- Change of clothes
- Toilet paper, hand sanitizer
- Big trash bag, mylar blanket
- Copy of driver's license
- Paper, pencil, family or pet photos, important documents

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NOE The Valley Voice

24th STREET IS A GREAT PLACE TO DO ANYTHING

We Begin

BY DAVID SNYDER

If you live in Noe Valley, no matter if you moved here yesterday or 30 years ago, you probably have wondered what makes this area so remarkably unique. Most residents consider Noe Valley a "dream realized" neighborhood after having lived elsewhere in highly touted, so-called communities. Residents here actually care for and take an interest in the lives and concerns of each other. There is a pride in the neighborhood and its neighbors.

NOE VALLEY. WHAT IS IT? WHY DO WE LIVE HERE? WHO ARE WE?

Noe Valley does not have a homogeneous population; in fact we are a microcosm of the City. We are the professionals, the shopkeepers, the artists, the laborers, the politicians, and a diverse mixture of ages, colors and life styles. Perhaps this is why Noe Valley is unique in a city whose hallmark is the expression of individuality. Noe Valley is, and will remain to be, primarily a long term residential community. We are a population with dreams, opinions, ideas, creativity, and concerns. We are a community struggling with change, yet we are highly stable.

Idle Chatter:

"Wouldn't it be great if we had a newspaper—a forum to express our beliefs, to explore our history?"

Too often ideas of this sort are unrealized. This time the idea has become concrete. The NOE VALLEY VOICE is born.

Noe Valley, we have discovered, is the home of many talented writers and artists waiting for a medium to present their work. This issue was conceived and produced in less than a month. Our advertisers have all responded with excitement at the opportunity to advertise their shops and services in a paper geared to the local needs.

Articles planned for future issues include a multi-part history of Noe Valley, District 5 politics, the high cost of home buying, crime, reviews of shops, restaurants and services, sports and activities, interviews with residents who are significant to the history and development of the area, a multi-part article on the business associations, and a community open forum.

This paper is conceived as a Community forum to meet the needs of our neighborhood. Our objectives are fourfold:

- 1) To provide news and information on the businesses, services, and individuals in Noe Valley.
- 2) To document our history in an area individual and integral to the city of San Francisco.
- 3) To provide a forum for the residents of Noe Valley to express their opinions of what the neighborhood could and should be.
- 4) To provide a medium for poets, writers and artists to publish their work.

If we are to continue this effort we need your help. We need your interests and opinions in the form of articles, statements, stories, poems, drawings and photographs. We need your financial support in the form of advertising and contributions. We believe that Noe Valley is capable of supporting a community newspaper. That is why we have come this far. To date, the response has been nothing but encouraging.

In order for the Noe Valley Voice to become a responsive community newspaper, we need your ideas and articles. In our second issue we will begin the Community Crosstalk column. Community Crosstalk will be an open dialogue to present your stand on any of the issues relevant to developing or protecting lifestyles.

We intend to continue free distribution of this paper. This issue has been partially financed by advertisers with the balance paid for by the staff. We sincerely hope that you will agree with us that the Noe Valley Voice is a viable adventure and will join us.

Our advertising rates are nominal. Our anticipated circulation is 3000 copies which will be distributed primarily in Noe Valley and the rest of District Five. Discounts will be given for both pre-payment and multi-issue contracts.

These are our beginnings. We are proud of this issue and look forward to serving the needs of our neighborhood and the individuals living here. We hope that you enjoy our maiden effort and provide feedback on how we can better suit your needs and be more responsive to the community.

City Curbs Business On 24th Street

BY COREY MICHAELS

William Murphy, a one-time tough nose San Francisco cop who turned in his badge for a doctorate, was cruising the second floor of City Hall waiting for the chance to use his courtroom histrionics against those Noe Valley anti-business upstarts. Murphy was born and grew up in Noe Valley. He hadn't lived in Noe Valley for 23 years, but he still owned the property that's leased to the Finnegan's Wake watering hole, and he wasn't going to let any change in the zoning laws hurt his moneymaker without a helluva good fight.

There were a hundred or so other people waiting to testify on a proposal before the Planning Commission that would control the growth of new business on 24th street. All they could do was mill around, discussing the proposal, because the planning commission was running later than the J Church. The more Murphy waited, the more he found himself being swayed by the arguments in favor of the proposal. By the time the public hearing got underway two and one-half hours late, Murphy was firmly in the "enemies" camp.

"I was talking to my childhood chums, who are still living in Noe Valley", Murphy said. "They want Noe Valley to remain stable. They don't want the noise and pollution and the traffic jams." What they don't want is for the 24th Street strip to become Union Street.

Those upstarts that initially scared Murphy were the Noe Valley Neighbors for Actions, Friends of Noe Valley, and the East and West of Castro Improvement Association. In February, they had petitioned the Planning Commission for a downzoning reclassification that would slow the rapid growth of shops swarming into the area. Without the change, Noe Valley would lose its unique neighborhood character.

Twenty-fourth street is a blend of ground floor bars, restaurants, groceries, and specialized, neighborhood oriented shops. The second and third floors of the buildings are residential apartments.

The Valley's uniqueness poses a paradox. The area currently is zoned C-2, which allows a wide range of

Continued on Page 7

Seems like it's been forever! We've been helping to nourish and support community in the best neighborhood in San Francisco.

Good Vibes and Good Spirits

After being washed out twice by winter storms, the popular **Noe Valley Night Market** at the Town Square is set to return this month—hopefully with clear skies.

The free event, on Tuesday, March 31, from 5 to 8 p.m., will bring music, local food, retail vendors, and a mobile bar to the neighborhood gathering spot.

“We are excited to be back in full force in March,” said Kathryn Gianaras, vice president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, which sponsors the event.

Jazz singer Lambert Moss will emcee and perform along with guest vocalists beneath the Town Square canopy of strung lights, Gianaras said.

Food tents will include Casa Mexicana, Novy, and Kingpin Katsu, a pop-up known for Japanese-style crispy fried chicken that has become a Night Market favorite. The Valley Tavern bar and partner Vibe Events will serve cocktails, beer, and wine from Vibe’s mobile van.

Three weeks later, on Thursday, April 23, the merchants will host another spirited event: the **Noe Valley Spring Wine Walk**, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Grab a glass for the tastings and visit two dozen participating shops and restaurants along 24th Street from Dolores to Douglass streets.

And what do you get for the \$40 entry fee? “It gets you really drunk if you go to all of the people serving wine for three hours,” Gianaras joked. “But it gets you a ton of tastes.”

Each business will decide which wines to pour—everything from cabernets and merlots to chardonnays and pinot grigios. At least two wineries will pour at the Town Square, 3861 24th St.

Wine lovers can buy tickets, get a map, and pick up glasses at two check-in points: the Town Square and the parking lot across from the Valley Tavern, at 4054 24th St.

To learn more about the Night Market or to reserve a Wine Walk glass, visit www.noemerchants.com.

—Corrie M. Anders

Bohemian Women of Russian Hill

In honor of **Women’s History Month**, the volunteer docents of San Francisco City Guides are leading a walking tour that explores the lives of unconventional women who helped shape San Francisco’s cultural history.

The free tour, “Bohemians and Other Unconventional Women,” winds through the steep streets and stairways of Russian Hill, long known as a refuge for artists, writers, and free spirits.

Along the way, guides share stories of women who made their mark in art, literature, sports, and photography. Among them are tennis champion—and wartime spy—Alice Marble, literary figure Fanny Stevenson, and pioneering photographers Dorothea Lange and Imogen Cunningham, both associated with the San Francisco Art Institute.

Among the guides are two Noe Valley residents, Cathie Staley and Laurel Turner, who helped develop the tour with fellow docents Donna McCartney and Julie Newbold. Together they aim to bring overlooked stories to life and make local history engaging and accessible.

“Rather than focusing on dates and dry facts, the tour centers on storytelling—revealing the challenges, creativity, and courage of women who lived boldly,” says Staley.

The walk covers about six city blocks and takes roughly 75 to 90 minutes, beginning at the base of the steps

SHORT TAKES



Tennis star—and wartime spy—Alice Marble is a featured “Bohemian Woman” on a SF City Guides walking tour.

Photo courtesy Cathie Staley, sfcityguides.org

leading to the Alice Marble Tennis Courts at Greenwich and Hyde streets and ending at Francisco Park.

Tours are scheduled at noon or 1 p.m. on March 7, 8, 13, 20, and 22 (and April 3), with various guides leading the walks. The route includes some of Russian Hill’s steepest grades, so sturdy shoes are recommended.

The tours fill up fast, so reservations are suggested. To sign up, visit the City Guides website, sfcityguides.org.

UNN Meets on March 18

All are invited to attend the next meeting of Upper Noe Neighbors on Wednesday, March 18, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Upper Noe Recreation Center, 295 Day St.

UNN President Chris Faust alerts us that several speakers and a board election are on the agenda.

State Assemblymember **Matt Haney** will discuss new legislation and provide a “big-picture perspective” on developments in SF and across California.

Police Captain **Gerry Newbeck** of Ingleside Station—which covers Upper Noe—will give an update on public safety and answer questions from residents and merchants.

Tatiana Mercier, community engagement coordinator for Community Boards, will speak about ways neighbors and businesses can resolve disputes through mediation. The nonprofit has provided conflict-resolution services in San Francisco since 1976.

With its fiscal year ending in March 2026, Upper Noe Neighbors will elect new officers whose term starts in April. Members who are current on their dues

will get their ballots by email.

The meeting will also include a discussion of UNN’s goals for 2026, including such things as street improvements and “placemaking”—a term used for projects that enhance public spaces and a sense of community. To add a festive note, a local merchant will contribute a door prize for a lucky attendee.

To find out more, email Faust at hello@uppernoeneighbors.com.

Of Victorians and Tomatoes

Two upcoming talks promise to draw bushels of locals to the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library.

First, on Saturday, March 28, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., historian Rob Thomson will give a “Presentation on **Noe Valley Victorians**.” Thomson, a past president of the Victorian Alliance of San Francisco, will explore the architectural history that gives many Noe Valley blocks their distinctive charm.

The illustrated talk will also revisit highlights from the Victorian Alliance’s popular 2024 Noe Valley house tour, sharing photos and stories about several historic homes, including the 1877 William Axford House at 1190 Noe St.

Thomson, who was trained as an archaeologist and preservation planner, manages historic preservation and cultural resources for the Presidio Trust.

Then, on Saturday, April 11, from 2 to 3 p.m., you can turn your focus from old houses to thriving plants by attending a demonstration of “**Growing Vibrant Tomatoes in Containers**.”

UC Master Gardeners Pat Kramer and Troy Weakley will share practical tips on container gardening—the kind that’s perfect for Noe Valley’s small yards, decks, and patios. The presenters will cover choosing containers, selecting soil, and picking tomato varieties (and vegetables) that grow well in pots.

Kramer, a retired oncology nurse who has gardened in Noe Valley for three decades, and Weakley, a lifelong gardener with a focus on pollinators, promise advice for both beginners and green thumbs. (Preview their tips in the April 2025 *Noe Valley Voice*.)

This program may take you out on the deck or into the garden at 451 Jersey St. For more information, call the Noe Valley branch at 415-355-5707.

March Beats at the Square

March brings a mix of music, movement, and fun to the Noe Valley Town Square, with four free events designed to get people grooving, singing, and dancing.

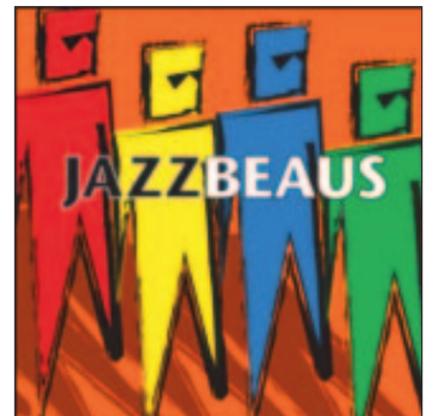
Things kick off Sunday, March 8,

from 1 to 3 p.m., with a **Community Music Hangout**, an informal jam session open to players and singers of all levels. Bring an instrument—or just your ears—and join the circle for a laid-back afternoon of shared tunes.

On Saturday, March 14, from 7 to 9:30 p.m., the plaza turns into a glowing dance floor for the **Noe Valley Silent Disco**. Stoked by the Disco Zaddies, the all-ages, come-as-you-are dance party offers wireless headsets streaming disco classics to modern electronic dance music. Pick your groove and show off your moves—prizes will be awarded for disco style and trivia champs.

Next up, Saturday, March 21, from 4 to 5 p.m., the popular **Rhythm & Motion Dance Workout** returns with a high-energy session focused on health and well-being. No dance experience required—just bring your enthusiasm.

The month wraps up on a jazzy note



The Jazz Beaus play Latin jazz and pop standards on piano, trumpet, and steel pans at Music in the Square March 22, 1 p.m.

Sunday, March 22, from 1 to 3 p.m., when the **Jazz Beaus** take the stage. Led by Tom Donald, the group blends classics with Latin favorites and island rhythms on piano, trumpet, and steel pans for a lively Sunday soundtrack.

All events are free. So be there *and* be Square, at 3861 24th St. Or look for more at noevalleytownsquare.com.

J-Church Track Work Ahead

Neighbors near Duncan and Church streets may notice some daytime noise and traffic redirection over the next two weeks as crews repair the rail bed for the Muni Metro J-Church line.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency plans maintenance work at the intersection March 9 through March 20, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily. Crews will remove and repave the concrete foundation beneath the rails and repair the street base next to the track area.

The work is intended to stabilize the tracks, reduce noise, and extend the life of the rail line, according to the agency.

Transit riders can relax: no service disruptions are expected for the J-Church line during the project.

Drivers and nearby residents should expect some temporary changes, however. During work hours, drivers on Duncan Street may make right turns only onto Church Street, with flaggers directing vehicles. Through traffic on Church will continue with assistance from flaggers, while Duncan Street between Dolores and Sanchez streets will be limited to local traffic only.

Some parking spaces on Duncan and Church will also be restricted, though overnight parking will be restored between 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 a.m.

For more details, contact public information officer John Gravener at 415-646-4784.

Unless otherwise noted, this month’s Short Takes were written by Sally Smith, with just a little help from AI.



The San Francisco Art Institute attracted two famous Bohemian women in the 1940s, Imogen Cunningham and Dorothea Lange.

Ansel Adams photo courtesy sfcityguides.org

The Book, the Monsters, the Sally Brunn and the Librarian who saved Us

by Jane R. Wilson

It began in Crete, in Knossos, in the Minoan ruins, when a cocky stranger poked his nose in my fieldnotes. I pulled away, but not before he'd seen the primordial monsters I'd drawn. He called out the name of an Aegean Professor, a certain Spyro Spyropoulos, whose rare Bestiary of Monsters was a must.

Back home, in our Valley, back to my budding Medusa play, I found the Archaeopress edition of his book out-of-print. Even so, I longed for it. Alas, the San Francisco Main arranged an inter-library (LINK) loan for delivery to our local Sally Brunn branch. When the Professor's book arrived, I claimed it, then scurried home. In my Noe abode, I lifted its cover, where, to my horror, all manner of monsters, all Greek, flew from its pages to circle round, then pitch camp in my psyche.

Some slithered; some bit and that was it; others half-human played pipes to charm the unfortunate into the forest. And there was Cerberus, Hade's three-headed-hound, known for his savage welcome of unwelcome visitors.

Oh, what a wild bacchanalia of monstrous myth we all celebrated--until the book came due.

Now the monsters gnashed their terrible teeth when I tried to return them to their library of origin. They claimed to love life in our Valley. They planned on staying to colonize us to serve them forever. Even our cats and dogs.

Yikes! What had I wrought? Was I hooked? Maybe. Had they beguiled me? Maybe. Yet, to their credit, the monsters had brightened my mood. Their loathsome exploits had become my daily medicine. The best anti-depressants ever!

Who among us would throw stones at a rabble of monsters, intent on softening our nation's terrible terrible nightly news? Who knew shrieking Furies could soothe? Or that Sirens and Gorgons could delight?

Back then, the Gods and Furies had cosmic checks on evildoers. Imagine the grand flurry of claw, beak and searing yellow eyes serving the immorally unjust their just



desserts--while everyone shrieks!

Dear Neighbors, what I'm about to say is mostly true. It was a foggy Noe Sunday. A day best spent darnning or reading. But no. That day the library sent word:

"The Following LINK+ books are overdue. A fee of \$115 has been added to your account." Holy Smoke! No overdue notes, no warnings--and the library's going for my throat?

The next line outranked the first: "Your borrowing privileges are currently suspended." Suspended? No way! Books are my

food. Already I'm starving...

You may have seen me scurrying up 26th toward the Sally Brunn wearing jeans, a waistcoat, a messenger-boy hat and Blundstones? As I rounded Jersey--a street rife with life-altering sidewalk cracks--I read a quote from Strabo, the Greek philosopher:

"...Since mythical narrations with monsters do not cause only pleasure, but they also cause fear...we offer the myths to children...to urge them towards good, the scary ones...to avert them from evildoing."

Evildoing? Yikes! How had I come to this? What if...our Noe Librarians--ever kind, and patient and helpful--have some "in" with...the Furies?

Talk about seeing a mirror reflecting a monster returning a monster book. Was this my fate?

At the library, I tip-toed up Sally's marble steps, battling errant claws and shrieks trying to flee-- until the Librarian caught my eye. Was she waiting for me? I whispered humbly, "I am a monster returning a monster book. It is twelve-days overdue."

The librarian had this feral streak of pink hair, which she twisted, not amused nor alarmed. The book's LINK papers? she requested. When I had none, her long finger pointed to Sally's exit sign. I was to go get them. Closing time was imminent.

By now it was cooler, windier. Restless branches, bare, scraped the sky--one, a low-hanger, gouged my cheek. Ha ha, I laughed, but...what were those shadowy things above the library's stacks? And did they not flock to the librarian upon seeing me?

At home I found the LINK papers, no sweat--yet upon my return, a forlorn whimper ensued. I looked for a dog in a window but saw none.

Alas, the Librarian took my return, reversed the \$115, and gave me a wink. As she masterfully wrestled the monster's mournful claws, beaks and shrieks into their LINK papers, I felt blue. Already I missed them.

I've not heard a shriek since. But yesterday, as I reached in my pocket, I found a tiny nest, then felt a sharp nip. My fingers bled. Take care, dear neighbors...

Jane R. Wilson is an artist and writer, inspired by myth, folk and fairy tales and her own ordinary magic. She has lived in Noe Valley for eons.

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The Cost of Living in Noe

Slowest January on Record

By Corrie M. Anders

A lack of homes for sale, coupled with a scarcity of shoppers, created an oddity early this year that Noe Valley has not seen in decades.

Only two residential properties sold in the neighborhood during January, according to data that Corcoran Icon Real Estate provides monthly to the *Noe Valley Voice*.

One sale was an elegant midcentury single-family home on Newburg Street. The other was a ground-floor condominium in a new 13-unit building on San Jose Avenue.

January typically is a slow month. But there has never been a January with so few home sales, as far as the *Voice* logs go, dating back to 1999.

“It was a quiet month,” acknowledged Christine Lopatowski, manager of Corcoran Icon’s 24th Street office. “I was a little surprised.”

That surprise led Lopatowski to double-check her numbers and search for answers.

She found there were only three



This four-bedroom, three-bath midcentury home on Newburg Street fetched \$4,750,000 in a private, off-market sale. The property backs onto the Duncan-Castro Open Space.

detached homes on the market in Noe Valley in December—the month when buyers would have been lining up a deal to close in January.

According to industry standards, said Lopatowski, buyers would run through those three homes in 0.3 months, or about nine days, assuming the supply was not replenished. Compare that with December 2024, when seven homes were available. That supply would last 0.8 months, or about 24 days, without new listings.

“Keep in mind it was the holidays,” Lopatowski said. “So people were not putting properties on the market...and

there were fewer people looking.”

There was also what she called “seller hesitation.” Some homeowners in Noe Valley might have been reluctant to give up a 3 percent mortgage on their current residence to buy a home at today’s roughly 6 percent rate.

Despite the slim pickings, two buyers did take the plunge.

By paying \$4,750,000—13 percent more than the seller’s asking price—the would-be homeowner on Newburg Street snagged the property in a private off-market sale.

“They made an aggressive offer to lock it down,” Lopatowski said.

The four-bedroom, three-bath home, in the first block of Newburg near the intersection of Castro and 27th streets, abuts a large wooded area called the Duncan-Castro Open Space.

Built in 1949, the house was modern-

ized with a third-story addition in 2016, which enlarged the property to 2,612 square feet of living space. The top level offers an observation deck with sweeping views of the valley, the bay, and downtown San Francisco.

The home’s gourmet kitchen features marble countertops, stainless steel appliances, abundant light, and a gas fireplace. The property also offers an “au-pair” suite with kitchenette, a rear deck with a hot tub, and a two-car garage.

The other purchase in January was a 1,150-square-foot condominium in a three-story building in the 300 block of San Jose Avenue, between 25th and 26th streets. The development—which added nine new condos to a four-unit building originally built in 1900—was completed in 2025.

The two-bedroom, two-bath unit sold for its asking price of \$989,000.

Amenities included open living/dining and kitchen, hardwood floors, radiant heat, and a deeded terrace. But there was no parking space. ■



The only condominium sold in Noe Valley in January was a ground-floor unit in this 13-unit building on San Jose Avenue. The price was \$989,000 for the two-bedroom, two-bath residence. 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						
January 2026	1	\$4,750,000	\$4,750,000	\$4,750,000	0	113%
December 2025	4	\$2,400,000	\$4,850,000	\$2,955,000	17	102%
January 2025	6	\$1,611,100	\$3,775,000	\$2,500,350	18	109%
Condominiums/TICs						
January 2026	1	\$989,000	\$989,000	\$989,000	25	100%
December 2025	4	\$730,000	\$1,850,000	\$1,394,500	37	106%
January 2025	3	\$729,000	\$2,925,925	\$990,000	64	105%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
January 2026	0	—	—	—	—	—
December 2025	1	\$2,285,000	\$2,285,000	\$2,285,000	70	99%
January 2025	3	\$1,260,000	\$1,750,000	\$1,650,000	73	103%
5+-unit buildings						
January 2026	0	—	—	—	—	—
December 2025	1	\$2,825,000	\$2,825,000	\$2,825,000	18	98%
January 2025	0	—	—	—	—	—

*This survey includes all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley is loosely defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Noe Valley Voice* thanks Corcoran Icon Properties, San Francisco, for providing sales data. NW3/2026

Noe Valley Rents**

Unit	No. in Sample	Range February 2026	Average February 2026	Average Dec 2025–Jan 2026	Average February 2025
Studio	1	\$1,950 – \$1,950	\$1,950 / mo.	\$2,515 / mo.	\$2,400 / mo.
1-bdrm	10	\$2,350 – \$4,395	\$3,477 / mo.	\$3,678 / mo.	\$3,466 / mo.
2-bdrm	8	\$3,900 – \$7,500	\$5,409 / mo.	\$4,418 / mo.	\$4,117 / mo.
3-bdrm	3	\$3,200 – \$6,000	\$5,065 / mo.	\$6,170 / mo.	\$5,538 / mo.
4+-bdrm	1	\$12,499 – \$12,499	\$15,000 / mo.	\$15,000 / mo.	\$13,500 / mo.

** This survey is based on a sample of 23 Noe Valley rental listings appearing on Craigslist.org from Jan. 22 to Feb. 11, 2026. Last year in February 2025, there were 50 listings. NW3/2026



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March 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29: Free Sunday morning YOGA FLOW offers all-level classes; bring water and a mat. 11 am-noon. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

March 1-28: CREATIVITY Explored hosts a solo exhibition, "Color Field," by artist Hung Kei Shiu. Thurs. & Fri., 3-6 pm; Sat., noon-5 pm. 3245 16th. 863-2108; creativityexplored.org

March 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30: Toddler STORY-TIMES are Mondays, 11:15-11:45 am. Tickets available 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

March 2-30: Mamahuhu hosts MAHJONG Mondays from 6 to 9 pm. 3991 24th. 374-7012; eatmamahuhu.com

March 3-31: The BAR on Dolores offers free BINGO on Tuesdays, comedy on Thursdays, and mahjong on Saturdays, 8 pm. 1600 Dolores. 695-1745.

March 4: A BOOK PARTY at Bird & Beckett introduces Jan SOLLISH, author of *Simply Magical*, and Jackie Davis Martin discussing her *Life, Fictively*. 7 pm. 653 Chenery. 586-3733

March 5 & 19: New Thursday morning QIGONG classes run from 8 to 9 am. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

March 5, 12, 19 & 26: Family STORY-TIMES are Thursdays, 10:15 am and 11 am. Tickets for each are available at 10 and 10:30 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

March 6: Ring a HANDBELL at Bethany's "Ring Out Danger: People of Faith Opposed to Gun Violence." First Fri., 9:35-9:45 am. 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org

March 6: The Jinx Jones JAZZ TRIO performs at Bird & Beckett, at 6 pm. 653 Chenery. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com

March 6-27: Noe Valley RUN CLUB meets Fridays at Noe Cafe, 1299 Sanchez. 6:45 am for 4 miles, and 7:30 am for 2.5 miles. noevalleyrunclub.square.site

March 7: Make HERSTORY-themed buttons and play a women's history trivia game (ages 8 and up) at the Noe Valley Library. 2:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

March 7: The Chinese NEW YEAR PARADE features Grand Marshall Olympic

Medalist Eileen Gu. 5:15-7:30 pm. Starts at 2nd Street and Market, goes around Union Square, and ends at Kearny and Columbus.

March 7-28: The FARMERS MARKET has fresh produce, food, and music Saturdays, 8 am to 1 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

March 7-28: The NOE WALKS group springs into action on Saturdays. Meet at 24th and Sanchez 10 am.

March 7, 8, 13, 20 & 22: A free walking tour of Russian Hill called "Bohemians and Other Unconventional WOMEN," starts at Greenwich and Hyde at noon or 1 pm. Reserve at sfcityguides.org.

March 7 & 28: City Guides also offers a free WALKING TOUR of Noe Valley, led by Cathie and Paul Staley, and starting at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey, at 2 pm. Registration required: 375-0468; sfcityguides.org

March 8: Community MUSIC HANGOUT at the Town Square welcomes players and singers of all levels. 1-3 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

March 10: It's LEGO and Board Game Night at the Noe Valley Library. 6-7:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

March 11: The League of Women Voters, SF Women's Political Committee, and Real Reform SF host a community FORUM, "The Future of Independent Commissions in SF." 6-7:30 pm. Women's Building, 3543 18th St. lwvssf.org/calendar

March 12: Sana Javeri Kadri and Asha Loupy discuss *The Diaspora SPICE Co. Cookbook*. 6:30 pm. Omnivore Books on Food, 3885 Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

March 13: The Noe Valley Library screens the FILM *Nomadland*. 2-4 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

March 14: A SILENT DISCO dance party at the Noe Valley Town Square provides wireless headsets. 7-9:30 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

March 15: Volunteers for the monthly Noe Valley CLEANUP DAY meet at the Town Square to pick up supplies. 10 am-noon. 3861 24th. Refuse Refuse and SF Public Works; mobilize.us

March 15: SF Choral Artists perform "L'CHAIM! A Celebration of Life, with music from around the world. 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 494-8149.

March 15: Music on the Hill hosts the Chamber Music Society of SF in a CON-CERT of works by Brahms and Mozart. 7:30 pm. St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 101 Gold Mine Drive. musiconthehill.org

March 17: Join the ACTION-SF group on third Tuesdays, 6 to 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey; action-sf.com

March 17: Amon and Jenna Muller introduce *Full Belly: Recipes and Stories from a Family Farm*, at OMNIVORE BOOKS. 6:30 pm. 3885 Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

March 19-23: The Castro Theatre screens the 30th anniversary Berlin & Beyond FILM Festival. 8 pm. 429 Castro. 621-6120; thecastro.com; berlinbeyond.com/2026

March 21: The Randall Museum hosts "BIRDING on the Hill," gathering at 8 am. 199 Museum. 554-9600; randallmuseum.org

March 21: KIDS STORYTIME at Noe Valley Books features Jilanne Hoffmann, author of *The Ocean's Heart*. 9-10 am. 3957 24th. 590-2961; noevalleybooks.com

March 21: Composers and inventors Danny Clay, Mark Applebaum, and the Living Earth Show will amaze you at Noe MUSIC KIDS. 10:30 am-12:45 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. noemusic.org/nmk

March 21: Dance WORKOUT Rhythm & Motion offers a high-energy program for all ages. 4-5 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

March 21 & 22: Noe Music features pianist DAN TEPFER performing two programs: "Inventions/Reinventions" and Bach's "Goldberg Variations/Variations," March 21,

C A L E N D A R

8 pm, and March 22, 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. noemusic.org

March 22: The Jazz Beaus play at Sunday's MUSIC IN THE SQUARE from 1 to 3 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

March 23-April 27: NERT offers a full training class in emergency preparedness, Mondays, 5:30 to 9:30 pm, at Full Life Christian Center, 3535 Balboa. Sign up promptly. 558-3200; sf-fire.org

March 27: The Slow Sanchez HAPPY HOUR runs from 4:30 to 6:30 pm at Noe Cafe. 1299 Sanchez. 915-8876; slowsanchez.com

March 28: Rob Thomson of SF's Victorian Alliance shows images of Noe Valley's VICTORIAN gems at the library, 2 to 3:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

March 29: The Corner Sessions monthly JAZZ concert at Dolores Deluxe plays 1-3 pm. 2500 22nd. doloresdeluxe.com

March 30: Ham El-Waylly discusses *Hello, HOME Cooking: Do-Able Dishes for Every Day*. 6:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885 Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

March 31: The Noe Valley NIGHT MARKET offers local vendors, food, and entertainment, 5 to 8 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noemerchants.com

March 31: The SF HISTORY Association hosts a discussion by Therese Poletti, "The Doctor's Wife." 7 pm. Sherith Israel, 2266 California. sanfranciscohistory.org

April 3: A free Interfaith LABYRINTH Walk is accompanied by meditative music. 7 pm. Bethany United Methodist Church, 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393.

April 11: UC Master Gardeners Pat Kramer and Troy Weakley demonstrate TOMATO container gardening at the Noe Valley Library, 2 to 3 pm. 451 Jersey; 355-5707.

No Foolin': The next Voice Calendar will be in the April 2026 issue. The deadline for calendar items is March 20. Events in Noe Valley receive priority. Email calendar@noevalleyvoice.com.

STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular Voice feature on new stores and restaurants in Noe Valley. This month, we introduce Kawanoya, a Church Street restaurant that is lucky to have “Noe” in its name.

KAWANOYA

1689 Church St. at 29th Street
415-918-9587

<https://www.yelp.com/biz/kawanoya-san-francisco>

The new restaurant Kawanoya is modeled after a Japanese izakaya, an eatery where skewered and grilled foods like yakitori (bite-sized chicken) take center stage.

The menu also highlights katsu—pork, chicken, beef, fish, or tofu cutlets, breaded with panko and deep-fried.

The mix of spices in the breadcrumb coating is a family secret, says Kawanoya co-owner Kally Chan. Her family uses it to serve up their signature tonkatsu, a crispy pork cutlet (\$28), which can also be made stuffed with cheese. There are also chicken-thigh (\$28), tofu (\$19), and salmon filet (\$30) katsu options.

“This is authentic Japanese style. Our breading is not the same as you find if you go to a random Japanese restaurant in the Bay Area,” says Chan. “We have a recipe, but I can’t tell you the secret! It is why it is a little different from just your normal panko breading.”

The yakimono, food grilled or pan-fried and served skewered on bamboo sticks, run the gamut from vegetables, like miso-glazed eggplant, okra, shiitake mushrooms, and zucchini (\$4), to seafoods such as unagi (eel), which comes glazed in a sweet and smoky sauce (\$6), and large Hokkaido scallops, known as hotate in Japanese (\$7). There are also pork belly, chicken thigh, duck, and beef short rib skewers for \$6 to \$8.

Among the fish entrees are the Gindara Saikyo-Yaki, a buttery black cod marinated in a sweet, Kyoto-style white miso glaze (\$26), and the Grilled Hamachi Kama, a grilled yellowtail collar served with yuzu-soy dipping sauce and grated daikon radish (\$16).

The Saba Shioyaki (\$22) is a salt-grilled mackerel with crispy skin and a gentle smokiness, while the Unagi Donburi (\$28) is grilled eel glazed with a sweet and smoky sauce served over Japanese rice in a bowl.

All of the grilled fish can be served



Before it is filled with hungry patrons, Henry Chan surveys the dining room of Kawanoya, the Church Street restaurant he opened with sister Kally Chan in December.

Teishoku style, with miso soup and steamed rice, for \$5 extra. One popular entrée has been the Grilled Duck Ochazuke, served over steamed rice in a fragrant tea-based dashi broth (\$30). The soft-shell crab tempura appetizer (\$8) has also received rave reviews.

Usually, in Japan, an izakaya will specialize in either skewers or katsu, notes Chan. But she and her brother, Henry, felt it would be better to have a varied menu at their restaurant, since American diners might not be familiar with the concept.

“We thought, why not have both? I [still] would call this an izakaya style of a restaurant,” says Chan.

As head chef, Henry Chan oversees the kitchen and the wait staff, as he is on site every day. The restaurant’s name roughly translates to Henry’s house.

He tells the *Voice*, “Opening a Japanese izakaya in Noe Valley and serving as head chef has been incredibly meaningful to me. From perfecting our tonkatsu and yakitori to crafting desserts like hojicha tiramisu, every dish reflects my commitment to authentic Japanese flavors—and the warmth of the Noe Valley community has made this journey truly special.”

A first-time mom who gave birth to her daughter two months ago, Kally Chan has mostly been working on the

administrative side of the business from Sunnyvale, where she lives with her husband. Kawanoya is the first eatery she and Henry Chan have opened in the U.S.

Descended from a family that emigrated from Hong Kong, China, to South America, the siblings both were born in Maracay, Venezuela, and later relocated to San Francisco. Kally Chan, now 36, came when she was 11. Henry Chan, in his 40s, has been in the city off and on for a decade.

Their family runs a Chinese restaurant in Maracay. It is one of several businesses they operate in Venezuela.

The siblings took over the space where Clay Oven Indian Cuisine had been for eight years, at 1689 Church St. After soft opening Dec. 16, they began serving their classics as well as tinkering with the menu.

They are adding a selection of sushi choices and will feature saki flights as soon as they can secure a liquor license. Once they do, they intend to have a grand opening event.

“Having been longtime residents in San Francisco, we both know Noe Valley is a really great neighborhood. We like going to 24th Street to get food,” said Kally Chan. “We have always liked the neighborhood, so when we saw there was a spot, we

immediately fell in love with it.”

They remodeled the décor, adding Japanese touches such as a wooden latticed structure at the front entrance. A bar and counter seating area is to the left.

Those who sit in the front windows have views of St. Paul’s Church and its English Gothic façade across the street. With wait times running up to 40 minutes on Saturday nights, the restaurant started taking reservations in late January via Yelp.

“We are actually very surprised,” Kally Chan said of the reception. “Throughout the remodeling phase, a lot of neighbors stopped by. We feel very welcomed. That is another thing I love about Noe Valley—the people are so friendly.”

Now that they’re open, “a lot of people are saying we are such a great addition to the neighborhood,” Chan says, pointing to positive online reviews. “We are excited to be [in Noe] and serving food we personally love.”

Kawanoya is open for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. It opens for dinner at 4:30 p.m. and closes at 9:30 p.m. most nights but stays open until 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. It is closed Monday.

—Matthew S. Bajko



Those who sit in the window at Kawanoya can view the spires of St. Paul’s while enjoying the crispy Japanese cuisine called katsu. Photos by Art Bodner



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MORE FOOD TO EAT

Falafel Salad at Vive la Tarte

I'm a big fan of the falafel salad at **Vive La Tarte** (4026 24th St.). It's the kind of dish that leaves you feeling good on multiple levels: It satisfies your hunger. It's vegetarian. And the ingredients have a low-carbon footprint.

And while plenty of dishes can deliver sheer volume, this one stands out for offering quantity, quality, and variety. What I love most is the range of flavors, textures, colors, and temperatures (when eaten fresh).



My favorite way to enjoy the salad is to build each bite so I can get as many of the elements in my mouth at once.

The falafel is the clear centerpiece: the fritters are crispy on the outside but soft and warm in the chickpea-and-herb interior. Falafels can skewer dry, but here they're balanced by sides of tzatziki yogurt and house-made hummus—the former bringing creaminess, the latter depth and earthiness.

What really wakes up my taste-buds, though, is the bright pop of pickled cabbage. Its acidity cuts

cleanly through the richness of the dips and the more subtle notes of the falafel, tying the dish together. The lettuce adds crunch and freshness and contributes yet another color and texture to the plate.

All told, the salad is an ideal lunch if you're aiming for an active or focused afternoon. At \$19, it's also an excellent value, delivering five falafel balls along with plentiful dips, greens, and cabbage.

—Matt Fisher, on the beat for More Food to Eat

Have a suggestion for a dish to try in Noe Valley? Send an email to Matt Fisher at MoreFoodtoEatNoeValley@gmail.com.



Park area supervisor Frankie Macuer prepares volunteers to beautify Upper Noe Rec Center's Sanchez Street border with flowering plants. Photo by Chris Faust

Gardening Group Is Growing

Upper Noe Gardening Group held its first **Community Gardening Day** on Feb. 21, adding over 60 flowering plants along the Sanchez Street sidewalk. The next **Gardening Day**, on March 21 from 10 a.m. to noon, will target the Native Plant Garden inside the park along Sanchez Street near Day. Neighbors of all ages and skills are invited to come learn about, care for, and plant California natives.

Upper Noe also looks forward to taking part in the Noe Valley Garden Tour in May. Visit <https://uppernoerecreationcenter.com/gardens/>.

Spring Session runs March 17 through May 30. General registration for classes opens March 7 at 10 a.m. Karate, wrestling, and coed and women's boxing will return to Upper Noe, along with your standard favorites like yoga and pilates.

Summer Day Camp registration opens March 21, 10 a.m. Upper Noe will host nine one-week sessions, weekdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., between June 8 and Aug. 14.

Girls Play Sports Camp for 5- to 12-year-olds is all about confidence, teamwork and nonstop action as girls explore basketball, volleyball, tennis, pickleball, softball, floor hockey, dance, yoga, and tumbling in a positive, non-competitive environment. Each week also features a fieldtrip day and a nutrition and cooking class.

Upper Noe Sports Camp for 9- to 14-year-olds provides a dynamic and supportive environment where campers participate in two sports a day, including volleyball, tennis, basketball, flag football, kickball, dodgeball, soccer, capture the flag, and hunters and gatherers. You can register and view the spring and day camp catalogs at <https://sfrecpark.org/406/Recreation-Programs>. For information, call the rec center office at 415-970-8061 or visit uppernoerecreationcenter.com. Equipment for pickleball, ping-pong, and other activities is available at the office, at 295 Day St. Any park issues, call 3-1-1. —Chris Faust, Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

Upper Noe Spring Session (March 17 to May 30, 2026)

Rec Center Hours, 295 Day St.: Tues.–Fri., 9 a.m.–9 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Sun. & Mon. closed (outside activities only); Park Grounds: Daily, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Tuesday

9 to 10 a.m. Zumba (outside) Free
 9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play Free
 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pickleball (all ages)
 12 to 1 p.m. Pilates (18+)
 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Strength & Flexibility (18+)
 2 to 5 p.m. Open Basketball (ages 6-17) Free
 6 to 7 p.m. Tennis – Beginning (ages 8-10)
 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Yoga Vinyasa (18+)
 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. Open Basketball (18+)
 Free
 7 to 8 p.m. Tennis – Beginning/Intermediate (18+)

Wednesday

9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play Free
 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Pee Wee Basketball 4/15–5/20 (ages 3-5)
 12 to 1 p.m. Feldenkrais (18+)
 2 to 5 p.m. Open Basketball (ages 6-17) Free
 4 to 5 p.m. Karate Kidz – Little Kickers (ages 6-8)
 5 to 6 p.m. Karate Kidz (ages 9-12)
 6 to 8:45 p.m. Adult Advanced Volleyball (18+)
 6:30 to 8 p.m. Coed Boxing for Adults (18+)

Thursday

9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play Free
 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pickleball (18+) Free

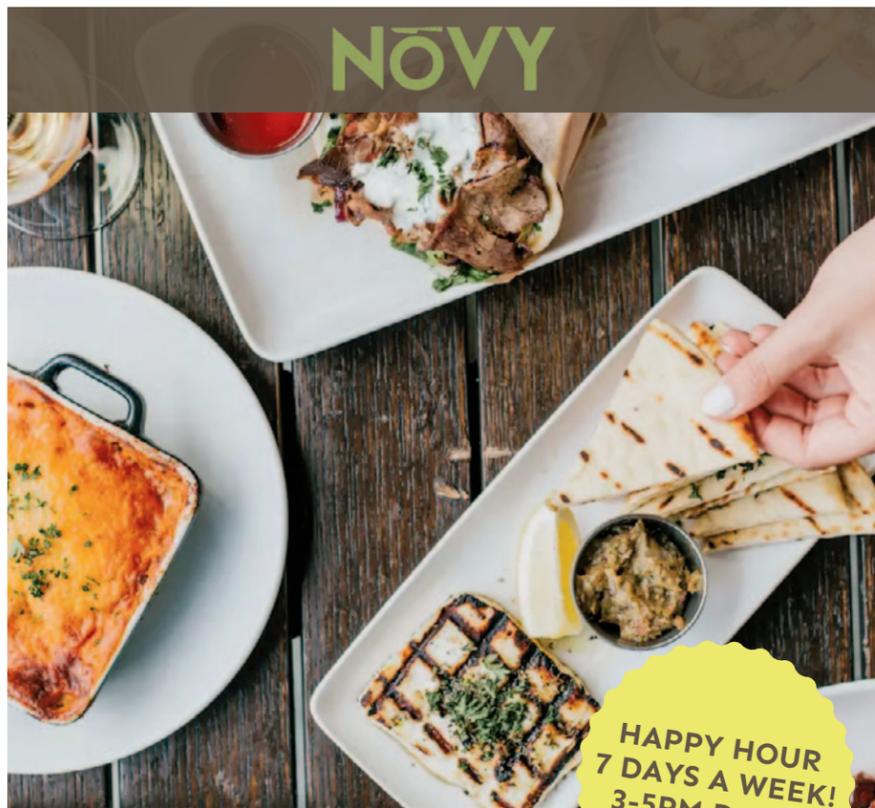
12 to 1 p.m. Pilates (18+)
 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Strength & Flexibility (18+)
 2 to 5 p.m. Open Basketball (ages 6-17) Free
 4 to 5 p.m. Petite Bakers (ages 3-5)
 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Yoga Vinyasa (18+)
 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. Open Basketball (18+)
 Free

Friday

9 to 10 a.m. Zumba (outside) Free
 9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play Free
 10 to 11 a.m. Tot Futsal 4/10-5/29 (ages 3-4)
 4:15 to 6:30 p.m. Volleyball League – Girls (ages 10-12)
 6 to 7 p.m. Tennis – Beginning (ages 8-10)
 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Women's Boxing Fundamentals (18+)
 7 to 8 p.m. Tennis – Beginning/Intermediate (18+)

Saturday

9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Open Basketball (all ages) Free
 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Family Zumba – Play Pass \$5
 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. A Place to Play Free
 3 to 4 p.m. Wrestling – Camp Grapple (ages 7-13)

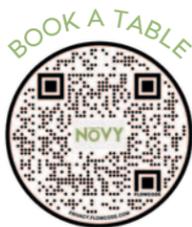


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CHILDREN'S FICTION

In the fable *A Pond, a Poet, and Three Pests*, written by Caroline Adderson and illustrated by Lauren Tamaki, a mosquito, a fish, a lily, and a frog try to distract a poet taking a walk. Ages 2-6.

A child and a tree grow side by side in *I'm Like a Tree and a Tree's Like Me*, by Sylvaine Jaoui with illustrations by Anne Crahay. Ages 4-7.

A boy and his grandmother make a rug in *A Knot Is Not a Tangle*, by Daniel Nayeri, illustrated by Vesper Stamper. Ages 4-8.

Gabby Torres Is the Best Winner Ever is the second book in Angela Dominguez's graphic novel series about fourth-grader Gabby. Ages 6-9.

CHILDREN'S NONFICTION

Hi, Worry. Bye, Worry! by Elizabeth Verdick with illustrations by Steve Mark, shows ways to deal with stress. Ages 6-9.

Random House's How to Draw Avatar: The Last Airbender, offers step-by-step instructions, with illustrations by Patrick Spaziante. Ages 7-10.

Lindsey Leigh explains the complicated ecosystem living under the ground in *The Dirt! Wild Life Under the Soil's Surface*. Ages 8-12.

You can find 20 tales of deities and heroes in *Persian Mythology: Epic Stories of Gods, Heroes, and Monsters*, by Ryan Bani Tahmaseb; illustrated by Reza Dalvand. Ages 8-12.

CHILDREN'S EBOOKS

Three animals receive a gift from the sky in *Hugged by the Night*, by poet Harold Green with illustrations by Karabo Poppy. Ages 3-5.

Welcoming the Lunar New Year by Lara Lee, with pictures by Natelle Quek, is part of a "Festivals of the World" series. Ages 4-6.

Cynthia Rylant's picture book *A Book of Loves* celebrates the little things that make people and animals happy. Ages 4-8.

In the graphic novel *Serendipity*, by Gabbie Benda, an overachieving girl thinks she is cursed when her luck runs out. Ages 8-12.

TEEN FICTION

Sisters named after the characters in *Little Women* search for a culprit in *Beth Is Dead* by Katie Bernet. Ages 12 and up.

In Kylie Lee Baker's *I'll Find You Where the Timeline Ends*, Mina, who is descended from a Japanese dragon god, searches for her sister. Ages 13-18.

Teen travelers navigate a world of inhuman creatures in the queer YA fantasy *We Can Never Leave*, by H.E. Edgmon. Ages 14-18.

In *Red as Royal Blood* by Elizabeth Hart, a servant girl is named heir to the throne. Ages 14 and up.

TEEN NONFICTION

Dungeons & Dragons: The Book of Dragons, by Michael Witwer, is a guide to the dragons in the game. Ages 11 and up.

In *The Forgotten Teachers: How Nature Wrote the Story of Life*, Brian Isett interweaves science, spirituality, and storytelling. Ages 11-14.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Not **HIM** by Michael Blake

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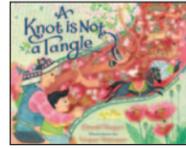
MORE BOOKS TO READ

Spring Forward

As you bound along this month, dancing in the rain, sun, or the Cloud, grab one or more of the titles listed below by Children's Librarian Madeleine Felder, Youth Librarian Cristal Fiel, or Adult Services Librarian Amy Lewis, guardians of the shelves at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library. Once again, we thank them for sharing the latest arrivals at the branch.

To put items on hold, go to sfpl.org or get the mobile app at <https://sfpl.org/services/mobile-resources/library-catalog-mobile-apps/>. Or visit the impressive brick-and-mortar at 451 Jersey St. If you have a question for Lewis, Felder, or Fiel, call 415-355-5707. Meanwhile, view the new books (and films), blurb-ed on this page by Voice bookworm Karol Barske.

—Sally Smith, ed.



"Tweeny-bopper" Elise shares her diary in *True Colors: Growing Up Weird in the '90s*, by artist Elise Gravel. Ages 11-14.

Educator Helen Barsham offers useful advice in *Manage Test Anxiety While You Study: Overcome Exam Stress and Learn Revision Skills*. Ages 13 and up.

TEEN EBOOKS

Robert Mgrdich Apelian's graphic novel *Fustuk* was inspired by Armenian and Persian mythology. Ages 12-17.

In the rom-com *We've Hit Turbulence*, by Jessica L. Cozzi, Olive gets stuck on a cross-country flight with her ex-boyfriend. Ages 12-17.

Humans and dragons battle in *A War of Wyverns*, Book 2 in a fantasy series by S.F. Williamson, set in an alternative 1924 London. Ages 13 and up.

Every year on his 17th birthday, Carter loops back a year and his memory gets wiped clean, in *16 Forever* by Lance Rubin. Ages 14 and up.

ADULT FICTION

In Davey Davis' *Casanova 20: Or, Hot World*, a handsome, much-desired Adrian searches for meaning in life.

Disinheritance: The Rediscovered Stories, by Ruth Praver Jhabvala, includes the author's works from 1956 to 2013.

A married artist and physicist choose different paths to explore their pasts, one involving a time-travel experiment, in *Lightbreakers* by Aja Gabel.

Winter Stories, by Scandinavian author Ingvild H. Rishøi, is a collection centering on overcoming adversity.

ADULT NONFICTION

Atlas of Borders: Walls, Migrations, and Conflict in 70 Maps, by Delphine Papin, shows an amazing variety of boundaries.

W. David Marx argues that creativity has become stagnant in *Blank Space: A Cultural History of the 21st Century*.

Capitalism: A Global History, by Sven Beckert, examines the origins of our economic system.

New Yorker columnist Elizabeth Kolbert offers *Life on a Little-Known Planet: Dispatches From a Changing World*.

ADULT EBOOKS

In Tory Hoen Henwood's *Before I Forget*, 26-year-old Cricket deals with her father's Alzheimer's diagnosis.

Simon Winchester analyzes changes in the atmosphere in *Breath of the Gods: The History and Future of the Wind*.

Cape Fever by Nadia Davids is a gothic psychological thriller set in the 1920s.

Tareq Baconi's memoir, *Fire in Every Direction*, reveals the Palestinian activist's queer awakening across continents.

ADULT DVD/BLU-RAY

Come Closer (2024) is a psychological drama directed and written by Tom Neshar, starring Lia Elalouf and Darya Rosenn.

Nuremberg: The Real Story (2025) is a documentary made by Bruce Vigar that recaps the trials and the history of World War II.

Jane Austen Wrecked My Life (2024) is a French comedy by Laura Piani about a "desperately single bookseller."

Tapawingo (2023), directed by Dylan K. Narang and featuring Jon Heder of *Napoleon Dynamite* fame, is about a nerd who becomes a bodyguard for a teenager.

Rebuilding (2025) is a neo-Western about a rancher who loses his home to fire, directed by Max Walker-Silverman.

—Annotations by Voice bookworm Karol Barske

LIBRARY EVENTS

All events take place at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St., and are drop-in unless otherwise noted. Be aware events are first come, first served. For information, visit sfpl.org or call the branch at 415-355-5707.

Toddler Storytimes are Thursdays, March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 11:15-11:45 a.m. Tickets are available at the door, starting at 11 a.m. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Ages 10 through 18 can work on school projects with help from a librarian at **Homework Hangout** with snacks available by request, on Tuesdays, March 3 and April 7, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Family Storytimes are Thursdays, March 5, 12, 19 and 26, at 10:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. Tickets are available at 10 a.m. for the first storytime, and at 10:30 a.m. for the second. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org.

The Noe Valley **Knitting Circle** meets on Saturdays, March 7 and April 4, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., to knit, crochet, embroider, or macramé. Beginners welcome.

Walk the steep slopes of Rancho San Miguel with the **Shaping San Francisco Walking Tour** on Saturday, March 7, noon to 3 p.m. Reserve at 355-5707 or email shaping@foundsf.org.

Make **herstory**-themed buttons and play a women's history **Trivia Game**, for ages 8 and up, Saturday, March 7, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The City Guides **Walking Tour**, "Noe Valley: Village Within a City," explores historic sites in Noe Valley on Saturdays, March 7 and March 29, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Registration required at 355-5707 or at [SF City Guides.org](https://sfcityguides.org).

Get **Drop-in Tech Help** on Monday, March 9, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Family LEGO and Board Game Night plays Tuesday, March 10, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Nomadland, a 2021 film starring Frances McDormand, screens Friday, March 13, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Learn how to research the **history** of any San Francisco building via the SF Library's databases, on Saturday, March 14, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Teens and tweens are invited to bring a book or a journal to the new **Alone Together Book Club**, Monday, March 16, 3 to 4 p.m.

The Noe Valley **Short Stack Book Club** discusses *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes, on Friday, March 20, 3 to 4 p.m. Copies are held at the circulation desk for checkout.

The **Living Poets Society Reading Series**, curated by SF Poet Laureate Genny Lim, features poets from the Youth Poet Laureates Cohort of SF, on Tuesday, March 24, from 3 to 4 p.m.

Children and their caregivers are invited to a fun **Family Dance Jam** on Friday, March 27, from 4 to 5 p.m.

Past president Rob Thomson of the **Victorian Alliance** of San Francisco gives a presentation on Noe Valley's Victorian legacy, with images of tours in the neighborhood, on Saturday, March 28, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Pajama Storytime for families gets snuggly on Tuesday, March 31, from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

UC Master Gardeners Pat Kramer and Troy Weakley give a talk on **Growing Vibrant Tomatoes in Containers** on Saturday, April 11, 2 to 3 p.m.

BRANCH HOURS

Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library						
451 Jersey St., 415-355-5707						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1-5	11-6	10-8	12-8	10-6	1-6	10-6



MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

Action SF, the National Movement in Your Neighborhood

https://m.facebook.com/ActionSFactivism/
 Website: <http://www.action-sf.com/>
 Email: ActionSFTeam@gmail.com
 Meetings: Usually third Tuesday (March 17),
 Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey, 6-7:30 p.m.

Al-Anon Noe Valley

Contact: 834-9940; office@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).
 Thursdays, 7:15-8:30 p.m. Bethany UMC, 1270 Sanchez St. (enter through Clipper Street side door and go up the stairs)

Castro Merchants

Contacts: Terry Asten Bennett, President;
 Address: 584 Castro St. #333, SF, CA 94114
 Email: info@CastroMerchants.com

Comerford Greenway

Contact: Howard Fallon
 Email: ComerfordGreenway@gmail.com
 Website: www.sanfranciscoparksalliance.org/partners/comerford-greenway/
 Monthly workdays in Comerford Alley.

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 Lili Wu, 647-0235. Address: 560 Duncan St., SF, CA 94131. Meetings: Call for details.

Eureka Valley Neighborhood Assn.

Contact: Board@evna.org
 Address: P.O. Box 14137, SF, CA 94114
 Meetings: See website Events. Castro Meeting Room, 501 Castro St., 7 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors

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

Friends of Billy Goat Hill

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

Friends of Dolores Park Playground

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

Friends of Christopher Park

Contact: Brynna McNulty, 818-744-4230
 Email: friendsofchristopherpark@gmail.com
 Website: FriendsOfChristopherPark.org

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: noecourts@gmail.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.

Friends of Slow Sanchez

Contacts: Christopher Keene, Andrew Casteel
 Email: info@SlowSanchez.com
 Website: SlowSanchez.com

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 (FUNDOG)

Contact: 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, MI7-6290
 Email: dave@schweisguth.org
 Website: meetup.com/Juri-Commoners
 The group is on hiatus and seeking a new leader. Call Dave. "Tidy up when you can."

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

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

Noe Neighborhood Council

Contact: Ozzie Rohm or Matt McCabe
 Email: info@noeneighborhoodcouncil.com
 Website: noeneighborhoodcouncil.com
 Meetings: Quarterly at Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St.

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 Democratic Club

Contact: Sam Maslin, President
 E-mail: noevalleydemocrats@gmail.com
 Website: www.noevalleydemocrats.org
 Meetings: Monthly at Valley Tavern or Tacolicious, dates publicized on website.

Noe Valley Farmers Market

Open Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 3861 24th St. between Vicksburg and Sanchez
 Contact: Leslie Crawford, 248-1332
 Email: info@noevalleyfarmersmarket.com

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)

Contact: Kristen McCaffery, President, Kristen@novysf@gmail.com, 829-8383; or Kathryn Gianaras, Vice President, Kathryn@novysf@gmail.com
 Meetings: 9 a.m. Call to confirm location.
 Website: <https://noemerchants.com>
www.NoeValleyMerchants.com

Noe Valley Parent Network

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

Noe Walks

Contact: Chris Nanda
 Email: christopher.nanda@gmail.com
 Website: NoeWalks.com
 Meetings: Saturdays, 10 a.m. Starts 24th and Sanchez. Ends Noe and Duncan for photo.

Progress Noe Valley

Facebook: [ProgressNoeValley](https://www.facebook.com/ProgressNoeValley)
 Email: progressnoe@gmail.com
 Website: progressnoe.com
 Meetings: Check Facebook page for current meeting and event schedule.

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/nert>
 Visit the website to sign up for trainings.

Upper Noe Merchants

Contact: Info@UpperNoeNeighbors.com;
<https://uppernoeneighbors.com/merchants/>

Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Chris Faust
 Email: Hello@UpperNoeNeighbors.com
 Website: www.uppernoeneighbors.com
 Meetings: Bi-monthly on third Wednesdays. Confirm by email or check website.

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE
editor@noevalleyvoice.com

All phone numbers are in the 415 area code, unless otherwise noted.



Just Listed in Glen Park
162 STILLINGS AVENUE
 View Home | 3 Bedrooms | 2 Bathrooms | 1 Car Parking
 Asking Price: \$1,195,000



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 ICON PROPERTIES

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We offer a combined 50+ years of experience representing Buyers and Sellers. We have successfully navigated every kind of market in Noe Valley and beyond, and would be delighted to share our expertise with you!
 Call us to discuss your needs.

and now for the
RUMORS
behind the news

Hidden Treasures of Noe

By Mazook

MARCHING AHEAD: February may be the shortest month, but it is the longest in my list of changes happening on 24th Street. There are some good things, but navigating the commercial strip is not one of them.

Driving or parking in Downtown Noe Valley (DNV) is a challenge, whether it be morning, noon, or night. Drivers are making U-turns mid-block to grab a vacant parking space or cruising 24th, hoping someone will put out. The meter readers start their day on 24th Street promptly at 9 a.m. and roll up and down the street until 6 p.m., ticketing the violators with hefty fines.



GRIPES OF WRATH: You might have noticed that the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) posted signs last month about a March 6 public hearing on proposed parking changes on 24th Street from Church to Castro Street.

If you tried to read the notices, you might have had trouble understanding the changes. They were a blizzard of details that left me with more questions than answers. It seems there will be big changes to the yellow loading zones on the north side of 24th from Noe to Castro, and minor changes from Church to Vicksburg.

The yellow zone changes from Noe to Castro, for example, will “rescind” or remove one 22-foot loading zone (stall 4018) while adding three yellow zones totaling 67 feet (stalls 4020, 4024, and 4026) and extend their loading time from the current 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., to 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The changes would create one new non-commercial parking spot for shoppers. But take away two more (although it appears one does not presently exist).

The MTA should eliminate the yellow zone on the southwest side of Noe at 24th, which is rarely used and should be returned to the public meter it once was.

On 24th from Church to Vicksburg, the most significant change is turning the white taxi zone on the northwest corner of 24th and Church into a 48-foot yellow zone for morning deliveries. The two green zones (short-term parking) on the south side of 24th will be changed to regular parking from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Also, the white zone in front of the Crayon Box children’s school will have its hours abbreviated.

There was no fix for the glaring omission of removing Muni’s red zone at the northwest corner of 24th and Castro. Muni now boards passengers on the southeast corner of Castro and 24th, leaving three or four spots across the street which should be open for public parking. There’s no reason not to rid us of the red paint.

Lastly, the four yellow zones in front of Whole Foods should either be eliminated or shortened to two-hour parking from 9 to 11 a.m., since the store’s deliveries come earlier in the morning or to the rear doors on Elizabeth Street.

Parking in the Whole Foods lot has been extra challenging these days. A sixth of the lot has been consumed by an outdoor freezer. Their indoor freezer broke down in January, and sadly is still in a state of disrepair. The wait to park in the lot has caused cars to line up on 24th Street. The staff was unable to tell me how much longer the fix would take. Hopefully the freezer will be gone by the end of March.

You know I would love to vent more...



COME ‘N’ GET IT: It appears that the Tacolicious space at 4063 24th St., which closed in October, its windows covered in brown paper, now has a new tenant, a person who owns two other restaurants in San Francisco. According to the mystery owner, who told me he wished to stay

mum about the details, the eatery plans to open the first week of March and will have “a flair for Mexican food.”

We hope also to welcome Fresca back soon. The restaurant, which has been closed since early on in the pandemic, plans to reopen the last week of March, after its remodel at 3945 24th St. is complete.

Owner Julio Calvo Perez, chef Jose Calvo Perez, and manager Ivan Calvo Perez tell me they will have the same menu—ceviche, steak, arroz con mariscos (paella)—but with a “few modifications.” They plan to stay open every day but Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Great news for all of you foodies: Falasteen, which calls itself a Palestinian Kitchen + Bar (at 4018 24th) had a very slow opening in mid-January and is serving Palestinian cuisine Thursday through Sunday from 5 to 9 p.m. (Falasteen is the Arabic word for Palestine.)

The interior is beautiful, and the menu is very fairly priced, starting with mezze—dips and spreads served with warm pita. The muhammara, a mix of roasted red peppers, walnuts, and spices, is \$11. A falafel order is \$10.

In the Warm Bites, a musakhan with sauteed mushrooms, caramelized sumac onions, and slivered almonds wrapped in a thin lavash is \$12. The salads, like baby arugula and grilled haloumi cheese with tomato, red onion, citrus, and olive oil, are \$15 to \$16. Main dishes such as Kefta Kabobs, spiced minced beef with parsley and onion, go for \$27 to \$32. I would probably start off with a dessert, which may seem crazy but then I wouldn’t have to wait: orange blossom rice pudding with pistachio and rose petals for \$8.

Falasteen’s owner Samir Salameh is sharing recipes that have been in the family for generations. Chef/co-owner Lamees Dahbour, known as Mama Lamees, started her own catering company.

General manager Greekor Nemet says, “We have had a very favorable reception from the neighborhood.” I suggest making a reservation, especially on a weekend.

Another spot that now needs reservations is Damansara, at 1781 Church St.

Despite being one of only two Malaysian restaurants in the city, Damansara has been experimenting with a new formula. In December, chef-owner Tracy Goh closed her doors to eat-in dining and switched to takeout only.

But last month, she decided to change the model again. Now Goh is accepting diners “by appointment only.”

The 48-seat restaurant—and her menu of laksa, curry puffs, and Dungeness crab—will be available only for private events, supper clubs, and catering.

Damansara opened on Church in 2022, replacing Ardiana (and before that La Nebbia). Goh arrived in San Francisco in 2012 and began hosting popup dinners out of her apartment before expanding the business with the help of La Cocina.



STILL HUNGRY? Opening at the end of March will be GLK Noe Valley, owned by folks who have two very successful restaurants in Oakland, called Grand Lake Kitchen, one on the shores of Lake Merritt and the other in the Diamond neighborhood.

GLK Noe will be at 1199 Church (corner of 24th, most recently Mr. Digby’s, which closed last year). The owners, May Seto Wasem and her husband, David Wasem, tell me they are very excited to be in Noe Valley, with a menu they call “American comfort food.” Says May, “I used to live in Noe Valley about 20 years ago on Sanchez Street near Elizabeth, so for me it’s like coming home.”

They will be open seven days a week, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and feature weekend brunch. “We are now working on creating our menu and stocking our full bar,” says May Wasem. “We plan to serve a brunch of French toast; poached or scrambled eggs with mushrooms, parmesan, arugula, and herb oil; a pastrami Benedict with hollandaise on rye toast with arugula salad with lemon vinaigrette; and matzo ball soup.” She says, “Dinner choices will include brisket French dip, bone-in pork chops, and steamed clams.”

Also, a shout-out to the Diamond Street Café, which is celebrating its 12th year at 751 Diamond St. It’s open 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.,



Starry Night on 24th: After devouring Firefly’s famous fried chicken, British pop star Sam Smith posed with chef Haley Sausner (left) and server Samie Niven. Smith stopped in for dinner before his Feb. 18 show at the Castro Theatre. *Photos courtesy Firefly and #samserved*

seven days a week, serving bagels, sandwiches, and huevos rancheros.



SAM SMITH SERVED: The crew at Firefly Restaurant (4288 24th St.) must have been shouting for joy when they finally caught their breath on Wednesday, Feb. 18, the night British superstar Sam Smith and entourage dropped in for dinner.

The pop and R&B singer is on a 20-show engagement at the newly renovated Castro Theatre. During the lengthy run, which ends March 14, Smith has been hitting restaurants around town and blogging about them at #samserved.

Smith and five companions and security people arrived at Firefly for a pre-show meal around 6 p.m.

“We were in disbelief, and we were panicking,” said co-owner and chef de cuisine Haley Sausner. “This couldn’t be happening.”

But over the next hour and a half, the kitchen kept the dishes coming.

“They ate a ton of food,” Sausner said. “They were big fried chicken aficionados” and also loved the griddled daikon radish cakes. She said Smith even opened his shirt to display a chest tattoo of a radish cake.

After the feast, Smith posed outside with Sausner and server Samie Niven. Then he took off over the hill for the Castro Theatre performance.

Did they leave a big tip?
Co-owner Brad Levy wasn’t telling.

“They were very appreciative of the evening,” Levy said.



HIDDEN TREASURES: “Trinket trade” boxes—like little libraries—are popping up in San Francisco as they did last summer in Portland. I discovered one local box only after former *Voice* writer and editor Suzanne Herel, now living in Delaware, spotted an Instagram reel showing someone opening it “at Alvarado and Sanchez” (a block from my house).

In the video, the box looked like a little refrigerator attached to a large wooden bin. When I found it in the 800 block of Sanchez, it was still stocked with an array of doodads and thingamabobs—toys, charms, stuffed animals, and keychains. The idea is simple: take a trinket that catches your eye, and leave a little treasure for the next person to enjoy.

Another neighborhood treasure is the Rabbit Hole Children’s Theater, on the corner of Diamond and 24th, which is celebrating its 10th year in Noe Valley. They feature after-school clubs, theater classes, and birthday parties, for kids.

“We have programs filled with dress-ups, puppet shows, and work on a performance for their family to watch at the end of each week,” says owner and founder Brooke Patton. “We also have summer camps from Memorial Day to Labor Day, but parents should make reservations now since we are almost sold out.” Camps usually have 30 kids a week.

Parents and children may be enjoying similar fun activities when Manny Yekutieli, who’s running for District 8 supervisor in November, opens his campaign headquarters in the former Umpqua Bank space at 3938 24th St.

“Noe Valley is an essential part of the district and it’s full of families,” said Yekutieli when asked why Noe. “It’s the heart of District 8 in my opinion.” He reminds me he moved to the city in 2012. “I lived at



the corner of 24th and Castro from 2013 to 2020, and I held a lot of shabbat dinners with neighbors in my apartment. It’s one of the reasons I fell in love with San Francisco.”

Yekutieli wants the new office, which he says is “huge” (2,400 sq. ft.), “to serve as a free community space, where everyone can come and sit and relax and drink their Bernie’s coffee. We’ll also have special programs for kids and families.”

The office will have its grand opening on April 12.



HERE TODAY, GONE TAMALE: The Noe Valley Farmers Market has a new farm participating on Saturdays in the Town Square. The new vendor is King Ranch Farms, run by Jorge Silva and his family from Watsonville, who bought the land in 2022.

As you market regulars know, El Buen Comer, the very popular vendor of Mexican food since 2008, has been closed since the beginning of the year. I have truly missed eating my weekly favorite, their vegetarian tamale. The reason it closed was that their chef, Juan Carlos Caudillo, had an accident in his restaurant kitchen (3435 Mission) at the beginning of the year and broke an elbow and shoulder. Now he’s recuperating, and his wife, Isabel Caudillo, continues there as head chef.

I am told that Juan Carlos Caudillo exuberantly wants to reopen after he gets his cast off in a couple weeks, but common sense tells me his return might take several more months.

Many of you might have seen a poster in store windows in DNV informing shoppers that a GoFundMe had been set up for Caudillo and family. The page asked for \$10,000, which I am informed reached that limit very quickly and went over \$12,000. Donations have now been paused.



THAT’S ALL, Y’ALL: Oh, almost forgot. As promised, I have an update on the police chase and car crash in the 3600 block of 22nd Street that occurred at 12:50 a.m. on Jan. 26. I told you I had come across some of the accident debris during a walk later that morning.

According to the police report, the driver of the car that crashed on 22nd was identified as Kavari Vallare, 24, of Antioch. His 2019 white jeep allegedly damaged sidewalk curbs, a power pole, a car, and three houses along 22nd, until it finally came to a stop just north of Vicksburg Street.

Vicksburg Street resident Monica Burk, whose 2009 Honda CRV was totaled in the incident, wrote the *Voice* to tell us what she learned by attending two court hearings in February:

“Apparently, [Vallare’s] vehicle was known to be involved in mail theft, and that’s why the police chase began. He was originally found at 18th and Eureka and chased through the neighborhood (running more than eight stop signs at more than 50 mph, according to the policeman who testified),” Burk wrote.

The jeep traveled south on Sanchez, then turned left heading east on 22nd Street—a block so steep that traffic laws only allow one-way travel downhill toward Church Street.

“I don’t think he knew the hill very well,” Burk told the *Voice*.

An understatement. ■



WINE COUNTRY RESIDENCES

SONOMA PRIVATE RETREAT WITH POOL, MAGICAL GARDENS



775 Boyes Blvd. | Sonoma

3 BEDROOMS & 2 BATHROOMS | \$1,700,000

Nestled behind a tree-lined gate in bucolic Wine Country, you will find this urban enclave - a true hidden gem that is close to everything and simultaneously feels like your own private retreat. This unparalleled residence has a myriad of outdoor spaces that make it the ultimate zen retreat and perfect entertainer's paradise.

The residence is at the center of it all - boasting three bedrooms and two zen baths - and is the essential hub and connector of the magical gardens, multiple patio areas, gazebos, fire pit lounge areas, and lap pool - enjoy year-round on fall nights and summer days. The ideal flow makes it easy to relax in privacy or throw a soiree that everyone will be talking about for years to come.

The main residence underwent a full renovation, so you can expect luxurious finishes in both the kitchen and the baths. The great room fireplace commands the living space, while double French doors allow you to be seamlessly connected to the front and back outdoor areas and pool deck. The kitchen boasts an adjoining dining area, a wet bar, and a connection to the BBQ patio, making it perfect for dinners in. The wine room den is a perfect spot to unwind after a great dinner and enjoy music at the outdoor bar.

Although you may never want to leave - when you do - you are minutes from Sonoma Golf Club, world-class restaurants, hiking, parks, farmers markets, the Sonoma Town Square, wineries, bakeries and all that Sonoma has to offer. You can have it all, in the heart of it all. If you are looking for a unique residence to call home every day, on the weekends or whenever you so choose - this residence has it all.



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