



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE



A Fab Decade: Since it officially opened in October 2016, the Noe Valley Town Square has been the neighborhood's favorite spot to meet a friend, buy a tomato, watch a debate, wear your Halloween costume, listen to jazz, folk, or classical, and dance till you drop—in this case to the sounds of the all-femme salsa band Agua Pura. *August photo by Art Bodner*

Town Square Celebrates With A Birthday Bash

New Brighter Lights to Shine On Oct. 24 Anniversary Party

By Matthew S. Bajko

Just in time for its 10th anniversary party, the Noe Valley Town Square is getting a lighting upgrade.

The new illumination will have improved technical abilities that will allow the lights to visually respond to music performances held in the public plaza.

It also can be used for themed lighting packages during the holidays and other special times throughout the year, like Pride Month in June. The new lights will also have more luminosity than those currently in place, adding more brightness to the stage area and the pergola on the west side.

West Oakland-based lighting designer Joshua Hubert's Glow Fidelity studio is overseeing the installation. He explained to the *Voice* that the new lights will be able to react to music played in the Town Square by changing to different colors or appearing to dance along in various lighting patterns.

"All the lights can be programmed and scheduled," said Hubert, who nearly seven years ago had installed the current lighting for the city-owned open space at 3861 24th St., between

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



On the Bright Side: Katie Douglas, owner of Running Wylder, says the four people who stole merchandise from her store on Sept. 13 didn't break the large front windows that feature the store's logo, "San Francisco is a good place to run," gilded by a friend. Instead, they broke one of the side windows made of tempered glass. *Photo by JL Odom*

Running Wylder Back on Track After Early Morning Break-In

Owner Katie Douglas Grateful For Community Support

By JL Odom

On a Saturday afternoon in mid-September, Running Wylder was full of customers. People browsed racks of clothing and shelves of shoes while owner Katherine "Katie" Douglas moved between the counter and the

floor, chatting with shoppers and answering questions.

Nothing about the scene suggested that just days earlier, people had smashed one of the windows, torn through the store, and taken off with a haul of merchandise.

Since then, Douglas has been dealing with the practical and emotional impact

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Rent Prices Soar As Vacancies Vanish in Noe

The Case of the Disappearing Apartments Is No Mystery

By Emily Hayes

Local property rental agents are reporting high demand and low availability for Noe Valley apartment rentals, amid the AI boom and as more workers trudge back to their offices in the city.

There were only six listings for one-bedroom apartments with an average price of \$4,664 in the *Noe Valley Voice's* survey of Craigslist rentals in September 2026. (See *Noe Valley Rents table, page 15.*)

By contrast, there were 42 one-bedroom apartments with an average price of \$2,588 in September 2021 during the Covid pandemic, when remote work was common.

Depending on the location in Noe Valley—how close you are to 24th Street, for example—you can now expect to pay \$3,250 a month for a studio and \$4,500 for a one-bedroom apartment, says J.J. Panzer, president of the longtime family-owned Real Management Company at 1234 Castro St.

Apartments rent within 72 hours max, he says.

"I have zero problems finding

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

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If you’re curious about how today’s market may apply to your situation, Lamisse would be happy to share insights and answer any questions.

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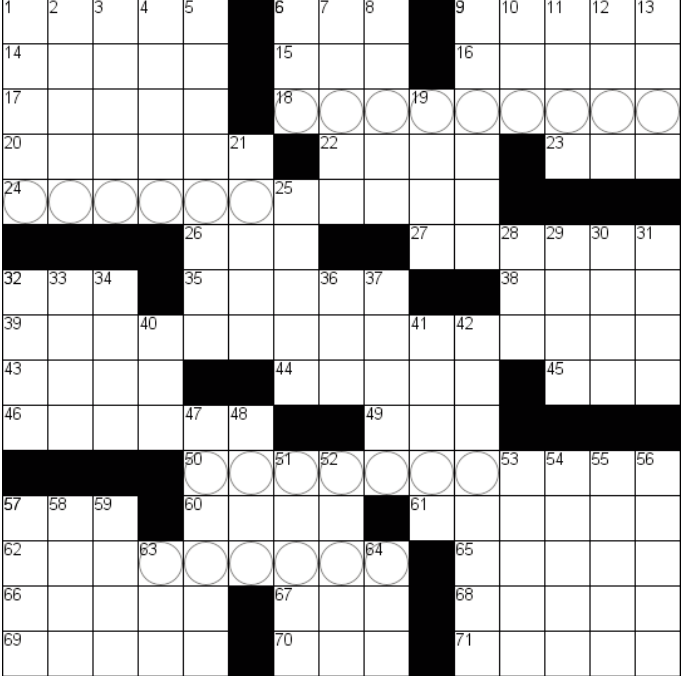
North to South

ACROSS

- Cincinnati's onetime MLB mascot
- "Kill Bill" actress Thurman
- Hard tennis shot
- "If ___ Hammer"
- Total
- Hyundai headquarters
- "___ do!" ("Sorry, Charlie")
- With Mary, only name for two English queens
- Lacking energy
- SF-based tech-review site
- Cute ___ button
- MTV show that made Snooki a star
- Debt-incurring Wall St. deal
- Vitamin C source
- Bernal Heights direction, from Noe
- "Vive ___!": "Long live the king!"
- Not artificial
- What are adjacent, in Noe Valley, to all the circled words in this puzzle
- 10-cent coin
- Complete, as a crossword
- "Fiddle-de-___!"
- Golf lesson topic
- Monkey Brains, locally
- Need for riding the J-Church
- Neighbor of Mex.
- Reporter Lois
- Color, hippie-style
- Idaho ski resort
- Playground attraction
- Levi's fabric
- Columbus or Van

DOWN

- Rap star Nicki
- River through Lyons
- Indy 500 car
- Red-waxed cheeses
- Writer Steel who owns SF's Spreckels Mansion
- Exploit
- Garden ground covering
- ___ acid (building block of proteins)
- Alysa Liu, for one
- Flash ___ (faddish assembly)
- Bay ___
- Ness, briefly
- Make changes
- "Take ___ breath"
- All-Pro Patriots receiver Welker
- Longest river in France
- Tennis match divisions
- Sound of laughter
- Zippo
- Modern lead-in to space or cafe
- Saddle ___ (cowboy's complaint)
- "All the Things You ___" (Kern tune)
- Necessity
- Golden ___
- Last word of a threat
- Goals
- Brooks Brothers buy
- Austen heroine
- Dashboard prefix with meter
- Waterfront Long Island town
- Jerry's ice cream partner
- Best Buy buy
- Eye-for-an-eye act
- Letter-shaped gripper
- Airline that serves only kosher food
- Brother's wife, e.g.
- "Pet" complaint
- Yo-Yo strings?
- Indian restaurant at Valencia and 22nd
- U-Haul rival
- Big name in farm equipment
- Beef-inspection agcy.
- Engaged in litigation
- Queen for whom some Noe Victorian houses are named
- Compete
- "Affirmative"





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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 82¢

Thank You, NVA Pioneers

Editor:
JL Odom’s wonderful article celebrating the Noe Valley Association’s 20th anniversary (“The NVA Keeps Noe Valley Looking Good,” September 2026 *Noe Valley Voice*) brought back so many memories—and reminded me that the story of the NVA has always been a story about people.

There’s an old saying I’ve always loved: “None of us is as smart as all of us.” That certainly describes the NVA. Whatever we have accomplished over these past 20 years has been possible because so many talented, generous, and committed Noe Valley neighbors believed in the idea, shared their expertise, rolled up their sleeves, and helped make it happen.

So, as we celebrate this milestone, I’d like to give a special shout-out to a few of those people whose contributions were particularly important in our early years:

Don Neuwirth of Urban Ecology, who helped us develop the original long-term plan for the commercial corridor. That plan gave us a vision and a roadmap for many of the improvements that followed.

Mark Frankel, who brought his wonderful design talent to the creation of the NVA logo and helped give our new organization a visual identity.

Eleanore Gerhardt, an original



founder who represented the community and helped us navigate those challenging early years of organizing, listening, and building neighborhood support.

Rob Evans, who designed our original street-tree map and was quite literally willing to get his hands dirty. Rob was one of the people pushing that grocery cart filled with nutrients up and down 24th Street as we fertilized and nurtured our newly planted trees. Those trees are now part of the beautiful canopy we enjoy today.

Mary Gassen of Noe Valley Bakery, our treasurer during the NVA’s formative first years, who helped us establish the sound financial footing a new organization needed.

And Eric Alexanderson, former long-time board member and all around Good Guy, who was one of the first major property owners to believe in what we were trying to accomplish. His early confidence, encouragement, and steadfast support of the NVA and its work meant enormously to us.

There are, of course, many more

people who have given their time, ideas, energy, and heart to the NVA over these 20 years. I am deeply grateful to all of them, particularly our detail-oriented bookkeeper and all-around fine artist of promotional materials and annual reports, bulletin board, etc.: Sylvia Vientulis!

With enormous gratitude,
Debra Niemann
Co-Founder and Executive Director
Noe Valley Association

Beating the Odds

Editor:
In an interview with me that appeared in the June 2026 issue of the *Noe Valley Voice*, I discussed my 40 years as an author of popular non-fiction and fiction and told of the places I’d gone while doing research. I casually quipped that I must be the only Noe Valley resident who had a library card from the mysterious Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Vatican Library made so alluring by suspense novels like *The Da Vinci Code*.

This was a good wager. Google

asserts that the likelihood of meeting such a person randomly in this country is statistically zero. What does Google know?

When I flippantly added that if there were another such Noe Valley resident, I’d like to buy them a drink, it was not out of smugness but from knowing that this would be a great conversation. It soon turned out that there are not one, not two, but three of us in Noe Valley! And the ongoing conversation has been beyond great. We’re even calling our little clique “the Library Club.”

Kathleen Maxwell spent several months at the Vatican Library in 1980 studying 13th-century illustrated Greek gospel books and lectionaries while doing research for her dissertation. She was later a professor in the Department of Art and Art History at Santa Clara University.

S.A. Kushinka, who is a local artist and calligrapher, spent what she calls “21 glorious days at the Bibliotheca Vaticana in the summer of 1984,” poring over some of the library’s most treasured manuscripts. She gained access by crafting an illuminated letter of introduction for the library’s prefect in the hopes that her talent would compensate for her lack of credentials. “It worked.”

As for me, I was a latecomer, slipping through the gates in 2024. Like S.A., I’m not in academia, but by consulting academic databases, I discovered that my nonfiction books have been “cited” dozens of times by many academic writers. For me, this worked. Federica Orlando, the person in charge, even started calling me “Doctor,” which I’m not.

What am I researching? It’s the quest for obsessively coveted first-century religious relics by saints and sinners in the third and fourth centuries. Keeping up with real Indiana Joneses—but from 1,700 or so years ago.

Bill Yenne
Alvarado Street

Art Festival a Winner

Editor:
The Noe Valley Art Festival on Sunday, Sept. 13, was a great success. We all sold our art and met wonderful people. I was so impressed by how well organized it was.

I was also impressed to learn the town square had been beautified even more [in recent years] by Noe Valley Garden Tour donations.

BJ Droubi
Sonoma, California

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Send an email to editor@noevalleyvoice.com. Please include your name and contact information. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.


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Sharing a drink in the Valley Tavern’s back garden and bonding over their *Da Vinci Code*-like connections to the Vatican Library in Rome are Noe Valley residents (l. to r.) Mike Underhill, S.A. Kushinka, Bill Yenne, and Kathleen Maxwell.
Photo courtesy Bill Yenne




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Town Square to Shimmer and Shake Oct. 24

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sanchez and Vicksburg streets. Hubert and his team will begin putting up the new lighting in early October and aim to finish in time for the party being held Oct. 24 to mark the Town Square’s first decade of operation. It opened to the public in October 2016, three years after the city acquired the site for \$4.2 million from the Noe Valley Ministry.

The religion-owned parcel had become home to a weekly Saturday farmers market following the closure of the Real Food Company’s 24th Street location in 2003 amid an effort by the employees there to form a union.

When the church decided to sell the property, the neighborhood launched a successful campaign to ensure that the former site of a gas station and parking lot became a park and a permanent home for the farmers market.

The square has become a popular alfresco dining spot and children’s play area, as well as the outdoor venue for various activities and events.

Going forward, there will be a new glow at night for the site, which Hubert hopes will attract even more people to the space.

“The new lighting is going to be essentially brighter, so people will be able to have more nighttime events there,” said Hubert, who has worked on numerous civic lighting installations around the Bay Area.

He compared the new lighting for the Town Square to his SPECTRA-SF

lighting installation in the city’s Civic Center between the San Francisco Public Library’s main branch and the Asian Art Museum. Consisting of 1.6 acres of lights spanning the rooftops of the two institutions, its 1,271 lightbulbs sparkle and pulse in a wavelike pattern. In October, Hubert is debuting a radio station at Civic Center that will play music that the lights will react to.

“Having technology play animated patterns and subtle patterns makes an area feel more alive and have more personality,” said Hubert.

Greenlight Says Go

The new lighting for the Town Square is the result of a \$25,000 grant the nonprofit Avenue Greenlight awarded to the Noe Valley Association, the neighborhood’s community benefit district tasked with improving the streetscape along the 24th Street commercial corridor (and the fiscal agent for the Town Square). It previously awarded funds for the music series at the square and to promotional efforts of the neighborhood carried out by the Noe Valley Merchants & Professionals Association.

Launched in 2020 in response to the Covid pandemic, Avenue Greenlight aims to assist local businesses throughout the city by improving commercial corridors so they attract more residents and visitors. Its board consists of members and former presidents of merchants groups from across San Francisco.

“Lighting has been a huge priority for the board because it just improves the aesthetics of an area. We find it helps bring people out to a neighborhood’s commercial corridor at night,” said Elise Jacobsen, Avenue Greenlight’s deputy executive director.

“This lighting project fits right in to that mission by bringing people into the commercial corridor and to a space uniquely used to host free community events. It will bring more people outside and get them shopping in our small businesses.”

Flash Mob and Disco Inferno

Hubert aims to finish the install of the new lighting before the “Noe Valley Town Square 10 Year Birthday Bash,” set to take place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24.

The plans include a disco party with

mob orchestrated by Rhythm & Motion, which has offered free monthly outdoor classes at the square since 2022. The group will be performing to disco star Sylvester’s “You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real),” and anyone interested in being a part of the mob can sign up at <https://www.rhythmandmotion.com/newsletters/2026/9/15/dance-day-2026-perform-with-rampm>.

“We will be handing out some kind of bling to show off,” said Moira Leslie Crawford, who oversees community events at the Noe Valley Town Square. “I am in control of the weather, so it’d better be nice weather,” she joked.

Crawford said the party will be a four-part celebration. In addition to marking the Town Square’s anniversary and the 20th anniversary of its fiscal sponsor, the Noe Valley Association, the event will also serve as a sendoff for District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman. Due to term limits, he will leave office in early January after serving eight years as the neighborhood’s representative at City Hall.

The disco-themed party will also mark the debut of the new lighting for the square. It consists of 75 lightbulbs, which Crawford noted would be 50 percent brighter and provide better illumination for nighttime performances.

“I’m truly beyond the moon on this. It seems incredible that we received this really wonderful grant. The space has become so important, and equally important are the lights,” she said. “To have stage lighting is important for the Noe Valley Night Market and other events.

“The Town Square has become such a vibrant place. This will make it a little safer at night and more colorful. It really is enhancing this great space we have.” ■



For the Town Square’s 10-year anniversary party on Saturday, Oct. 24, CK the DJ will be spinning disco, pop, world, and house music. Photo courtesy Christine La Monaca

CK the DJ, drinks, an enormous cake donated by Noe Valley Bakery, and prizes from local merchants. People are encouraged to dress in their disco finest, with prizes given out for the best outfits.

Kicking things off will be a flash



JB
JESSICA BRANSON



Jessica's most recent Noe Valley listing, a stunning five bedroom, five and a half bathroom home, is already pending after just 2 days on market. See photos, video, and a 3D tour at NoeValleyLiving.com. Noe Valley is seeing a high concentration of aggressive overbidding, and exceptional homes in the right locations continue to command extraordinary results, even despite the increased fall inventory. While many agents focus on building larger teams, Jessica remains personally involved in every aspect of her listings. Before real estate, she was a technology executive managing large teams and P&Ls. Over the past 20 years, she built her business from the ground up to nearly \$1 billion in sales by combining data driven strategy, thoughtful marketing, meticulous and emotional property preparation, and relentless negotiation. If you’re wondering what today’s market could mean for your home, give Jessica Branson the opportunity to show you what it’s like to work with one of San Francisco’s top performing listing agents.

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Scant Supply of Rentals in Noe Valley These Days

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

qualified tenants nowadays at any price. I don't have any vacancies," said Panzer during a September interview with the Voice at Philz Coffee on 24th Street.

In the pandemic years, the opposite was true. Supply increased as Noe Valleyans left for outlying areas and "lived a different life for a while," he said.

Panzer attributes the rental shortage in large part to the AI boom.

"The rental market for the last 18 months has been fueled by crazy growth in AI jobs and in companies finally putting their foot down and telling people they had to be in San Francisco to keep their jobs," Panzer said.

The Gold Rush

Prices have exploded over the last year, meaning people who are in a rent-controlled apartments are unlikely to move out, says Timothy R. Mullins, broker associate at Mullins & Co., another local family-owned property management firm. And even if they do move out, word gets out fast and soon someone is asking to rent the apartment and move in right on the heels of the departing tenant.

Like Real Management Company, Mullins & Co. had no Noe Valley vacancies in September, though two rentals were expected to open up in October—one studio and a one-bedroom.

Mullins said demand was coming from across the United States and internationally. Renters hailed from countries all over, including Japan, Israel, Germany, China, and India.

"Everyone on the planet," it seems, wants a place in Noe Valley, said Mullins, who lives near the firm's office at 700 Diamond St.

About a month ago, when Mullins & Co. priced a two-bedroom, one-bath apartment with parking near Guerrero Street in "Baja Noe" at \$5,700 a month,



J.J. Panzer stands in front of Real Management Company at 1234 Castro St., a family business that has been sharing tips with potential tenants for over 45 years. Photo by Emily Hayes

the firm's phone was ringing off the hook and their email account was inundated. It was a "zoo," with people offering more than the asking price, but Mullins said the company stuck with the original figure.

"I don't get into the game of auctioning an apartment off to the highest bidder, because I think it's already expensive enough," Mullins said.

'Slim Pickings'

Some people pay six months' rent up front, plus a two-month security deposit, says Zara Rowbotham, a Compass Real Estate agent and a national host on *The American Dream* TV network.

In the *Voice* table of Noe Valley Rents for September, there were only 19 vacancies culled from Craigslist, compared to 90 in September 2016.

"It's slim pickings," said Karol Barske, who has been tracking and vetting rental listings for the Voice for more than 25 years. "What are people going to do?"

Barske, an artist, herself opted to move out of Noe Valley to her hometown of Chicago after getting priced out way back in 2006.

Faced with a dearth of housing opportunities, would-be Noe Valleyans asking for leads online have started to sound a little desperate.

"We've been closely monitoring the rental sites since May and keep coming up empty," wrote one public school educator on the Noe Valley Neighborhood Facebook group in mid-September. "Between the sky-high listings and folks tossing around hyper-inflated monopoly money, we realize the usual route isn't working—which is why I'm attempting this longshot instead."

The Price of Good Weather

AI isn't the only factor fueling demand. Lack of new housing is also at fault. It takes four to five years to build even the smallest project in San Francisco, said Panzer, adding that, sure, housing can be built but not in time for this boom. Maybe for the next one.

The decline in rental stock is a city-wide trend, which prompted Mayor Daniel Lurie to declare a "rental emergency" in September. Space is at a premium.

But Noe Valley has some attributes that keep our rents particularly high. In the 1980s, the neighborhood was a sleepy working-class enclave. That changed during the dot-com boom of the '90s, when workers increasingly commuted from the city to the South Bay, Panzer recalled. Now, in terms of desirability, Noe Valley is right up there with Pacific Heights.

"Everybody realized that the weather here is best and that we're close to both 280 and 101," Panzer said.

Noe Valley has the best weather in the city hands down, agrees Rowbotham, who lives on Dolores Street. Tech workers can get downtown easily on Muni or BART, or they can drive or catch the shuttle bus to Silicon Valley.

"It's in proximity to everything," Rowbotham said. "And the majority of the blocks are flat, so it's super walkable."

In Noe Valley, the areas most in demand include blocks located near 24th Street on Sanchez, Church Street, Elizabeth, and Jersey, she said.

"There are bidding wars on rentals all the time in those areas. It's tight," Rowbotham said.

With rent prices so high, some tech workers are opting instead to buy a large house and rent out rooms to the tune of \$2,000 per room per month. Such "hacker houses" are becoming more common, Rowbotham said.

Owners Nervous Too

While the current boom promises higher rental income for property owners, it also brings a surge in demand for modern amenities. According to Panzer, renters today expect an in-unit washer and dryer—or at least a shared laundry room in the building. "It's a deal breaker for a lot of people if you have to go to a laundromat to do your laundry or you have to send it out," he said.

Renters are also looking for a dishwasher, garbage disposal, hardwood floors, and permission to have pets. Interestingly, parking is no longer the priority it was 20 years ago, said Panzer, due to both the high cost of car ownership and a rise in the popularity of biking. "Parking is nice to have, but



Compass agent Zara Rowbotham keeps a close eye on real estate while surveying her Dolores Street neighborhood and hosting episodes of *The American Dream* TV series. Photo courtesy Zara Rowbotham



Timothy R. Mullins looks out the distinctive Dutch door of his Mullins & Company Real Estate, a fixture in Noe Valley since 1974. His father, Eddie Mullins, posed the same way for a Voice photo more than two-and-a-half decades ago. Photo courtesy Maryellen Mullins

it probably is like fifth or sixth on the list of amenities that people are looking for," he said.

While landlords are happy with the current rental pricing, everybody's a bit on edge thinking about how long it will last, Panzer said.

The biggest tech IPOs in history are coming and AI is threatening middle-income as well as subsistence-level jobs, which could lead to more layoffs and more people leaving San Francisco for greener pastures, he said.

"When does the bubble burst, and what does that look like?" asked Panzer.

Right now it's anybody's guess. ■

Muni, Mandelman, and Muck

Parking and Muni were hot topics at the Upper Noe Neighbors meeting on Sept. 16. A lively score of neighbors voiced their approval of a proposal for new parking meters on Church between 29th and Day streets. All-day parkers are crowding out short-term shoppers, said UNN President Chris Faust.

The next step, he said, was to take that consensus to our supervisor and ask him to talk to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency. District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman, who was in the audience, gamely acknowledged the problem.

Mandelman then pointed out that he had just over four months left in office and that he was focusing on charter reform, which included Measures A, D, E, and F on the Nov. 3 ballot. “Vote yes on all of them,” was his advice to the crowd. “Prop A is a package of things to fix” on the charter that have been long overdue. Props D, E, and F clarify mayoral authority. “The mayor is the CEO of the city and should be able to run the city,” said Mandelman.

“How do we get Church Street repaved?” asked a member of the audience. “Bring it up with the mayor and the candidates for supervisor,” Mandelman said. It took years to get the Muni tracks on Market Street in shape, he reminded them. “Anything to do with rail is really hard.”

As the meeting wound down, Faust made a pitch for the Upper Noe Cleanup group, working on second Saturdays with the RefuseRefuseSF program. Show up Saturday, Oct. 10 (or Nov. 14), at 295 Day St., 10:30 a.m. to noon, to join your neighbors in picking up litter, “all supplies provided.” Afterwards, the group meets at Martha’s on Church Street for coffee and bagels. You can email info@refuserefusesf.org or sign up at <https://www.mobilize.us/civicjoyfund/event/971514/>.

Music on the Hill

Mozart, Brahms, and Schubert, three great masters of 18th- and 19th-century music, will be featured by the Cecilia Ensemble in a Music on the Hill concert at St. Aidan’s Episcopal Church Sunday, Oct. 25, at 7:30 p.m.

In 2020, Maki Ishii Sowash, Michael Long, Paul Ehrlich, and Victoria Ehrlich began playing together outdoors in San Francisco during Covid. The strings group, all of whom perform regularly with the San Francisco Symphony, Opera and Ballet orchestras, named themselves the Cecilia Ensemble. They will be joined by guest artists Amy Hiraga and Peter Wyrick.

St. Aidan’s is located at 101 Goldmine Drive, next to the Diamond Heights Shopping Center. Tickets—\$25 general admission, \$15 for students, free for children 12 and under—are available through musiconthehill.org or Eventbrite.



The Cecilia Ensemble, composed of (l. to r.) Victoria Ehrlich, Paul Ehrlich, Maki Ishii Sowash, and Michael Long, will play at Music on the Hill at St. Aidan’s on Sunday, Oct. 25, at 7:30 p.m. Photo courtesy Ava Soiffer

SHORT TAKES



Cielo Fassett heads *A Chorus Line* of student actors set to perform the “Teen Edition” of the popular musical Nov. 5 to 7 at James Lick Middle School, 1220 Noe St. Photo courtesy Keith Carames

A Singular Sensation

Get your Broadway groove on when James Lick Middle School presents *A Chorus Line: Teen Edition* Nov. 5 through 7 in the renovated school auditorium at 1220 Noe St. Performances are at 7 p.m., with an additional matinee show at 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov 7.

The show, directed by Theatre Arts teacher Keith Carames, along with music director Jorell Chavez and choreographer Vince Chan, a cast of 30, and a stage crew of 10, creates the exhilarating and tense atmosphere of a Broadway show audition.

Carames notes that auditions for the James Lick production mimicked the storyline of the show. “[It] was highly competitive, resulting in a group of highly motivated, creative, and wonderfully generous young performers reaching for excellence.”

Carames is proud of the fact that this is the only middle school production so far of this complicated and ambitious musical.

The sole adult on stage, Bay Area professional actor Christian Jimenez Solorio, returns to where it all started for him when he was cast in his first-ever play at James Lick in 2016.

Tech partner JK Sound brings to life the lighting and sound design on the school’s brand new 21st century systems. “They will be working with and training students to become light and sound board operators,” says Carames.

Go to www.eventbrite.com/d/ca--san-francisco/chorus-line/ for tickets.

The Ben and Bonnie Show

Run, don’t walk, to the Noe Valley Ministry at 1021 Sanchez St. on Thursday, Oct. 22, to see two stars of the music industry talk about Why Making Music Matters.

Legendary rock journalist Ben Fong-Torres will join acclaimed singer-songwriter Bonnie Hayes along with guitarist Kurt Huget in music and conversation. Doors open at 7 p.m., and refreshments and light bites are promised.

Blue Bear School of Music, which has been transforming wannabe rock and rollers into serious musicians since 1971, is sponsoring the free event. Hayes has a special connection. She studied with Blue Bear as a young musician and then returned as a teacher—all the while building a four-decade career as a singer-songwriter and producer.

Her writing chops have inspired songs recorded by Bonnie Raitt, Bette Midler, and David Crosby. Her new wave (think a more melodious version of punk) band Bonnie Hayes With the Wild Combo garnered international acclaim. Hayes herself toured the world with Belinda Carlisle in 1988, the same year Bonnie Raitt topped the charts with Hayes’ song “Have a Heart.”

After teaching around the country, Hayes settled back in the Bay Area in 2022 and founded the youth All Star Songwriting Program at Blue Bear, to help the next generation find their voice.

For listeners of a certain age, Ben Fong-Torres is the man with a front row seat to rock and roll history. A kid with an encyclopedic knowledge of pop music, he landed a job at Rolling Stone in 1968 and quickly rose to become the preeminent voice on the emerging sound of rock icons such as Joni Mitchell, Linda Ronstadt, and Jim Morrison. Former San Francisco Chronicle music critic Joel Selvin described Fong-Torres as “sitting on the top of the rock heap.... He could get inside a story and make it come alive.” In 2000 actor Terry Chen portrayed Fong-Torres in Cameron Crowe’s auto-fictional film *Almost Famous*.

You might have seen this 40-year-plus Noe Valley resident having a latte at Martha’s or hanging out at the Town Square.

Tickets for the free event are on Eventbrite.com (“The Ben Fong-Torres Show in conversation with Bonnie Hayes”).



Singer-songwriter Bonnie Hayes and guitarist Kurt Huget will join rock journalist and former *Rolling Stone* writer and editor Ben Fong-Torres at a Blue Bear School of Music conversation on Why Making Music Matters at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., on Thursday, Oct. 22, at 7 p.m. Photo by Ross Pelton

Healthier Living for Seniors

Older adults looking to take charge of their well-being are invited to a free six-week Healthier Living workshop starting Friday, Nov. 6, at the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St.

Sponsored by the Bay Area nonprofit On Lok in partnership with the San Francisco Public Library, the workshop runs from 1 to 3 p.m. and is designed for adults aged 60 and older. Participants will learn practical tools for symptom management, as well as skills to better navigate chronic health conditions such as arthritis, high blood pressure, and chronic pain. The series runs through Dec. 18 (with no class on Nov. 27). Space is free, but registration is encouraged. Call the library at 415-355-5707 or register online at the “Healthier Living (Chronic Disease Self-Management Program)” at Eventbrite.

For more information about On Lok (and the nearby 30th Street Senior Center), call 415-550-6002, email workshops@onlok.org, or visit onlok.org/senior-center/health-workshops.

—Sally Smith

Unless otherwise noted, this month’s *Short Takes* were written by Kit Cameron.

Let the Hauntings Begin

Halloween is all about kids and pets in Noe Valley. And this year, because Oct. 31 is a Saturday, the festivities will be going on all day.

Noe Valley Pet Company gets things rolling at 11 a.m., when the Howl-O-Ween pet parade proceeds from the store at 1451 Church St. up Comerford Alley (between 27th and Duncan) to Sanchez Street, then meanders to Noe Café at the corner of 26th Street for the popular Pet Costume Contest.

Dogs of all sizes and shapes are welcome, along with their human companions, preferably in costume. Treats and prizes will be given—for originality, attention to detail, and stage presence.

Meanwhile, says Dave Olson, a member of Resilient Noe Valley, the Halloween Stroll on Slow Sanchez will continue as a “low-key [tradition] where families just come out to enjoy a walk in costume.”

Expect to see little bunnies, cowboys, and Valkyries promenading on Sanchez between Clipper and 27th, starting around 3 p.m.

Twenty-fourth Street merchants will be handing out candy, says Noe Valley Merchants Association President Kristen McCaffery, “but we’re not planning anything special this year.” The street will already be bustling with weekend crowds, she says. McCaffery notes, however, that the St. Philip’s parade of cuteness likely will march on 24th Street on Friday morning.

And of course, on Halloween, Fair Oaks Street will be closed to traffic between 22nd and 26th streets from 5:30 to 8 p.m., for that last chance to score treats.

And what to wear for all this posing?

Tim Curry, Dolly Parton, and Michael Jackson are “huge” this year, says One Stop Party Shop owner and Halloween muse Mardie Vandervort.

“Everyone started coming in at the beginning of September,” she says. Most buyers prefer to create their own costumes using her extensive array of accessories and wigs, says Vandervort. “Odyssey is very big,” she adds. “And clowns.” The clown from the movie *It* stands creepily in her main window.

The shop is open noon to 6 p.m. daily from Oct. 6 on, with extended hours during the week before Halloween. But don’t wait till the last minute to get that pirate hat!

—Kit Cameron



Photographer Najib Joe Hakim caught this skeletal remain trying to pluck a waning crescent from the Noe Valley sky last month. He was petrified. Who would dare take a moon this close to Halloween?

Running Wylder Back on Track

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of the break-in—cleaning the mess left behind, having a new window installed, replacing merchandise, and figuring out how to make the store more secure.

But she’s also been struck by how quickly the community has rallied around the Noe Valley running shop.

“It’s been chaos in the best way—a lot of people wanting to come by and just be like, ‘I’m so sorry about what happened,’” Douglas said.

The early Sunday morning break-in on Sept. 13 was the latest in a series of attempts to get into the store. During three previous attempts last year, Douglas said, people broke glass but fled after the alarm went off.

This time was different.

From her home, Douglas awoke to the store’s alarm in the very early morning hours and watched through security cameras as four people arrived in a black sedan, dressed in black and wearing masks and gloves. After smashing the side window, they immediately began taking merchandise.

“They didn’t go behind the counter to look for cash or for electronics or anything,” Douglas said. “They were very specifically seeking out the product.” The group ransacked the store, throwing shoe boxes out the broken window and grabbing armfuls of



Four masked individuals broke into Running Wylder early Sunday, Sept. 13, smashing a window and leaving the store in disarray as they stole merchandise.

Photo courtesy Katie Douglas

clothing before leaving, Douglas said. The entire incident lasted about two minutes.

The timing was particularly frustrating. Douglas was supposed to leave for Brazil that Sunday for a trip connected to her work in the running industry.



Katie Douglas opened Running Wylder in October 2024. The boutique has been a go-to spot for the San Francisco running community and Noe Valley residents ever since. Photo by JL Odom

Instead, she stayed in San Francisco to deal with the aftermath.

She wrote about the experience in a Sept. 15 Substack post titled “Silver Linings,” describing the conflicting emotions of watching people ransack a business she had poured her “literal heart and soul into.”

There were, she wrote, still silver linings. She got to spend time with her son, Dougie, rather than travel, and she went on a seven-mile trail run in the Presidio, describing it as “everything she needed.”

A Givebutter Fundraiser

The response from the neighborhood and wider running community was immediate.

Customers and others reached out to Douglas online, by phone and in person, expressing their support. She eventually started a Givebutter fundraiser, despite initially hesitating to do so.

“I really resisted it, but I just had so many people asking how they could donate and what they could do,” Douglas said. “The support’s been insane.”

The fundraiser has brought in approximately \$19,000, surpassing the roughly \$8,700 Douglas initially estimated she would need for a security gate and insurance deductible.

She plans to use the money to install the gate and, once it is in place, hold a “gate party” at the store. She’s considering commissioning a mural on the

side of the building facing Jersey Street—something she said would not have been possible without the additional money raised through the fundraiser.

Any funds left over, Douglas said, would go toward the community around the store.

Mayor Stops By

Douglas has also heard from city officials and staff since the break-in. Mayor Daniel Lurie visited the neighborhood and spoke with Douglas soon after the incident.

The exchange left her wanting more concrete help from the city—both in preventing another break-in and in addressing the financial burden the incident placed on her business.

“One of the things that Lurie said to me was, ‘We’re going to catch these guys,’ and I was like, but I don’t care about catching the bad guys and putting them in jail,” she said. “I just want to make sure it doesn’t happen again, because it’s a waste of money. It’s a waste of money for me. It’s a waste of money for all these people donating. It’s money that never had to be spent, and now it’s getting spent, and I’m just annoyed by it.”

A representative from the city’s Office of Small Business reached out as well. Douglas said she was told that the city’s vandalism grant program, which has provided financial assistance to businesses dealing with storefront van-

dalism and break-in-related damage, may return in 2027. The program’s website currently says applications are closed and that it is expected to reopen in the future.

Douglas said such assistance would not address the broader financial pressures facing small retailers.

“We need more than just a vandalism grant,” she said.

The experience underscored what Douglas sees as a larger challenge for small businesses in San Francisco.

“I think it’s highlighting some very serious blind spots in our current administration,” she said. “It’s tough being a small business in San Francisco with always feeling like the underdog and being forgotten about.

“We’re the ones that are breaking our backs to build the community that we want to see, and we’re not making a ton of money doing it,” she added.

Building a Running Store

Douglas, who is 44, moved to San Francisco more than a decade ago to take a job as a product designer for Old Navy. After six years at the company, she decided she wanted to do something different.

A lifelong runner, Douglas initially considered creating her own running brand. But she realized there were already plenty of good brands out there.

Instead, she decided to create a store that would curate them, and she knew where she wanted it to be: Noe Valley.

Douglas, who lives in the Mission with her husband and son, became more familiar with Noe Valley after attending classes at The Lotus Method on 24th Street while she was pregnant.

“I was like, ‘This is such a great neighborhood,’” Douglas said. “I think this side of the city is so magical, and I think the people who live here really seek it out and choose it.”

She eventually found the storefront at Castro and Jersey streets, formerly occupied by First Republic Bank. This October marks the start of Running Wylder’s third year in the location.

Determined to Run Wylder

Douglas said the store has been consistently drawing customers since opening, as well as runners who take part in its group runs and events.

“It’s been doing really well. I think the test of that is we’ve been busy,” she said. “I don’t know what good business is or bad business because we’re so new, but it’s been really good. I was feeling really comfortable, and then the break-in happened.”

For Douglas, running remains one of the ways she processes difficult moments.

“I feel like running just puts things into perspective,” she said.

The break-in has been frustrating and expensive, Douglas acknowledged, but she said she never considered closing the store.

“I have a sense of urgency to get the gate up, because I just feel really exposed right now,” Douglas said. “But never once was I like, ‘Are you kidding me? I’m done.’ I’m the type of person where I will just dig in more.” ■



Running Wylder hosts weekly runs, including ones on Sunday morning, that draw San Francisco and wider Bay Area runners and run clubs.

Photo by JL Odom

CRIME SNAPSHOT

Noe Valley Incident Reports June 2025 – August 2026

Crime Category	Jun25	Jul25	Aug25	Sep25	Oct25	Nov25	Dec25	Y2025	Jan26	Feb26	Mar26	Apr26	May26	Jun26	Jul26	Aug26
Larceny/Theft	27	28	31	36	35	33	43	419	38	37	32	28	31	43	22	22
Burglary	6	14	18	16	11	10	9	157	6	10	15	9	5	5	9	6
Malicious Mischief	5	7	6	9	4	6	8	68	2	2	7	5	5	6	2	5
Motor Veh. Theft	7	6	4	9	5	2	4	61	1	4	3	2	4	5	3	2
Assault	2	2	0	4	6	0	1	26	1	1	6	2	5	5	2	3
Robbery	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Other Misc	2	2	4	4	7	4	4	72	2	4	2	5	1	3	4	2
Fraud	7	4	1	2	11	5	2	49	3	7	1	5	1	4	2	1
Family D.Violence	4	1	1	1	1	3	3	25	8	3	0	4	3	4	2	0
Vandalism	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Totals	60	65	65	82	80	63	74	887	53	68	66	61	56	75	46	43

Source: Dataset titled “Map of Police Department Incident Reports: 2018 to Present” at <https://data.sf.gov/Public-Safety/Map-of-Police-Department-Incident-Reports-2018-to-/jq29-s5wp>. 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 August 2026 data for Noe Valley on Sept. 16, 2026. “Noe Valley” on the SFPD’s digital map is bordered by 21st Street, San Jose Avenue/Guerrero, 30th Street, and Grand View Avenue/Diamond Heights Boulevard.

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From Homeless Vet to Milestone Recipient

Nicholas Galarza Meets Pelosi For Open Hand's Historic Meal

By Matthew S. Bajko

At first, Nicholas Galarza only knew he had been selected to receive the 30 millionth meal from Project Open Hand (POH), a nonprofit that helps feed people living with HIV and other chronic illnesses. It was only a few weeks prior to a July 27 news conference arranged to mark the milestone that he learned House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) would be the one delivering the groceries to him at his Noe Valley apartment.

Before she did, on the balcony leading to Galarza's home in the apartment complex at the corner of Clipper and Douglass streets, the two had about 10 minutes to talk privately that Monday.

Galarza used the time to thank Pelosi for her work on food security and for helping to pass the Affordable Care Act. "It has impacted me and so many other people," he told the *Voice*.

He also thanked her for helping to repeal the military's homophobic "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which had led to his being discharged from the Army for being gay. The end of DADT, as it's known, allowed Galarza to access veterans' benefits he otherwise would have been unable to receive. "I was just going through a lot of her work to just thank her for it."

As for Pelosi, she noted that the work on such issues was never done, because "these things can be taken away," Galarza, 39, said of their private conversation.

Galarza also disclosed that Pelosi, in an effort to calm his nerves, "held my hand really tight, and I thought that that was a special moment."

Ruth Brinker's Kitchen

In front of the cameras, Pelosi spoke of the nonprofit's late founder, Ruth Brinker, who began in 1985 by cooking hot meals in her San Francisco kitchen and delivering them to gay men stricken by AIDS, a malady that at the time was largely a death sentence.

Her efforts led to the founding of Project Open Hand, which has its headquarters on Polk Street, where it operates nutrition programs and cooks the hot meals. (Galarza said the turkey Bolognese is among his favorites.)

Brinker's pride in her work, noted Pelosi, "and the gentleness in which she did, not showing off but giving out ... it was really something that I'll always remember. Can you imagine what an



Nicholas Galarza poses on the balcony of the Clipper Street apartment where he met with House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi before receiving Project Open Hand's 30 millionth meal. Photo by Matthew S. Bajko

honor it is for me to be invited to deliver the 30 millionth meal?"

In 2005, when she was in her early 80s, Brinker briefly lived in Noe Valley with her daughter and son-in-law after a fire damaged her Bernal Heights home. That December, she moved into the Laguna Grove Care Senior Community in Hayes Valley, as the *Voice* noted in a profile of Brinker in February 2006.

"I have to thank my previous husband. He never made any money, but he always insisted on eating delicious meals. I have to thank him, because he brought me up to be a good cook," Brinker, who died in 2011 at age 89, had told the *Voice*.

Galarza has been receiving groceries from the nonprofit for five years. Alberto Cortés, hired in 2024 as Project Open Hand's vice president of fund development and community affairs, told the *Voice* that a client services employee at the agency suggested Galarza be picked for the honor as he is reflective of "who we are as an organization." The Army veteran not only speaks eloquently about his struggles with substance use, said Cortés, but also about how he's benefitted from the services he receives from the nonprofit.

"In that sense, he is very much the face of the people who are served by Project Open Hand, and in an eloquent manner speaks to how we have made a difference in his life," said Cortés.

Years on the Street

Born in Puerto Rico, Galarza moved to Charlotte, N.C., with his family when he was 5 years old. When he came out to his parents as gay in high school, they kicked him out of their home. It prompted him to enlist in the Army, which sent him to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri for boot camp.

He didn't hide his sexuality there.

Thus, Galarza believes someone who had a problem with him being gay reported him to their superiors on base. Kicked out due to DADT, Galarza moved in with military friends in Texas before returning to North Carolina in 2000.

Homeless at first, Galarza moved in with a man who picked him up one day and remained with him until they broke up in 2016. He again found himself homeless and believes it was then that he contracted HIV.

Eventually, a pen-pal friend flew him out to Whidbey Island in Washington state and allowed Galarza to live with him until he was able to move to San Francisco in July 2017.

Once in the Bay Area, Galarza landed a counseling job and moved into an apartment in the Tenderloin.

Then the Covid pandemic hit in 2020, and he lost his job, then his housing. Couch surfing with friends and also living on the streets, Galarza became addicted to meth and was sexually assaulted while unhoused. When he sought help, he was placed into Ferguson Place, a residential treatment program for people living with HIV or AIDS and co-occurring substance use and mental health issues.

"I would stay there for three months and then I'd relapse and be in crisis and then come right back, and it was like a whole cycle for a whole year," recalled Galarza. "After the last time I left rehab, I decided to start going back to school, and I feel like that was what changed everything for me."

A Safer Environment

He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology via an online program from Thomas Edison State University and is now in graduate school for social work. Twenty months ago, he moved to the Clipper Street apartment with a balcony overlooking Noe Valley and downtown.

"I love it. It's much more quiet, and I don't feel in danger like when I was in the Tenderloin. I felt in danger a lot," said Galarza, who walks all over Noe and frequents the public library branch on Jersey Street. "I feel like when I was in the Tenderloin, since drugs were so abundant, it made it easier to seek them. And here, being here, I don't have any cravings for drugs anymore."

A federal supportive housing program for veterans pays for two-thirds of his rent, while his disability payments cover the rest. Because he is currently in school and has no job income, Galarza relies on meals from Project Open Hand. But he noted he gets more than just food from the organization.

"It's about dignity, healing, and compassion," explained Galarza, adding that POH operates "on a simple but powerful truth: food is medicine, and no one should have to fight for their health on an empty stomach."

Castro resident Ariel Saliva has known Galarza for close to a decade. They're not only friends but teammates on a recreational dodgeball team called the Boyberries.

Saliva told the *Voice* he was "beyond elated" to see his friend be chosen by Project Open Hand to meet Pelosi, whom Saliva also finds inspiring. "It's phenomenal. It's fantastic," he said. "I wish him the best and I hope he continues moving forward."

As Saliva has gotten to know Galarza, he has come to admire his friend's grit and determination.

"Given his upbringing, his resources, the circumstances he has lived through, I have been impressed with how he has been able to navigate through life. He is someone I have encouraged to write his stories down, as I feel like they need to

be shared with other people," said Saliva, who works in the tech field.

Mr. January

Larry Rich, who also lives in the Castro, has gotten to know Galarza via the pair's participation in the *Bare Chest Calendar*, a publication that's been raising money for local nonprofits for more than 40 years.

The last two years, Rich, in his role as president of the BCC's board, has helped select Galarza as Mr. January—for both the 2026 and 2027 calendars.

It's been two decades since someone appeared in back-to-back calendars, said Rich, adding that Galarza and other BCC celebrities contribute an enormous amount of time selling and promoting the calendar at events held throughout the year.



Nicholas Galarza was featured as Mr. January in the 2026 *Bare Chest Calendar*. Proceeds from the calendar benefit local organizations, including PRC (formerly Positive Resource Center), the Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County, LYRIC Center for LGBTQ+ Youth, and the American Legion Alexander Hamilton Post 448. Photo courtesy Alex Ray

"He shares his personal story in a way that is really effective and in a way that gets people to donate or be interested," said Rich, who himself was Mr. January in 2019. "I have a lot of respect for him for doing the calendar multiple times. He was dedicated last year and did more than he committed to, then came back for more."

Galarza, said Rich, "he is one of the good ones."

Giving Back

Watching the news coverage of Galarza meeting with Pelosi, Rich said he felt Galarza did a "good job" fielding the reporters' questions and representing the nonprofit that had helped give him a leg up as he pursued his graduate studies. His public appearances for the BCC likely helped prepare him for the media scrum, noted Rich.

"I think he is a humble person, and I don't think he fully appreciates how accomplished he is," said Rich. "As I have gotten to know him, I've seen him get more comfortable speaking on stage and to donors."

Asked how he envisioned his life in five years, Galarza said he hoped to be working with LGBTQ youth and able to give back to Project Open Hand as a volunteer and former client.

"If you do the hard work and you seek support, it will get better," he said.

Editor's Note: Galarza is looking for part-time work as a dog walker to bring in some extra income. Anyone interested in hiring him can call 415-377-3545. To purchase the 2027 Bare Chest Calendar (\$30), go to <https://www.barechest.org/Purchase3>. There you can also boost Galarza's fundraising goals by choosing "Nicholas (Mr. January)" under the "Team Member to Support" option. ■



Noe Valley resident Nicholas Galarza celebrates Project Open Hand's 30 millionth meal with House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi (center, in aqua) and the program leaders and volunteers representing the 41-year-old charity. Photo courtesy Project Open Hand



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The Cost of Living in Noe

Only the Strong Survive

By Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley’s red-hot real estate market showed little sign of cooling in August, even as the summer buying season wound down.

A dilapidated, unoccupied two-story house on Day Street sold for \$2.6 million—nearly three times its asking price. Meanwhile, a newly renovated Clipper Street home fetched \$6.4 million, or \$1.7 million above its asking price.

The pair were two of six single-family detached home sales in August, according to Corcoran Icon Real Estate, which provides monthly sales data to the *Voice*. Buyers also purchased four condominiums.

The six detached-home sales represented a sharp decline from the 18 houses sold in Noe Valley during July. But Christine Lopatowski, manager of Corcoran Icon’s 24th Street office, said the August slowdown was typical.

“Not much happens in August because everybody’s away, getting kids back to school, and all that kind of stuff,” she said.

Still, the month produced some jaw-droppers.

The most dramatic was the sale of the decaying house in the 300 block of Day Street, between Sanchez and Noe streets. Built in 1904, the 1,450-square-foot cottage had three bedrooms, two baths, and a garage.



A buyer paid \$2,635,000—nearly three times the asking price—for this unoccupied fixer-upper on Day Street. It was the least expensive home sold in Noe Valley in August.

Photos by Corrie M. Anders



A home on Clipper Street that retained its vintage façade but otherwise was rebuilt from the studs up was the costliest property sold in August in Noe Valley. The final price was \$6.4 million—\$1.7 million more than the seller’s asking price.

Paint was peeling in strips from its façade. The interior stairs sagged precariously, and holes in the roof were large enough to let the sun in.

The home had sat vacant for two years following the owner’s death.

“It needed to be torn down,” said real estate agent Sean Kelly of Rise Homes, who listed the property. “Everything was falling apart.”

Marketed as “a rare opportunity to restore, renovate, and create something truly special,” the house attracted 30 offers.

“Some families were willing to try to navigate” a renovation, “but it was not for the faint of heart,” Kelly said.

In his eyes, the sale required an all-cash buyer, a developer with deep pockets.

Though the property was the cheapest house sold in August, the winning offer was \$2,635,000—\$1, 737,000 more than the sellers’ asking price (\$898,000).

War Skews Averages

The Day Street bidding war helped push the average premium paid by buyers in August to 55 percent above asking. However, with only six homes in our sample, the number should be viewed cautiously—as should the average sales price for a detached Noe Valley home: \$4 4 million.

That stat was boosted by the selling price of the lavishly renovated home in the 200 block of Clipper Street, also between Sanchez and Noe streets.

The property sold for \$6.4 million, or \$1,705,000 more than its \$4,995,000 asking price (a 28.1% premium), making it August’s most expensive single-family home.

The house retained its modest Edwardian façade, but the interior had

Noe Valley Home Sales*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price as % of List Price
Single-family homes						
August 2026	6	\$2,635,000	\$6,400,000	\$4,420,834	5	155%
July 2026	18	\$2,300,000	\$6,100,000	\$3,891,000	18	125%
August 2025	4	\$1,725,000	\$4,900,000	\$3,338,750	20	98%
Condominiums/TICs						
August 2026	4	\$799,000	\$2,480,000	\$1,613,000	12	114%
July 2026	2	\$1,428,888	\$2,020,000	\$1,178,444	16	119%
August 2025	6	\$1,550,000	\$1,862,500	\$1,687,500	107	110%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
August 2026	1	\$3,333,000	\$3,333,000	\$3,333,000	11	145%
July 2026	3	\$950,000	\$4,400,000	\$2,450,000	70	104%
August 2025	2	\$1,325,000	\$1,610,000	\$1,467,500	43	98%
5+-unit buildings						
August 2026	0	—	—	—	—	—
July 2026	0	—	—	—	—	—
August 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. NVV10/2026

been gutted to the studs, rebuilt, and expanded to accommodate four bedrooms and four baths in 3,100 square feet of living space, spread over three stories.

The makeover included a chef’s kitchen with an oversized marble waterfall island and Bertazzoni appliances, a floating glass staircase, floor-to-ceiling glass walls, a primary suite with a spa-like bath, multiple decks, a media room, and one-car parking.

Penthouse with a Lift

The month’s most expensive condominium was a penthouse in the 4100 block of Cesar Chavez Street, between

Noe and Castro streets.

The townhouse-style unit sold for \$2,480,000, slightly below its \$2,495,000 asking price.

The two-level residence, in a six-unit complex built in 2008, offered three bedrooms and three baths in 1,894 square feet of living space and boasted panoramic views from Twin Peaks to the East Bay.

Amenities included a private elevator, refinished hardwood floors, radiant heat, and a gourmet kitchen with a 14-foot island, a Thermador range, Sub-Zero refrigerator, a wine refrigerator, and one-car garage parking with an EV charger ■

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Noe Valley Rents**

Unit	No. in Sample	Range September 2026	Average September 2026	Average July/August 2026	Average September 2025
Studio	2	\$2,850 to \$3,595	\$3,223 / mo.	N/A	\$2,275 / mo.
1-bdrm	6	\$3,500 to \$5,795	\$4,664 / mo.	\$3,300 / mo.	\$3,557 / mo.
2-bdrm	5	\$5,500 to \$6,195	\$5,897 / mo.	\$6,099 / mo.	\$5,544 / mo.
3-bdrm	5	\$5,300 to \$9,995	\$8,517 / mo.	\$9,906 / mo.	\$7,781 / mo.
4+-bdrm	1	\$22,995 / mo.	\$22,995 / mo.	N/A	\$10,000 / mo.

** This survey is based on a sample of 19 Noe Valley rental listings appearing on Craigslist.org from Aug. 26 to Sept. 13, 2026. In September 2025, there were 31 listings. NVV10/2026



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STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular Voice column by Matthew S. Bajko, featuring new stores and restaurants in and around Noe Valley. This month, Bajko spotlights a Peruvian restaurant on 24th Street, which neighborhood diners have been missing for six years.

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After an interminably long wait, Fresca is back in Noe Valley serving up Peruvian cuisine and enlivening the neighborhood's happy hour options. At the helm are brothers Ivan and Jose Calvo-Perez, whose father opened the first location of the restaurant in 1996.

The one at 3945 24th St. opened in 2004 and, like other eateries, was forced to close at the start of the Covid pandemic in 2020. The siblings had let go of the lease but, in 2023, with it still vacant, re-leased the space with plans to reopen after a remodel.

Over the next three years, Fresca's three other locations shuttered, as the refresh for the Noe Valley restaurant dragged on. The biggest change was to the bar on the left side of the dining room. It was moved forward and now sports displays for raw oysters and ingredients for ceviche, while providing eight chairs for seating.

Acknowledging the lengthy reopening timetable, the brothers announced in mid-August "The wait is over!" on Facebook and welcomed diners back on Aug. 24.

"It's been amazing. Our clientele is super happy for us to be back," says Jose Calvo-Perez, the head chef. "It's only a month in, but we are getting to know the new people in the neighborhood, and a lot of our regulars have come back."

The main menu is heavily focused on seafood and features four ceviches (\$24 to \$28), with the clásico made with the catch of the day and aji rocoto leche de tigre (pepper marinade). The ceviche mixto adds calamari, shrimp, and octopus to the catch of the day and aji amarillo leche de tigre, while the ceviche Nikkei is made with ahi tuna,



After a six-year hiatus, Fresca Restaurant reopened in August with a modern light-filled dining room and a menu spiced by its chef-owners' creative blend of Peruvian and Japanese cuisines. Photo by Art Bodner

ponzu leche de tigre, cucumber, avocado, and sesame. An order of plantain chips to go with the ceviche is \$9, while a tasting of the trio is \$60.

Nikkei refers to the marriage of Peruvian and Japanese cuisines, notes Calvo-Perez, who kept the menu staples his dad had introduced, like the ceviches and a whole fried branzino, but retooled with his own recipes.

He serves the fish entrée, named Pescado a lo Macho (\$45), in a seafood and shellfish stew with aji amarillo cream and jasmine rice.

"It is all authentic Peruvian food but made with my own twist on things," says Calvo-Perez, who eschews the term "fine-dining" for his cooking. "I hate that word. My focus is to make good food that is a little bit more elevated. I will say that."

There are three types of tiradito, a Peruvian version of the sashimi and carpaccio found at Japanese sushi restaurants but served with a sauce. Fresca's Tiradito Apasionado (\$27) is thinly sliced ahi tuna with passion fruit leche de tigre, rocoto avocado, chalaca, corn, and cancha. The salmon version (\$25) adds a bite of spice from a cilantro-jalapeño leche de tigre, while the Nikkei tiradito (\$24), made with thinly sliced catch of the day, is paired with ponzu leche de tigre and

jalapeño. A sampler of the trio costs \$55.

The rest of the menu is split between plates to share and main dishes, which can also be shared. Standout items are the Causa Limeña (\$29), a whipped dungeness crab salad, and the Pulpo Anticuchero (\$28), a grilled octopus served with potatoes, olive aioli, Andean corn, and salsa criolla.

Among the large plates is a Salmon y Tacu-Tacu (\$38) that features a grilled aji-miso glazed salmon atop canario bean tacu-tacu, coconut milk, aji amarillo, lemon butter, and salsa criolla. It is one of the most popular items on the menu, says Calvo-Perez. "People love it. It is not going anywhere."

There are also pasta dishes, such as the Fideos Achupados (\$39), squid ink linguini pasta served in a seafood and shellfish bisque with aji panca cream, tomato, and manchego cheese.

The Tallarín Saltado (\$34) is wok-fried bucatini pasta with tenderloin steak strips, onions, tomatoes, scallions, cilantro, and lomo demi. There are also chicken (\$28) and shrimp (\$35) versions, while the "surf n turf" option is \$44.

Aside from the seafood are several chicken dishes, such as the pulled-chicken stew Ají de Gallina (\$26) and the crispy-skin, slow-roasted Pollo a la

Brasa (\$28) with a citrus butter glaze.

Fresca has a full wine, beer, and cocktail menu, including a number of pisco specialty drinks. The Pisco Sour Clásico is pisco quebranta, key lime, sugar, egg whites, and angostura bitters, while the Purple Rain (chicha sour) is a chicha morada infused pisco acholado with cherry liqueur, lime, egg whites, and amargo chuncho (each is \$16).

The dessert menu at opening included a coconut cream cheesecake (\$14) and picarones (\$13), sweet potato and pumpkin donuts served with a citrus-canela syrup for dipping.

Early in September, the brothers launched a weekday happy hour menu from 3 to 5:30 p.m. Two of the ceviches are offered at reduced prices then, with oysters at \$2 each and fried wontons with salmon tartar, rocoto aioli, avocado cream, and ikura at \$7 each.

(On the regular menu oysters run \$5 each or \$25 for a half dozen. The salmon "wantacos" cost \$18.)

Reservations are highly recommended, as Fresca has been packed, particularly on weekend nights. Calvo-Perez says he's been pleasantly surprised that people are booking past 8 p.m.

"I remember Noe Valley being more of a brunch or lunch crowd, especially on weekends."

—Matthew S. Bajko



With its shiny logo and freshly painted exterior, Fresca, located on 24th Street across from Whole Foods, is attracting customers both new and old. Photo by Art Bodner

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C A L E N D A R

Oct. 2-30: Noe Music in the SQUARE free Friday series starts Oct. 2, with Yacouba Sissoko, Mike Block, and Idrissa Koné playing music from Mali, 5-6 pm. 3861 24th.

Oct. 2-30: The 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

Oct. 3 & 4: NOE MUSIC Kids traces music's journey "From Mali to America," on the 3rd at 10:30 am; the Mainstage on the 4th at 4 pm. 1021 Sanchez. noemusic.org

Oct. 3: The Friends of Slow Sanchez hosts a Noe NEIGHBORS DINNER; byo plates, utensils, and a potluck dish. 5:30-7:30 pm. Sanchez at Clipper. RSVP Facebook.

Oct. 3-31: The FARMERS MARKET has fresh produce, food, and music Saturdays, 8 am to 1 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

Oct. 3-31: The Noe WALKS group ambles along on Saturdays, 10 am. 24th & Sanchez.

Oct. 4: The Castro Street Fair celebrates its 52nd year of art exhibits, food, and activities, from 11 am to 6 pm. Castro and Market. castrostreetfair.org

Oct. 4: Come for Good Neighbor Week COFFEE and Donuts in the Square, noon to 1 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

Oct. 4: Sunday MUSIC in the Square features Projeto Novo, performing in many languages. 1-3 p.m. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

Oct. 4, 11 & 25: YOGA FLOW offers free classes; bring water and a mat. 11 am-noon. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

Oct. 5: Toddler STORYTIMES are Mondays, 11:15-11:45 am. Tickets 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 5-26: Mamahuhu hosts MAHJONG Mondays from 6 to 9 pm. 3991 24th. 374-7012; eatmamahuhu.com

Oct. 6: The 1st Marine Division BRASS BAND performs its Fleet Week concert. 6-7 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th.

Oct. 6-28: Tuesday TRIVIA Night at The Dubliner begins at 8 pm. Wed., it's bingo. 3838 24th. 826-826-2279; dublinersf.com

Oct. 7: The SF ZOO offers free admission for SF residents (with ID). 10 am-4 pm. Sloat and the Great Highway. sfzoo.org

Oct. 8: Valencia Live! NIGHT MARKET offers vendors, live music, family activities, and salsa lessons. 5-10 pm. Valencia between 18th & 21st. visitvalenciastreet.com/live

Oct. 9: The Coen brothers' FILM True Grit screens from 2 to 4 pm at the Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 10: Rocket DOG RESCUE brings pups to foster; 1 to 5 pm. When Modern Was, 4001 24th. rocketdogrescue.org

Oct. 10: Authors Bob Buckter, Ben Zotto, and Anson Moran discuss the VICTORIAN RESTORATION movement, 2-4 pm. Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 13 & Oct. 20: ACTION-SF hosts postcard-writing PARTIES. Stamps appreciated. 6 to 7:30 pm. action-sf.com

Oct. 13: Mission Local, the New York Times, and City Arts and Lectures host a DEBATE between Scott Wiener and Connie Chan. 7:30 pm. 275 Hayes. cityarts.net

Oct. 13 & Nov. 10: Family Board Game and LEGO NIGHT is 6 to 7:30 p.m. Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 14: The Noe Valley DEMOCRATIC CLUB celebrates its fifth year; The Dubliner, 3838 24th. 6-8 pm. noevalleydemocrats.org

Oct. 14: The FABULOSA Book Club reads Bargain Witch: Essays in Self Initiation. 7 pm. Fabulosa Books, 489 Castro.

Oct. 14: LITQUAKE's Trading Pages is a poetry and fiction exchange. 7:30-9 pm. 3957 24th. 590-2961; noevalleybooks.com

Oct. 15: The Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association cohosts a panel, "TRANSIT'S Future Is Unclear: This Election Matters." 6-7:30 pm. Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, 100 Diamond. evna.org

Oct. 15: Anna Voloshyna discusses UKRAINE: Recipes and Stories from Kyiv to the Black Sea. 6:30 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885 Cesar

Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

Oct. 15: Mamahuhu hosts a VIRTUAL Q&A with Katie Yee, author of Maggie: Or a Man and a Woman Walk Into a Bar. 7-9 pm. 3991 24th. 374-7012; eatmamahuhu.com

Oct. 17: Mend at a Clothing Repair Fix-It Clinic; one item per person. 2-4 pm. Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 18: "S.T.E.A.M. in the Square" includes hands-on science projects for kids ages 2 to 6, plus music and activities. 10 am-noon. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

Oct. 18: Volunteers for the monthly Noe Valley CLEANUP DAY meet at the Town Square to pick up supplies. 10 am. 3861 24th. Info@RefuseRefuseSF.org

Oct. 18 and Nov. 1 & 8: Ages 6 to 17 can get MATH tutoring on Sundays, by volunteers from Engage Tutoring. 4-5 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 22: Blue Bear School of Music hosts a free talk and performances by BEN FONG-TORRES and singer-songwriter Bonnie Hayes. 7 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; bluebearmusic.org

Oct. 23: Children ages 6 and older can create self-portraits inspired by FRIDA KAHLO. 3:30-4:30 p.m.. Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 23: The Hot Club of SF performs Manouche JAZZ, in "Le Jazz Hot," at Noe Music in the Square. 5-6 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

Oct. 23: Author Fuchsia Dunlop discusses FIVE TASTES: Delicious Recipes for Chinese Flavors. 6:30 pm. 3885 Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

Oct. 24: Celebrate the Noe Valley Town Square's 10th anniversary with a FLASH MOB performance and Disco Dance. 6:30-8 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

Oct. 25 & Nov. 8: City Guides offers WALKING TOURS of Noe Valley, starting at 451 Jersey, at 2 pm. Register with City Guides, 375-0468; sfcityguides.org

Oct. 25: Bring a jigsaw puzzle (all levels) to exchange at the Noe Library's PUZZLE SWAP. 2-3 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 25: The Ives Collective performs a CONCERT of Beethoven and Fauré, and premieres Mark Volkert's 2025 String Trio. 4-6 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; ivescollective.org

Oct. 25: Music on the Hill hosts a CONCERT of Mozart, Schubert, and Brahms by Cecilia Ensemble. 7:30. St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 101 Gold Mine. musiconthehill.org

Oct. 26: Ages 10 to 18 can decorate a Japanese style Decoden Keychainor hairclip. 2-3 pm. Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

Oct. 27: The Noe Valley Merchants NIGHT MARKET offers local vendors, food, and music, 4:30 to 8:30 pm. 3861 24th. noemerchants.com

Oct. 27: Journalist Jonathan Weber discusses City on the Edge with Brad Stone. 7 pm. Noe Valley Books, 3957 24th. 590-2961; RSVP to noevalleybooks.com

Oct. 31: The Howl-O-Ween DOG Parade and costume contest starts at 11 am at Noe Valley Pet Co., 1451 Church, and trots up Comerford Alley to Noe Cafe at 1299 Sanchez. Pets, owners, call 282-7385.

Oct. 31: The Slow Sanchez Halloween STROLL happens from 3 to 5 pm, between Clipper and 27th. slowsanchez.com

Nov. 1: NOE MUSIC presents "Quartets on the Mainstage" playing Beethoven and others. 4 pm. 1021 Sanchez. noemusic.org

Nov. 2: Author Khir Johari discusses The Food of Singapore Malays. 6:30 pm. OMNIVORE Books, 3885 Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

Nov. 5-7: James Lick Middle School performs A Chorus Line: Teen Edition. 7 pm; Nov. 7, 1 pm matinee. 1220 Noe. eventbrite.com/d/ca-san-francisco/chorus-line/

Spooky Season: The next Voice Calendar will be in the November 2026 issue. Noe Valley events receive priority. The deadline for calendar items is Oct. 20. Email calendar@noevalleyvoice.com.

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UPPER NOE RECREATION CENTER



It's flag football season at Upper Noe Rec Center. Come watch an award-winning team compete in league play on Saturday mornings.
Photo courtesy Chris Faust

New Classes in Women's Basketball and Self-Defense

Fall is the time for festivals. The grounds in late September were filled with colorful canopies for St. Paul's School picnic and Upper Noe NeighborFest. It's also time for football. Award-winning **Upper Noe flag football** teams practice on Thursdays and Fridays and compete on Saturday mornings. The field is striped, and the action is riveting.

Fall Session is under way with exciting new activities, as well as all of your favorite programming. Some adjustments to the published Fall Catalogue: Upper Noe is now hosting **Women's Self-Defense** on Wednesdays from 6:15 to 7:15 p.m. This course for adults is aimed at building confidence and practical self-defense skills in a supportive and empowering environment. Besides hands-on techniques, including simple martial arts movements, the class teaches strategies for personal safety that can be applied in everyday situations. No prior experience is necessary.

Also new is **Women's Basketball**, held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 6 p.m. It's free to hoopsters 18 and up. See the Fall Daily Schedule for Upper Noe and learn how to register at <https://uppernoerecreationcenter.com/>.

Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center is the stewardship group for the park. You can get more information at www.uppernoerecreationcenter.com. Meanwhile, if you see something on the field, in the gym, or in the children's playground, please say something. Contact office personnel at 415-970-8061 and/or San Francisco Customer Service (3-1-1) to improve conditions and keep the park healthy. Also, call the office if you need equipment for pickleball, ping pong, or other activities (415-970-8061).

—Chris Faust, Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

Upper Noe Rec Center Fall Session (Sept. 1 to Dec. 19, 2026)

Rec Center Hours, 295 Day St.: Mon., camp only; Tues. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sun. closed (outside activities only)
Park Grounds: Daily, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Ping Pong drop-in (ages 6+) free: Tues. to Fri., 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tuesdays 9 to 10 a.m. Zumba with Moira outside on the blacktop. Free and open to all. Just join in. 9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play (ages 6 mos to 5 yrs) 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Drop-In Adult Pickleball (18+) 12 to 1 p.m. Pilates (18+) 1:30 to 2:45 p.m. Strength & Flexibility (18+) 2 to 4 p.m. Open Basketball (17 and under) 4 to 6 p.m. Women's Basketball (18+) 6 to 7 p.m. Tennis Beginning (ages 8-9) 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Yoga (18+) 6 to 8:45 p.m. Open Basketball (18+) 7 to 8 p.m. Tennis—Beginning/Intermediate (18+)	4:15 to 5:15 p.m. Girls' Flag Football Junior Division—Upper Noe Team (ages 8-10) 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Girls' Flag Football Senior Division—Upper Noe Team (ages 11-14) 6 to 8:45 p.m. Open Basketball (18+) 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Yoga (18+)
Wednesdays 9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play (ages 6 mos to 5 yrs) 12 to 1 p.m. Feldenkrais (18+) 2 to 5 p.m. Open Basketball (17 and under) 4 to 5 p.m. Karate Kidz—Little Kickers (ages 8-10) 5 to 6 p.m. Karate Kidz (ages 9-12) 6 to 9 p.m. Advanced Volleyball League (18+) 6:15 to 7:15 Women's Self Defense (18+)	Fridays 9 to 10 a.m. Zumba with Moira outside on the blacktop. Free and open to all. Just join in. 9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play (ages 6 mos to 5 yrs) 10 to 11 a.m. Futsal for Tots (ages 3-5) 12 to 2 p.m. Open Basketball (18+) 2 to 4 p.m. Open Basketball (17 and under) 4:15 to 5:15 p.m. Volleyball—Upper Noe Team (ages 8-10) 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. SFFBL (Flag Football)—Junior Division—Upper Noe Team (co-ed ages 8-10) 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. SFFBL (Flag Football)—Senior Division—Upper Noe Team (co-ed ages 11-13) 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Girls' Volleyball—Upper Noe Team (ages 12-14) 6 to 7 p.m. Tennis—Beginning (ages 8-10) 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. Tween/Women's Volleyball (11+) 7 to 8 p.m. Tennis—Beginning/Intermediate (18+)
Thursdays 9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play (ages 6 mos to 5 yrs) 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Drop-In Adult Pickleball (18+) 12 to 1 p.m. Pilates (18+) 1:30 to 2:45 p.m. Strength & Flexibility (18+) 2 to 4 p.m. Open Basketball (17 and under) 4 to 5 p.m. Petite Bakers (ages 3-5) 4 to 6 p.m. Women's Basketball (18+)	Saturdays 9 to 11:30 p.m. Open Basketball (all ages) 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Zumba (family, all ages)—Play Pass fee \$5. For up-to-date information on Zumba classes, please visit www.sfrecpark.org/zumba 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. A Place to Play (ages 6 mos to 5 yrs) 3 to 4 p.m. Coed Wrestling—Camp Grapple (ages 7-13)

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Ellen Denham
REAL ESTATE

CHILDREN'S FICTION

The barnyard is in trouble when an unexpected visitor arrives, in **Farm Shark** by Bill Canterbury, with pictures by Maddie Frost. Ages 3-7.

In **Mama Says I'm Fine** by Brittney Cooper (illustrated by Tamisha Anthony), a mother comforts her apprehensive daughter. Ages 4-8.

Graphic novel **El Toro and Friends: Tough Times** is a Lucha Libre wrestling story by Raúl the Third, illustrated by Elaine Bay. Ages 6-10.

Four kids try to save their circus camp from closing, in **Camp Big Top** by Alexandra Diaz. Ages 8-12.

CHILDREN'S NONFICTION

Who's Making That Big Stink?! is an animal guessing game by Darrin Lunde, illustrated by Erica J. Chen. Ages 3-7.

In **Piece by Piece: How Stephen Sondheim Made Musical Puzzles Come Alive**, Erin Frankel analyzes and Stacy Innerst illustrates the work of the composer/lyricist. Ages 7-10.

Wes Locher tells everything you need to know about modern technology in **What Is AI?** with illustrations by Dede Putra. Age 8-12.

Diamond Fever! A True Story in the Wild West, written by Steve Sheinkin and illustrated by Jon Chad, is based on the Great Diamond Hoax of 1872. Ages 9-12.

CHILDREN'S EBOOKS

In K. O'Neill's **Dewdrop**, an axolotl cheers on his underwater friends at the pond's sports fair. Ages 3-7.

Choose your own adventure in Beck and Matt Stanton's **The Book That Never Ends**, in the "Books That Drive Kids CRAZY" series. Ages 4-8.

The picture book **Pumpkin Smash!**—written by Michelle Schaub and illustrated by Rilla Alexander—encourages composting. Ages 4-8.

A young vegetarian finds ways to enjoy the family's Cuban food in **Picadillo for Paulina** by Ruth Behar, illustrated by Gabriel Frye-Behar. Ages 4-8.

TEEN FICTION

In **Right As Rain** by Tashie Bhuiyan, a storm cloud literally follows Megh Rashid around, during the summer before she goes to college. Ages 12-18.

Tangled Roots and Wild Dreams, by Angela Velez, is described as a funny and moving coming-of-age novel. Ages 12-18.

Teen girls hatch a scheme in **Lake Life: A Fake-Dating Romance About Small Town Activism**, by Tanya Boteju. Ages 13 and up.

In Delali Adjoa's **The Free Verse Society**, two teens escape their problems in a high school poetry club. Ages 14 and up.

TEEN NONFICTION

Friedel and Gina: A True Story of Sisterhood and Survival During the Holocaust is by Jeremy Dronfield. Ages 10 and up.

Meredith Walk's **Be Yourself and Other Bad Advice** is subtitled, "A Teen Girl's Guide to Unlearning the Rules." Ages 12 and up.

The sister of one of Iran's biggest soccer stars fights the stadium ban for females, in

MORE BOOKS TO READ

Stay Awake in the Floating City

Welcome to this month's list of new titles, courtesy of librarians Madeleine Felder, Cristal Fiel, and Amy Lewis, of the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library. There are books about "great and unfortunate things" and "books that drive kids crazy!" And who can resist *Farm Shark*?!

But you may want to add one more book to your bag: *Awake in the Floating City* by Susanna Kwan. It's the San Francisco Library's **One City One Book** selection for 2026, to be read by all of us in the boat, from October to December.

"Set in a future San Francisco transformed by rising waters," the SFPL tells us, "the novel follows Bo, an artist, and Mia, an elderly woman, whose unlikely relationship brings memory, art, caregiving, loss, and belonging into focus. As the city around them changes, Kwan asks what we hold onto when the places we love are transformed—and how we preserve the stories that make a place home."

As part of One Book, you're invited to attend special events at libraries around the city—on adapting to climate change, reducing waste, saving films, preserving architecture, writing memoirs, and planning for the end of life (yikes). Also, you can hear **Susanna Kwan** in conversation with **Becca Prowda**, First Lady of San Francisco, on Dec. 13, 2 p.m., at the Main Library.

To put *Awake* or other items on hold, float to the library's website at SFPL.org. Or paddle over to one of our biggest reminders of the past, the Carnegie library at 451 Jersey St.

Other things to remember: There's a talk on **Victorian restoration**, preservation, and decoration at the Noe Valley Library on Saturday, Oct. 10, from 2 to 4 p.m. The presenters are the authors of two new books on the subject: *Architectural Color Design and Inside: 12 Beautifully Restored "Victorians" and the Remarkable People Who Care for Them*.

Also, note that all city libraries will be closed on Monday, Oct. 12, for **Indigenous Peoples Day**, or if you wish, **Columbus Day**.

—Sally Smith, Ed.

Azadi Means Freedom by Maryam Shojaei. Ages 14 and up.

David Levithan and Gabriel Duckels discuss the history of the AIDS epidemic in **The Fight of Our Lives**. Ages 14 and up.

TEEN EBOOKS

Norah discovers she can manipulate probability, in the fantasy **Flickerstate** by F.A. Davidson. Ages 12-18.

Guardians of Dawn: Suhwa is the fourth book in the fantasy series by S. Jae-Jones. Ages 13-18.

Wayfarers: A Road Trip Romance Novel in Verse is co-written by Jeff Zentner and Brittany Cavallaro. Ages 13 and up.

A teen with newly awakened magical abilities searches for the source, in **Bound by Fury**, fiction by Noelle Monét. Ages 14 and up.

ADULT FICTION

When a country club caddy is killed by a stray golf ball, shocking secrets are revealed, in **The Amateur** by Chris Bohjalian.

In **Etna** by Paul Yoon, an ex-military dog sets out on an odyssey in a war-torn country.

In 1816, a young magician takes up residency in a Boston museum, in **Hocus Pocus** by Brinda Charry.

Chang-rae Lee's **A Tender Age** deals with American masculinity, seen through the eyes of a child of Korean immigrants.

ADULT NONFICTION

Jill Lepore analyzes our dependence on data and technology in **The Rise and Fall of the Artificial State**.

In **Crossing the Wine-Dark Sea: Journeys Through Ancient Literature**, Emily Wilson explores how translations reshape our understanding of the past.

Fed Up: What Evolution Reveals About Food, Diet, Health, and Eating Well is a science-based book on nutrition by Daniel E. Lieberman.

Triage by Claudia Rankine follows the turbulent friendship of two sisters, the narrator and the theorist, in Gaza.

ADULT EBOOK

In **Beginning Middle End**, a novel by Valeria Luiselli, a mother and daughter travel through Sicily.

A crime journalist finds herself psychologically stalked, and perhaps hunted, in **Furious Violet** by Sarai Walker.

Great and Unfortunate Things is a memoir by Jason Arday detailing his family's response after Arday was diagnosed with severe autism at age 3.

Lauren Collins documents an American massacre in **They Stole a City: Wilmington's White Supremacist Coup and the Families Who Live with Its Legacy**.

DVDS / BLURAY

The Devil Wears Prada 2 (2026) is a satiric comedy made by David Frankel,

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 Noe Valley branch at 415-355-5707.

Family **Storytimes** are Thursdays, Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 at 10:15 and 11 a.m. Tickets are available at 10 and 10:30 a.m.

The **Knitting Circle** meets on Saturday, Oct. 3, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Prepare for an admissions interview at a **College Admissions** workshop with Study Smart tutors Sunday, Oct. 4, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Toddler Storytimes are Mondays, Oct. 5, 19, 26, from 11:15 to 11:45 a.m. Tickets are available at the door on a first-come basis, starting at 11 a.m.

Middle schoolers and teens can bring projects to **Homework Hangout**, Mondays, Oct. 5 & Nov. 2, 3:30 to 5 p.m.

The 2010 film **True Grit** screens Friday, Oct. 9, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Learn about **Victorian Restoration** and Preservation with Bob Buckter, Ben Zotto, and Anson Moran, the authors of two new books on San Francisco's architectural legacy, Saturday, Oct. 10, from 2 to 4 p.m. Space is limited.

Family **Board Game** and **LEGO Night** happens on Tuesdays, Oct. 13 and Nov. 10, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

The Noe Valley **Short Stack Book Club** discusses *The Birdcatcher* by Gayl Jones on Friday, Oct. 16, from 3 to 4 p.m. Copies are held at the circulation desk for checkout.

SCRAP hosts a **Clothing Repair Fix-It Clinic** (limit one item per person) on Saturday, Oct. 17, from 2 to 4 p.m.

High school student volunteers from the Engage Tutoring Program offer **Math Tutoring**, for ages 6 to 17, on Sundays, Oct. 18 and Nov. 1 and 8, from 3 to 4 p.m.

The **Alone Together Book Club** (ages 10–18) meets on the third Monday of the month, Oct. 19 and Nov. 16, from 4 to 5 p.m.

Children ages 6 and up can create self-portraits at a workshop inspired by **Frida Kahlo**, on Friday, Oct. 23, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

SF City Guides' tour "Noe Valley: Village Within the City" is an exploration of historic homes in the neighborhood on Sundays, Oct. 25 and Nov. 8, from 2 to 4 p.m. Registration required: 415-375-0468 (City Guides).

Bring a jigsaw puzzle to the **Puzzle Swap** on Sunday, Oct. 25, 2 to 3 p.m.

Ages 10 to 18 can decorate a Japanese-style **Decoden Keychain** or hair clip on Monday, Oct. 26, 2 to 3 p.m. Space is limited.

Pajama Storytime happens on Tuesday, Oct. 27, from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

On Lok offers a "**Healthier Living**" chronic disease self-management program in six Friday sessions, Nov. 6, 13, 20, and Dec. 4, 11, and 18, from 1 to 3 p.m., in the library's back courtyard. Register 415-355-5707 or see workshops@onlok.org.

starring Meryl Streep and Anne Hathaway.

Steven Spielberg's **Disclosure Day** (2026) is a sci-fi thriller about the hidden existence of aliens on Earth, featuring Emily Blunt, Josh O'Connor, and Colin Firth.

Girls Like Girls (2026) is a drama directed by Hayley Kiyoko and starring Maya da Costa, Myra Molloy, and Zach Braff.

Ryan Gosling plays a middle-school science teacher on a spaceship in the 2026 film **Project Hail Mary**, directed by Phil Lord and Christopher Miller.

Annotations by Voice bookworm Karol Barske

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

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North to South by Michael Blake

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https://m.facebook.com/ActionSFactivism/
Website: http://www.action-sf.com/
Email: ActionSFTeam@gmail.com
Meetings: Usually Third Tuesdays (email actionsolidarity@gmail.com for zoom link), Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey, 6-7:30 p.m. Oct. 20, hybrid meeting open to all at Manny's HQ, 3938 24th, 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: https://greeningprojects.org/comerford-greenway/
Quarterly 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: Diane McCarney, 824-0303; or Lily Wu, 793-1749.
Address: 590 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.

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

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 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: B.R. Demko, Dana Rosenberg, 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 (FUND OG)

Contact: David Emanuel, info@fundogsf.org
Website: www.fundogsf.org

Glen Park Association

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

Juri Commoners

Contact: Dave Schweisguth, M17-6290
Email: dave@schweisguth.org
Website: meetup.com/Juri-Commoners
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.NoValleyMerchants.com

Noe Valley Parent Network

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

Noe Valley Run Club

Meets Fridays 6:45 a.m. for 4-mile run; 7:30 a.m. for 2.5-mile, 26th and Sanchez.
https://www.instagram.com/noevalleyrunclub?igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ==

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
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.

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-Wei H., Recent Client

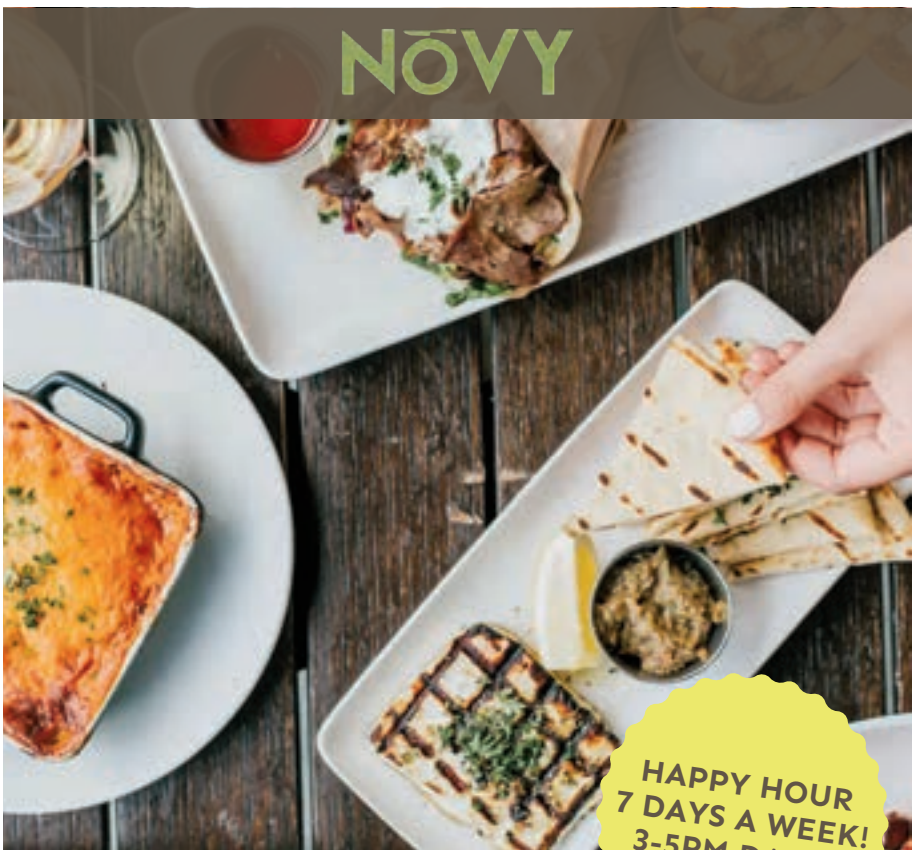


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Fall Is Falling Fast

By Mazook

ALL THE LEAVES ARE BROWN: The entrance to Whole Foods Market on 24th Street is already filled with pumpkins for sale, and they're rapidly being snatched up. They may be sold out by the time you read this.

The end of October in Noe Valley is the beginning of the holiday season. Halloween will be the first fall celebration.

I am looking forward to joining the sidewalk costume parades in Downtown Noe Valley and on Fair Oaks Street in lower Noe Valley. Last year, about a thousand revelers participated in each of the parades. Parking spots will be impossible to find as thousands show up in the Castro for their festivities.

Note that daylight savings time will end on Nov. 1. That Sunday morning at 2 a.m., clocks will move one hour backward, so we will have an extra hour of sleep (or counting our treats).

Veterans Day will be celebrated on Nov. 11. And that's when Noe Valleyans will begin shopping in earnest for Christmas or Hanukkah (starting Dec. 4).

By the way, San Francisco Fleet Week 2026 Oct. 4 to 12 this year, with the main air shows running over the weekend of Oct. 9 through 11. As you or may not know, San Francisco Fleet Week is headquartered in offices in Downtown Noe Valley, at 1104 Sanchez St. All the events, including the military band concert schedule, are at <https://fleetweeksf.org/map-of-events/>.

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THE ENVELOPE, PLEASE: We've got the results for the 11th annual Noe Valley Girls Film Festival held at the Noe Valley Ministry on Aug. 22.

Screened were 15 short films made by young female and non-binary filmmakers from around the world. For those of you who were not present in the packed theater, the results were posted online. The festival celebrates films in two age categories: by filmmakers 11 and under and 12 to 16 years old.

Winners in the younger category were:

1. *The Good Manners Shop* by Daniela Fernández, Adán Rivas (Spain)
2. *Under the Bed* by Amelia Swain (New Zealand)
3. *Broken Shell* by Ema Demková (Slovakia)

Winners in the older category:

1. *The Notes We Share* by India Anne Mitchell (Petaluma, CA)
2. *The Way You Hear Me* by Madeline Remotigue (Florida, U.S.)
3. *The Party* by Milena Yedigaryan (Armenia)

The NVGFF Hope Award (presented by Elfenworks) went to:

- *Superheroes Art-Lab* by Animations Lab (Georgia, Russia), and
- *I Belong* by Sherry Qianyu Ma (Arcadia, CA)

And the Audience Choice Award, voted on by the festival, went to *The Party* by Armenia contestant Milena Yedigaryan.

Among the 2026 finalists shown at the festival were two Noe Valley filmmakers: Zadia Kowta, who made *Born Beautiful*; and Helena Swan Otto, whose film was called *Inside V-Day*. Congratulations, all.

By the way, the festival is looking for volunteers who'd like to help organize next year's event. Email info@nvgff.com

or fill out a form at the NVGFF website.

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SCREEN TIME: Noe Valley filmmaker Steve Pressman sent me a mention that his documentary *Dust Bowls and Jewish Souls: Another Side of Woody Guthrie* "has been a hit at film festivals and with audiences near and far since its release in June."

He reports that "opening night in June was at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival [and *Dust Bowl*] received the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; sold out its screening at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Mass.; [and] shared the stage with the Klezmatics' Lorin Sklamberg at L.A.'s Museum of Tolerance."

The documentary had an ambitious schedule for September, and is screening this month at the Victoria International Jewish Film Festival in British Columbia (Oct. 10); the Milwaukee Jewish Film Festival (Oct. 11); the Chapel Hill Jewish Film Festival (Oct. 12); the Cinema Art Theater, Lewes, Del. (Oct. 18); and back in the Bay Area at the Silicon Valley Jewish Film Festival (Oct. 24), among many other places.

Methinks he may win an Academy Award in March.

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MUSIC TO MY EARS: Speaking of local celebrities, Ben Fong-Torres will be one of two special guests at a Blue Bear School of Music event at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez, on Thursday, Oct. 22, at 7 p.m.

Fong-Torres, known for interviewing the world's greatest rock musicians as an editor and writer for *Rolling Stone* magazine, will sit with singer-songwriter Bonnie Hayes (remember "Shelly's Boyfriend" or "Girls Like Me" and the Wild Combo!). They'll reminisce, talk songwriting, and sing tunes accompanied by guitarist Kurt Huget. (For more on their careers, see *Short Takes*, p. 19.)

A resident of Noe Valley (with his wife, Dianne) for over 40 years, Ben has been a friend since we were schoolmates in Oakland in the 1950s.

When it comes to singing, he's quick to say he's an amateur. But he has performed in dozens of places, from dive bars to national TV shows.

"Since I never got around to trying out for a gig in the Town Square," he says, "this event, part of Blue Bear's 'Making Music Matters' program, will have to do."

No way, Ben. You should definitely make music in the Town Square. As should Bonnie Hayes. And why not Bonnie Raitt too? (Raitt recorded Hayes' songs "Have a Heart" and "Love Letter.")

At the Ministry jam, Ben says we can expect to hear "Elvis, Dylan, and a surprise or two."

And it's free. Find the Ben Fong-Torres Ministry show on eventbrite.com.

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GIVE US A SIGN: The Friends of Noe Valley group is asking all of us Noe neighbors to help them choose the design for a Noe Valley neighborhood sign at 24th and Dolores. This is a project to help build community and provide support for our 24th Street merchants.

The plan is to combine the sign with a pollinator garden in the median strip along Dolores from 23rd Street to Jersey (similar to the pollinator garden at Market and Dolores).

If you want to have input into this project, contact Friends at info@friendsofnoevalley.com or write Friends of Noe Valley, P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146. You can also get involved at info@slowsanchez.com. By the way, Slow Sanchez founder and neighborhood involver Chris Keene is leading this effort.

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THUMBS UP: Congratulations go to



Ben Fong-Torres chats with Grammy-winning Roots drummer Questlove at the now defunct Harvey's in the Castro. On Thursday, Oct. 22, Fong-Torres will be sitting down with singer-songwriter Bonnie Hayes at 7 p.m. at 1021 Sanchez St.

Photo courtesy Ben Fong-Torres

Noe Valley Farmers Market vendor Green Thumb Farms, which last month was named one of America's Top 100 Small Businesses by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Green Thumb Farms Inc. was selected out of more than 12,000 applicants by a panel of judges who cited their impressive growth, innovative strategies, and commitment to their customers. The list includes businesses from 36 states and Washington, D.C.

Green Thumb owners Maria Gonzalez and Rudy Jimenez will head to D.C. Oct. 19 to 21 to take part in events at the Chamber's headquarters, including a VIP experience and access to some of the most influential names in business through a Small Business Forum.

At an awards dinner, 10 businesses will be recognized for outstanding achievement and receive \$2,000 each. One standout company will be named "CO-100 Top Business of 2026" and receive a \$25,000 prize. Go, Green Thumb.

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WHOOZIT IN 3938? A new kids store will be coming to 24th Street in November, to fill the space where Action-SF is meeting to write postcards and where Manny Yekutieli will have been organizing his campaign for supervisor, at 3938 24th St.

The store, called Five Little Monkeys, is according to its website, "a community based, hands-on toy store focused on providing unique, high-quality toys in a fun and friendly environment."

The website also tells an origin story: "Owner Stephanie Sala started Five Little Monkeys in 2001 shortly after graduating from UC Berkeley with degrees in Sociology and Religious Studies. Plans for graduate school were put on hold when the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, made her realize that being close to home was most important. As the oldest of five little monkeys in her close-knit family, Stephanie began looking for something that would allow her to play a very active role in her younger siblings' lives. With her father, Andre Sala, a renowned toy designer most famous for the Whoozit line of infant developmental toys, and her mother, Anna Hobbet, the co-owner and founder of Sweet Potatoes, a children's wear manufacturing company with several retail stores in the San Francisco Bay Area, opening a specialty toy store seemed like a natural fit."

The store's public relations representative, Oscar Mariscal, says the Noe store will be the chain's ninth Bay Area location and that it will be coming soon.

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THE QUESTION MAN: Polling the Noe Valley voters was my task at the "Last Tuesday of the Month" Night Market on Sept. 29 at the Noe Valley Town Square. (The next Noe Valley Night Market will be Tuesday, Oct. 27, 4:30 to 8:30 p.m.) I admit, the poll was far from scientific. But I tried.

I approached 100 people and asked each if they lived in Noe Valley, and if so, would they tell me anonymously how

they planned to vote in the general election on Nov. 3—for the District 8 supervisor race and for this district's race for U.S. House of Representatives (District 11), i.e., to be the Congress member to replace Nancy Pelosi.

Of the 100 people I approached, 20 told me they didn't live in Noe Valley, and 20 simply refused to respond or said they were "undecided."

In the House of Representatives race, Scott Wiener got 16 votes and Connie Chan garnered seven votes.

The race for District 8 supervisor—with four candidates—was more intriguing. The results of my poll were that 16 said they were voting for Manny Yekutieli, three said Darshini Patel, and one said Gary McCoy or Michael Nguyen.

I did not include a question about the California governor's race in my poll because, as some of you might know, over 90 percent of voters in Noe Valley in the last umpteen elections voted Democratic.

(Note that the Election Department stated Feb. 10, 2025, that in the City and County of San Francisco, 62.7% of us were registered as Democrats, 7.68% as Republicans, 2.2% as American Independent Party, and .65% as Green Party members.)

For this reason, I suspect that when all the Noe votes are tabulated, Democrat Xavier Becerra will win by a wide margin over Republican Steve Hilton.

As for the state and San Francisco propositions listed in my Department of Elections pamphlet, I've had a problem understanding the descriptions of almost all of them and therefore am still undecided.

Hopefully, the election will go off without a hitch and I can give you the results in December.

Yikes. The day after I turned in this column, the hitch arrived: On Oct. 1, after learning about new allegations of sexual misconduct, Mayor Daniel Lurie and a slew of other politicians rescinded their endorsements of supe frontrunner Manny Yekutieli, who then withdrew from the race, saying he was taking time to work on himself.

Looks like we have work to do, too.

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BUT FOR NOW, RELAX: Take a Noe Valley quiz. Breathe in. Breathe out. You are far, far from the world of politics.

1. Where was Cotton Basics located in Noe Valley?

2. In what Downtown Noe Valley restaurant can you order matzo ball soup as an appetizer and donuts for dessert?

3. Where in Noe Valley can you buy handmade cowboy boots?

4. When was the first issue of the Noe Valley Voice published?

5. What major film was shot in part in Noe Valley in 2021?

6. What major film was shot in Upper Noe Valley and released in 1992?

7. Where in Noe Valley was Dan's Gas and Diesel located?

8. Where is Noe Valley's "Slow Street"?

9. What store in Noe Valley sells Halloween costumes, wigs, jewelry, and decorations?

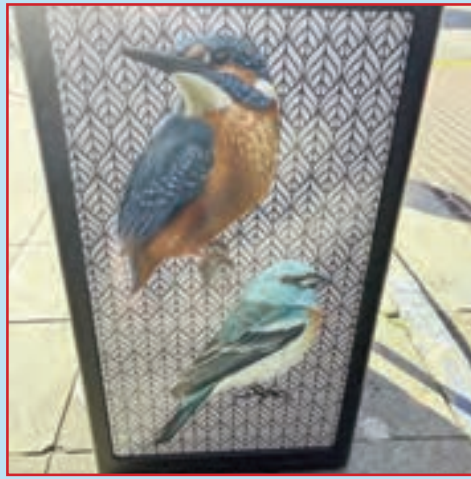
10. Where is the steepest drivable street in Noe Valley?

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THAT'S ALL FOR OCTOBER, FOLKS. See you next month. And...don't forget to vote on Nov. 3. ■



21 flower baskets



daily street cleaning

The Noe Valley Association is proud to celebrate **20** years



Noe Valley Association
A Community Benefit District
noevalleyassociation.org

of cleaning,
greening,
and improving
public space along
the 24th Street
commercial
corridor.



**Celebrate with us on October 24
at the Noe Valley Town Square!**

19 planter boxes



**NOE VALLEY
TOWN
SQUARE**



29 public benches