



More Demands for Justice. Noe Valley neighbors made a show of support in June by taking to a slowed Sanchez Street and saying that black lives matter. For more protest coverage and essays by two African American Noe Valley residents, see pages 8 and 9 of this edition. Photo by Sally Smith



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

The Valley Tavern And How It Came To Be

Vince and Declan Hogan Pour
Their Generous Spirits Into
Local Venue

By Megan Wetherall

If you’ve lingered over a pint at the Valley Tavern at 4054 24th St., then you have steeped in a fascinating history that spans more than a century, from when the bones of the building were first laid shortly after the 1906 earthquake right up to the precarious present.

According to local legend, the original structure was a storage space that became the overflow mortuary for a crematorium located in what is now the Peruvian restaurant Fresca. After a stint as a coffee shop in the 1940s, the place was re-vamped as the first in a long line of bars, which included the Celtic Tavern, Murphy’s Irish Inn, Finnegan’s Wake, the Rat and Raven, the Coyote Club, and most recently, since 2007, the Valley Tavern.

Noe resident Mary McFadden is the oldest of 10 children and grew up next door to this colorful establishment during the 1960s, in the small Victorian where her mother still lives. She describes a working-class immigrant neighborhood of bars, bookshops, and bakeries. Her father, a Scottish immigrant from the slums of Glasgow, had his doctor’s office in their house and frequented all the bars.

“Bars were the province of men,” Mc-



The Garden Is Open: Though the interior of the Valley Tavern is off limits to patrons, service is happening in the spacious outdoor area. Photo by Megan Wetherall

Fadden recalls dryly. “And these were his patients, the people he served. There were radios instead of televisions, and the bar windows were always open with guys hanging out, and you could hear the ball game or live music out on the streets.”

Tracing the Roots Of Abby (and Alexander) Fisher

Born a Slave in the South,
Cookbook Author
Called Noe Valley Home

By Evelyn Rose

Editor's Note: A few years back, in our May 2017 issue, the Noe Valley Voice published a short piece by bookstore owner Celia Sack in which she described one of her most prized possessions, a cookbook by Abby Fisher, an African American woman living in San Francisco in the 1880s. With her recent rediscovery that Fisher had resided in Noe Valley, historian Evelyn Rose approached the Voice in late 2019 to ask if she could share what she had learned about Mrs. Fisher and her road from the deep South to a wood-frame house on 27th Street. We are pleased to print it here.

What We Haven’t Known That Mrs. Fisher Already Knew: Some Insights for a Southern Culinary Mystery

By Evelyn Rose, Glen Park
Neighborhoods History Project

What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking, Pickles, Preserves, etc., a small book published by the Women’s Co-operative Printing Office of San Francisco in 1881, was once

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A Special Day. The bride and her maids stop to confer in front of St. Paul's Catholic Church after a wedding in this photo from the 1950s.
Photo and information courtesy [OpenSFHistory.org](https://opensfhistory.org/) / Western Neighborhoods Project / David Gallagher



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More of our neighbors have stepped up to demonstrate with a cash donation, their appreciation for the work of the Noe Valley Voice. We're extremely grateful to the people listed below, and to those we hope will join them.

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Serenity Spot. Many backyard gardens provide a safe space for Noe Valley residents as in this photo from February.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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Assault	3	2	1	1	2	9
Robbery	2	1	0	2	2	7
Other Miscellaneous	5	6	3	6	7	27
Fraud	4	6	0	4	3	17
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J-Church Route To Be Shorter in August

It May Be a Loopy Idea

By Matthew S. Bajko

When the Muni subway system returns to service in August, J-Church riders can expect a major change in the route. The line’s inbound trains will now make their final stop at the intersection of Church and Market streets, then turn around to head back outbound to the terminus at the Balboa Park Station near City College.

To continue downtown, riders will need to descend underground via the Church Station and board subway trains headed inbound.

The route change has long been talked about but gained renewed interest last year during neighborhood discussions about the J-Church Improvement Project. In recent months, the idea got a push from Covid-19.

Due to the configuration of several of the J-line’s street-level stops, such as on Liberty Hill near Mission Dolores Park, Muni can only use one-car trains on the J-Church, which runs south through the Castro/Mission and Noe Valley.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency hopes a shorter above-ground route will help spread out riders and increase the frequency of trains along the notoriously slow line. If cars are no longer bunching up outside the tunnel and people are more evenly distributed, passengers may be able to keep a safe social distance and thus contain the spread of coronavirus.

Because of the health crisis, a dramatic

decline in transit ridership, and rising concerns among SFMTA employees, the subway system was closed in late March in keeping with city and state shelter-in-place orders.

As more businesses reopen in the coming weeks, and schools get ready to welcome students back for the fall semester, the SFMTA is readying to revive subway service in August. It has yet to give an exact date, though, for when it will do so.

T & M and L & K to Be Linked

Riders will encounter several other changes to the subway lines. The M-Oceanview line is being combined with the T-Third line and will run with two-car trains servicing the new longer route. The L-Taraval and K-Ingleside lines are also being “interlined” into one new route with one-car trains.

Like the J-Church trains, those trains will no longer enter into the underground subway system, as they used to do via the West Portal Station. They will remain aboveground and run from the San Francisco Zoo to City College at the Balboa Park Station. Riders will need to disembark at West Portal to transfer to the M/T line or to S-Shuttles to get downtown.

More S-Shuttles with two-car trains will also be run between the West Portal and Embarcadero stations. The N-Judah subway line that runs from Ocean Beach to downtown will return to its normal route in August with two-car trains.

Speeding Up the Tunnel

By reducing the number of lines inside the underground system, Muni expects service will be faster along all of the lines and fewer trains will get stuck inside the subway system.

“We are all too familiar with the routine backups that occurred in the Metro rail tunnels before Covid-19,” acknowl-

edged the SFMTA in a June 18 post on its website announcing the coming changes. “Trains would be stuck outside the tunnels, between stations, and on the platforms for long periods, often unable to let customers on or off. For years J-Church and N-Judah customers have experienced delays waiting to enter the tunnel at Duboce.”

District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman, who has been working with city officials on plans to improve Muni service, said he hoped the coming changes provided commuters with more reliable, faster service.

“If reliability increases, people will be happy. But if it turns out people are waiting a long time to get on a train in the tunnel, it is not going to be good,” he said.

As for additional changes Muni has

been considering for the J-Church line, such as eliminating the inbound stop at 29th Street and removing parking spaces to make passengers more visible to drivers, those decisions still need to be discussed and approved by the SFMTA board of directors. It remains unclear when such changes will be before them, as the agency’s spokeswoman told the *Voice* in late June no hearing date had been scheduled.

“The stop changes near 29th and 30th that are part of the J-Church quick-build project still need to have a public hearing regarding those changes, and they are not part of the service changes,” explained Erica Kato, SFMTA’s acting chief spokesperson. “We will be communicating that with the public once a hearing is set.” ■



We’re Shoeless: On May 28, Astrid’s Rabat Shoes, a fixture for 42 years at 3909 24th St., closed its doors and tiptoed away, after loading up 1,100 pairs of shoes for donation to a St. Anthony’s program to clothe the homeless.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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Photo by Art Bodner

March for Racial Justice

400 Walkers on Sanchez Street

By Corrie M. Anders

More than 400 people turned out for a march on Sanchez Street June 6, to protest the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and racial inequality around the country.

The size of the crowd surprised Noe Valley resident Amy Morgenstern, who had organized the event just a few days before.

“I was amazed at the turnout,” said Morgenstern, an employment attorney. “I didn’t think anyone would show up.”

Morgenstern, who has lived in the neighborhood for eight years, said she was inspired by national and global demonstrations in support of Black Lives Matter, a movement for racial justice launched on Twitter in 2013.

“My thinking was...Noe Valley has a role to play in all of this, and we needed to show up physically in a demonstration of some kind,” she said.

The march began at 11 a.m. at 24th and Sanchez and moved south on Sanchez to



Photo by Sally Smith

Photo by Sally Smith



30th Street for a short rally there. Then it turned around and came back to 24th and rallied again. Walkers, most wearing masks, carried signs and chanted “Black Lives Matter!”, “I Can’t Breathe!”, and “No Justice, No Peace!”

Morgenstern said she wanted to hold the protest “in our community because with mass transit closed or scary, I couldn’t imagine how people with young kids could get to a demonstration downtown easily, and also I thought we could do a good job with social distancing.”

She put up fliers and posted notices on Facebook and Nextdoor. “People really came out—old hippies, middle-schoolers, parents with kids in strollers, and everyone in between,” she said.

The mood at the event was somber, however. Many in the crowd had seen on their phones or TV the horrendous, nearly nine-minute suffocation of George Floyd at the hands of police May 25.

Morgenstern has set up a Facebook group, Noe Valley for Racial Justice, so people can “contribute to and learn from the Black Lives Matter movement.”

After the demonstration, local supporters established a mini-library in front of Holey Bagel, 3872 24th St. The kiosk was stocked with books—from memoirs to novels to history—“dealing with this issue of race.”



Photos by Najib Joe Hakim

Ernest Brown

I moved to the Bay Area from Detroit/Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1974. When I arrived in the Bay Area, I was told that it was not as friendly a place as the Midwest. I started to experience a difference in the style of relationships.

In the Midwest, I had a circle of friends that I expected to spend time with nearly every day. I found the Bay Area much more transient, with people coming and going and changing jobs for a variety of reasons. Although people were friendly on the surface, that didn't lead easily to the types of bonds that I had had previously. Eventually, I did acquire a tribe.

I was also surprised to experience San Francisco as a place without Black people. I had spent most of my life (even on vacation) in areas that had large populations of Black people. However, I was fortunate to take up the game of Go, which brought me to a unique and multi-cultural den of tobacco enthusiasts, in a little room in Japantown, a space provided by a Japanese Buddhist sect. San Francisco's Go Club was the world's most multi-ethnic Go club. In other places in the world, there were separate Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and dominant-culture clubs. San Francisco was able to hold all of these groups together, which provided me with a rich experience of cultural exploration.

I married in 1987, and Lynn and I moved to Noe Valley in September of 1988. We couldn't afford to purchase a home here. However, someone we met (only once) loaned us the money to partner with him and his wife in a two-flat tenancy-in-common. Our flat on Cesar Chavez Street was an extreme fixer-upper that my wife has weekend warrior'd into a rather wonderful and tranquil space. Our niece now lives in the other flat with her husband and two daughters.

Prior to getting married, I lived in Cow Hollow, Twin Peaks, Laurel Heights, and Fillmore districts. Each district has its unique interest, but the Church Street Martha's Coffee has made me feel more a part of a neighborhood than any other place I've lived. Martha's staff learns their patrons' names and really gets to know them. And as a result, I think, the customers really get to know one another. In 1992 we hosted a Martha's contingent to join us to watch election night. One of my joys while at Martha's is studying Go games. For many years I felt like every regular learned to play the game from me. (Not many kept playing, but they indulged me.)

Our particular block has quite a few longtime homeowners who preceded us and remain today. At least three families are three generations into homeownership, and several others have more than our 30-plus years. Interestingly, we also have more than our share of Noe Valley African American families.

I can't remember any racial bias I have experienced while living in Noe Valley. However, my work with San Francisco youth keeps me involved with the opportunity challenges they face. And we should all do our best to understand the historical facts that have systematically led to the opportunity gaps for Black people in America.

Although we may have our own Noe Valley bubble, we will still have opportunity to impact the wider demographic at the polls. I recommend Dr. Joy DeGruy's website for up-to-date ideas on how to be a part of this struggle (joydegruy.com).

Ernest Brown, 70, is a psychologist with Richmond Area Multi-Services, a private, non-profit mental health agency in San Francisco.

Iris Fluellen

“You're a single woman, you need to own property” was the advice of a friend, a real estate attorney, whom I had the good sense to listen to in 1993. I, along with three strangers, bought a four-unit building as a tenancy-in-common on Duncan Street, fulfilling my wish to become a homeowner before I turned 40.

There isn't a day that goes by that I don't thank God, Buddha, Allah, et al, for taking my friend's advice. It took everything I had, including forgoing vacations for many years. There is no way I would be living here or anywhere in San Francisco if I hadn't heeded her words. It was worth it.

When I moved to San Francisco in 1982 after my divorce, I lived in Glen Park, a neighborhood I had never heard of. I was seeing a therapist who ran his practice out of his home on Elizabeth Street. I would always give myself time after to explore 24th Street, which I loved. At the time I thought, “Someday I want to live in this neighborhood.”

Like the rest of the city, my beloved hometown of Oakland, and the Bay Area as a whole, Noe Valley is a very different place these days. I have to consciously steer myself from falling into the trap of “nostalgia-itis” or railing against the techies, who can't be bothered to look up from their phones to say hello.

With the tragedy of George Floyd's murder and the bringing to light of this country's animus towards Black people, I have been surprised and heartened by the number of BLM placards I see in people's windows when I walk around the neighborhood. It makes me cautiously optimistic. Signs or catchy slogans aren't a substitute for the serious work that needs to be done, but it's a start. Noe Valley isn't a bastion of diversity, to say the least, but neither are most of the city's neighborhoods.

This is my home, having lived here longer than anywhere, including the house I grew up in, in Oakland's Temescal District. I am fortunate to have great neighbors, call Martha's (Church Street) *Cheers* without the booze, and have created a sense of community.

When I'm out walking with friends who don't live here, they're often amused by the number of people I say hello to. My response is, “It's because I'm Black and easily remembered.” There's some facetiousness to that

statement. But as comfortable as I am living here, and as nice as people are, I never forget how people either consciously or unconsciously perceive blackness.

No matter what color they are, when I tell people where I live, I note their reaction. What I find most interesting is when I tell white people I have lived in Noe Valley for 27 years, the first response I often get is, I must have great rent control. When I say I'm a homeowner, they are often surprised. Black people react with pleasure when I say I own my home.

Full confession, when I am running errands, heading off to work, as a fundraiser for the San Francisco–Marin Food Bank, if I see another Black person, I always make a point of smiling and saying hello. If I am at a neighborhood event, I will ask, how long have you been in the neighborhood, how do you like it? It's my effort to make them feel safe, and let them know they have a kindred spirit in me.

Iris Fluellen is the capital campaign director at San Francisco–Marin Food Bank, a nonprofit that weekly helps feed 32,000 households.

Black Lives in Noe

Editors' Note: After the brutal killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, we joined in the universal outcry against racism and police brutality. As protests filled the streets of San Francisco and prescriptions for change consumed the media, we looked for a way the Noe Valley Voice could be a part of the discussion.

Among our readers, friends, and contributors and via social networks like Facebook and Nextdoor, we reached out to African Americans, asking if they would share their personal experiences living, working, or playing in Noe Valley. We also sought their views on racial bias in the neighborhood, which according to data-tracker StatisticalAtlas.com, was 72 percent white and only 1.8 percent African American in September 2018.

Two longtime neighborhood residents, Iris Fluellen and Ernest Brown, responded with thoughtful essays. Here are their unfiltered observations.



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Tales of the Tavern

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The McFaddens didn’t keep liquor in the house because when they had company, her father would just ring down and order, and Mary would be sent to fetch the tray. When the coast was clear, she and her brother Michael used to clamber out their window onto the roof of Murphy’s and look below at all the people. Then they’d shimmy down to the vast open back yard that ran from the auto shop next door to the end of the block where it reached Castro.

“We had a whole imaginary country back there, a jungle of dill, weeds, and fennel. It was fabulous. There was no beer garden then, and today back yards have pretty much disappeared in San Francisco,” Mary McFadden laments.

Renewed Life in the Garden

Recently, on a balmy June afternoon on their second day of being open for outside dining service, I spoke to the father and son co-owners of the Valley Tavern, Vincent and Declan Hogan. The beer garden out back was humming with good cheer and gratitude as the sun beamed down on customers sharing some laughs, drinks, and card games, almost like old times except for the masked staff and the interior devoid of patrons.

The Hogans were clearly delighted to see their customers again. “When we opened the doors yesterday, three Irish guys ran in and they stayed all day,” Vince told me in his thick Irish brogue, chuckling at the thought. “It was a great first day open,” added Declan, the oldest of four children born and raised in Noe Valley, and the one who has chosen to follow in his father’s footsteps.

Vince has officially retired from the business now and handed over the reins to Declan. He has come a long way from the 29-year-old man who arrived in San Francisco from Dublin in 1982, fleeing the high unemployment in Ireland and a sense there was not much upward momentum in his life.



The front window at the Valley Tavern is open for pickup of salads and sandwiches, thanks to a partnership with Bistro Sf Grill.

He had been invited to California by some Polish refugee friends he had met while working in a pub in England, and decided it was time to try his luck in America. He arrived with \$500 in his pocket and no intention of ever going back. “I was the first in my family to do it, but three of my sisters followed and then my brother. My mother has nine children, so she was only getting rid of half of us,” Vince laughs.

His first digs were in the Tenderloin and infested with cockroaches, but he was determined to find a job. Three weeks later, down to his last \$10, he was offered one by the Irish owner of the Dover Bar on 18th Street. Not long after, he got a job

at Noe’s Bar at the corner of Church and 24th streets. Still, he always knew he wanted his own bar one day and that the opportunity would come. “They love the Irish here. When you come to America, you’re treated well and accepted immediately.”

He calls what happened next “my American dream.” Down the road at 3838 24th St., a bar called the Valley Cavern was for sale. It was 1987. “I went to the real estate guy and he loaned me \$60,000 to buy the building, and asked me to pay him back in a year, which I did.”

Vince was known as “The Dubliner,” so that’s what he named his new pub, and it became the first of a string of Dubliners around the city. But Vince always nursed an ambition to own the spot that was to become the Valley Tavern, which when he first arrived in the neighborhood was coming to the end of its chapter as Finnegan’s Wake, the bar that followed Murphy’s Irish Inn.

The Finnegan’s Era

Finnegan’s Wake—which incidentally is the birthplace of the *Noe Valley Voice*, cooked up by a group of friends there one fateful night in 1977—was opened the year before by a group of mates keen to invest in a new bar.

One of them was Tom Frenkel, who describes himself as a “typical rebel hippy,” who ran out of St. Louis after getting his law degree and landed a place to stay with a friend on Noe Street. “I was walking around the hills in my cowboy boots, and my calves were so sore,” Frenkel remembers ruefully.

He recalls a “working-class, blue-collar Irish and Latino neighborhood” and paying \$165 a month to rent his first home. “There were a bunch of fights when we first started Finnegan’s. It was a really sleazy rough hole in the wall, a major step below a dive bar. It smelled horrible. It had a low-hung ceiling, which we knocked out.”

Among Frenkel’s favorite memories of Finnegan’s Wake was when the 49ers won their first Super Bowl in 1981. The bar, which wasn’t that big at the time and had just one TV, was mobbed. “The city went absolutely insane,” he recalls. “You couldn’t get a car up and down 24th Street for about three or four hours.”

Every St. Patrick’s Day, the bar was rammed wall to wall. “We couldn’t pour Guinness fast enough, it was a big party scene.” Frenkel estimates he broke up some 200 fights, but in the same breath he remembers “there were a lot of marriages that came out of that bar.”

In September 1984, when Finnegan’s Wake was thriving, the landlord served the bar with a 30-day notice to quit the premises and refused to negotiate. It was shut down soon after. Frenkel was devastated. “Everybody loved it, and all of a sudden it was gone. After I lost the lease, I didn’t go near Noe Valley for about 10 years. It was pretty traumatic,” Frenkel said. (He was later able to reopen Finnegan’s Wake at 937 Cole St., which is run today by his daughter Melinda.)

After the bar had a brief run as Noebody’s Inn, the 14-year reign of the Rat and Raven began. Mary McFadden remembers it as a tougher pub than Finnegan’s Wake. Vince Hogan says it evolved into “a bike messenger place with a lot of hipsters and great beer and music.”

After one of its owners, Horst Grahlmann, was murdered at his home at the Russian River, the next iteration of the bar was the Coyote Club. It lasted until 2007, when Vince’s ultimate dream came true and he launched the Valley Tavern.

Learning Bar Etiquette

Vince beams when he talks about it: “The Valley Tavern is my most successful bar and my favorite. It’s a lovely lay-



Vince Hogan and son Declan stand ready for the day when they can completely reopen the Valley Tavern, a 24th Street bar with a long and colorful past. Photos by Megan Wetherall

out, wide, with high ceilings and the garden. It’s a fabulous place. And it has that history, going back to the mortuary. There have been occasions when my son and I feel there is someone in the building, and glasses even pop off the glass rack. Customers sometimes tell me they feel something.”

But that hasn’t put off Declan Hogan, who accompanied his father to work from when he was a boy. Young Declan was in charge of such duties as emptying the pay phones of all their quarters and rolling them up, then charging his dad a fee.

Declan vividly remembers how nervous he was on his first day behind the bar soon after turning 21 a decade ago. He had completed college and bartending school, but “I had never really interacted with customers. I was shy, and it was challenging to juggle conversations and learn how to cut people off without being rude. This job has taught me communication skills.”

The Hogans remind me that in England and Ireland bartenders don’t really talk to you, but over here you could have a full bar and you are still expected to talk to everybody. The difference is that America is a tipping and service culture, so part of the job is to be entertaining as well as a therapist. “So you walk up and down,” Vince explains, miming holding a cloth in his hand. “We call it walk and wipe.”

Both Cheers and Friends

The Hogans’ longest standing employee is Rikky O’Keefe, also from Dublin, whom Vince recruited to the Dubliner when it opened and who’s worked in the business “longer than I’ve been alive,” Declan laughs. Other staunch members of the team are Brittany Freed, who went to Sacred Heart with Declan and joined the Tavern in 2011, and Catey Knox, a family friend, who came on board in 2012.

They also happen to be Declan’s roommates. “That’s something unique about the Valley Tavern,” Declan explains. “We are a close-knit family which allows us to work so well together and to all know the customers. I probably know a thousand people by name.”

At least 60 percent of the customers are local and many are families spanning several generations. A common connection seems to be St. Philip’s School a block up the hill, where the Hogan and McFadden children were educated, as were most of the employees who grew up here.

At the end of a busy shift in the days

before Covid, Knox and Freed would drive home to Bernal Heights, while Declan prefers a peaceful walk through the empty streets to clear his mind before bed.

For now, while serving drinks and food (hearty sandwiches or refreshing salads prepared courtesy of a Covid-inspired partnership with Bistro SF Grill) out of the tavern’s 24th Street window and in the beer garden, the Hogans and their reduced staff are grateful to be keeping busy with long-overdue renovation projects.

When I asked what they could expect to offer at the bar in the coming months, they explained that it was really hard to predict, as the state and city guidelines seemed to be constantly changing. So, they are taking it day by day.

They have been touched by the support of the neighborhood’s residents, who have come to their window for a little sustenance, even on cold foggy afternoons, or for a few words with a friend, albeit a socially distanced one.

“What is Noe Valley without its bars? Without a place to congregate?” Vince asks. “People miss that camaraderie, that place to go every day. People can easily go down to the liquor store and buy a gallon, but it comes down to having somebody to talk to. They come down to the bar to watch the sports and hang out with people. That’s what it’s all about.”

As Mary McFadden observed time and again growing up next door, bars are indeed, as the Valley Tavern slogan reads, “Where the Neighborhood Meets.” From her unique vantage point, she salutes the Hogans for creating a pub culture rather than a bar scene, which she calls “a testament to them and their values and the idea that things are still family oriented. It doesn’t seem that a bar would have much to do with family, but it does.”

McFadden says she has met so many wonderful people at the Tavern and appreciates the trust that underlies the conversations there, even those encompassing politics and religion. “That’s a kind of trust, isn’t it? You have a difference of opinion, but you’re going to work towards an understanding.”

Editor’s Note: On June 26, Mayor London Breed announced that due to a rise in Covid-19 cases the city was pausing the next stage of reopening, which included bars for outdoor (sidewalk) drinking. Bars with permitted food service and offering physically distanced seating in a patio or beer garden were continuing to operate.

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What We Know of Mrs. and Mr. Fisher

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

believed to be the first cookbook written by an African American. While Abby Fisher’s cookbook is now known to be chronologically second, it remains the first known cookbook published by a former African American slave.

In her “Preface and Apology,” Mrs. Fisher relates, “[A] book on my knowledge and experience of Southern Cooking, Pickle and Jelly Making, has been frequently asked of me by my lady friends and patrons in San Francisco and Oakland.” What must be her apology follows: “Not being able to read or write myself... caused me to doubt whether I would be able to present a work that would give perfect satisfaction. But, after due consideration, I concluded to bring forward a book of my knowledge.”

Noting her experience of “upwards of thirty-five years,” she describes her book as a “complete instructor, so that a child can understand it and learn the art of cooking.” Her 160 recipes and cooking techniques for stews and soups, baked, boiled, and roasted meats, pickles, sauces, desserts, and remedies reveal Mrs. Fisher knew a lot about cooking.

The cookbook captures the many essences of Southern cooking that arose from centuries of influence from African-based flavorings and cooking methods, brought as memories to the New World

identified.

After arriving in California, she received a diploma for her pickles, sauces, jellies, and jams at the California State Fair in 1879, and was awarded two medals at the Mechanics’ Institute Fair in 1880. She and her husband also opened a pickle manufactory on Second Street in 1879, and by 1881 her cookbook had been published.

The Fisher family moved to Noe Valley in 1888. They soon purchased a home near the corner of 27th and Sanchez streets from real estate agent Joseph M. Comerford, who also had transactions with Mary Ellen Pleasant, the mother of California civil rights (see *Noe Valley Voice*, March 2019). The Fishers’ youngest daughter lived in the home until her death in 1954.

When culinary historian Karen Hess republished Mrs. Fisher’s cookbook in 1995, she speculated that the Fishers endured a “terrible trip to California” in the early 1870s, that the “newfangled rail” on the recently completed transcontinental route west would have been “costly” for the family, and that it was “not inconceivable that Mrs. Fisher signed on as a cook on a wagon train.”

New research has unearthed details that may cast doubt on that scenario.

Examiner Provides a Clue

PICKLES and FRUIT. The purest home-made Pickles and Preserves of all kinds put up in the good old Southern style. A liberal discount to the trade. Address, Mrs. Abbey Fisher and Husband, 569 Howard St, San Francisco.

Appearing in the *Placer Herald* on Dec. 13, 1879, this earliest known advertisement for Mrs. Fisher’s pickles and fruit may have signaled the launch of the Fishers’ culinary career in San Francisco.

The Fishers’ entrepreneurial success appears to have been immediate. By July 1881, Mrs. Fisher had relocated her pickle manufactory to 202 Dupont St. (today’s Grant Avenue at Post Street) and published her book. The *San Francisco Examiner* identified Mrs. Fisher as the “colored cook” from Mobile, Alabama, proclaimed the cookbook as “excellent... a neat cookery-book,” that “...reflects credit upon Mrs. Fisher, the publisher, and shows what our southern colored people can and will do.”

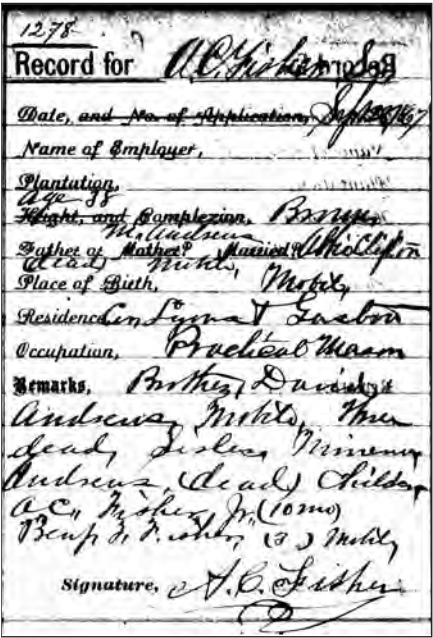
Moreover, the *Examiner* revealed a new fact: Mrs. Fisher had been “raised” in the family of a certain Newton St. John, also of Mobile.

The St. Johns of Mobile

A native of New York, Newton St. John relocated to Alabama in the 1830s. His first wife, Maria Jane Pope, was the niece of Alabama’s first governor, William Wyatt Bibb. By 1854, St. John was on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad Company board of directors and a senior partner of the banking house of St. John Powers &



Celia Sack, owner of Omnivore Books on Food, holds her first-edition copy of *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking, Pickles, Preserves, etc.* Photo by Evelyn Rose



In Freedman’s Bank Records for Sept. 28, 1867, A.C. Fisher stated his age was 38 and complexion brown. Image courtesy Ancestry.com

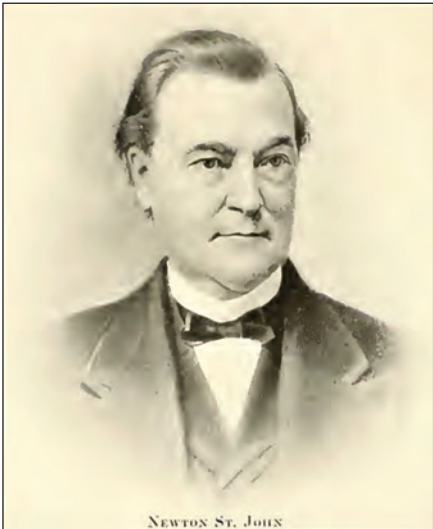
during the slave trade. Transplanted foods native to Africa, including okra, rice, eggplant, peanuts, and cowpeas, were introduced in the United States early on.

According to Celia Sack, proprietor of Omnivore Books on Food on César Chávez Street, “Abby Fisher’s importance as the first previously enslaved African American female cookbook author cannot be underestimated. Slaves brought so much of their African heritage to Southern American cooking and were rarely, if ever, credited for the influence they had over American cuisine.”

What We Know About Mrs. Fisher

Despite the efforts of historians, Mrs. Fisher’s early life has largely remained a mystery.

Born in South Carolina about 1832 to a white (possibly French) plantation owner and a black woman, she was living in Mobile, Alabama, with her husband, Alexander C. Fisher, by the late 1870s. Because of the paucity of records for African Americans during slavery, the year she arrived in Mobile is not known. In her book’s final recipe, she shared she had “given birth to 11 children and raised them all.” Only five have so far been



Newton St. John, slave owner of the Fisher family. Image from the St. John Genealogy by Orline St. John Alexander, 1907, available on Archive.org.

Company of Mobile. According to the 1860 Federal Census, his personal value was \$350,000 and his property value \$140,000 (equivalent to \$9.8 million and \$4.0 million today). While some culinary historians have assumed Abby Fisher lived on a plantation, the St. John residence was located just a few blocks from Mobile’s city center.

As the Civil War began in 1861, St. John moved his family to New York. When he returned to Mobile at the end of the war, his business was in shambles. He soon moved back to New York City.

The Fishers in the Antebellum South

Alexander C. Fisher is first named in the Mobile County Colored Population Census of 1866. In U.S. Freedman Bank Records from 1867, he stated he was 38 years of age with brown complexion and that his wife’s maiden name was Clifton, his mother’s maiden name was Andrews, and his occupation was practical mason. His children at the time included A.C. Fisher Jr. (10 months) and Benjamin T. (3 years).

The Federal Census of 1870 adds that Mr. Fisher was also a minister. It also lists the value of the family’s home as \$800 (just over \$16,000 today). Besides Ben and A.C. Jr., there are two more children listed, Lizo J. (2), and Jennie (2 months).

In 1875, Alexander is listed in the Mobile directory as the “col’d” pastor of State Street Methodist Church, a historic African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church still active today. His ministry extended into Florida at a time when the church was expanding throughout the Gulf states. Between 1869 and 1873, Mr. Fisher officiated at weddings and attended regional AME Zion conferences, serving as secretary. With young children to tend to, it is likely Mrs. Fisher remained at home during his travels.

A Link with Ulysses S. Grant

In 1871, Mr. Fisher was also serving as Customs Inspector for the Treasury Department at Perdido Key, Pensacola, Florida, about 60 miles east of Mobile. Reporting to R.A. Stearns, Deputy Collector, he earned \$1,095 annually (about

\$24,000 today).

In 1869, Florida Republicans were embroiled in “feuds and dissensions” led by a corrupt Florida state senator, Pensacola’s George E. Wentworth. Appointed by President Ulysses S. Grant as U.S. Marshal, Wentworth worked to replace anyone who disagreed with him, including the highly respected Perdido customs collector, Hiram G. Potter Jr., in June 1871.



Alexander C. Fisher, profiled in *Democracy’s Colored Army*, from the *San Francisco Examiner*, Sept. 27, 1890.

Stearns, Potter’s replacement, sent Mr. Fisher with a message for personal delivery to President Grant: “This will be handed to you by Rev. A.C. Fisher who has the confidence and respect of a large majority of the Republicans of this county... Be so kind as to listen to Mr. Fisher’s story and you will confer a great favor upon us.”

In August, Mr. Fisher telegraphed Grant himself: “A Colored man named Harriod left Pensacola Tuesday for Washington it is supposed with bogus papers against Collector Potter... please take no notice of him till you hear from me.” The outcome of this communication remains unknown.

Alexander had clearly established a

The Fishers of 27th Street

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

name for himself as a member of the clergy, as a secretary at AME Zion conventions, and as a messenger to the President of the United States. This experience would serve both him and Mrs. Fisher well once they arrived in San Francisco.

San Francisco Bound

In early 1877, about the time the AME Zion Church was encouraging its clergy to go west, the Fishers sold their home in Mobile for \$500 (\$12,000 today) and headed to San Francisco.

It is possible the Fisher family traveled west not by wagon train but via rail. They may have secured railroad passes because of the late St. John’s position on the board of the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, or financial support may have been provided by the church or from the Fishers’ own earnings and home sale.

The Mobile & Ohio Railroad’s northern terminus was at Columbus, Kentucky. From there, passengers could transfer to



Broadside for the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway, ca 1890. Image from Boston Rare Maps.

the St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad that ran to Cairo, Missouri. We know the Fishers passed through Missouri because census records show that Mary Matilda (Tillie) Fisher, their last child, was born there in 1877. In Cairo, transfers for Denver and all points west could be made to the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway (the company regularly advertised in the African American press).

A Falling Out with Church Elders

Having arrived in San Francisco, by April 7, 1877, Alexander was appointed Elder of the San Francisco Zion Church. By July, he was employed as messenger for Mayor Andrew Jackson Bryant. In the 1878 San Francisco directory, however, Alexander is working as a coachman for Edward E. Eyre, stockbroker.

Apparently, Alexander had come to disagreement with the leadership of the First AME Zion Church of San Francisco, having filed suit in October 1876 for \$689.75 (nearly \$17,000 today) for services rendered as pastor under contract. The Church filed a response in February 1878, claiming Alexander had never been employed for any term, and had not provided any services as pastor, “except in an ignorant, wretched, insulting, and unsatisfactory manner,” and that Alexander had “falsely represented himself fully competent.” Strong words for a man highly respected in the South who had done so much to expand the reach of the

AME Zion Church.

By September 1878, Mr. Fisher and San Francisco’s First AME Zion Church had had a very public falling out that led to his expulsion. Mr. Fisher claimed he had come “...to San Francisco to preach the Holy Ghost” but instead found that some AME ministers were pursuing more disreputable interests. Alexander could not approve of the “sensualities practiced,” he was quoted as saying. “Nearly all the preachers had three or four concubines besides their wives.” Mr. Fisher’s expulsion, along with his wife’s success at the State and Mechanics’ Fairs, may have been the impetus for opening Mrs. Fisher’s Pickle Manufactory.

Mrs. Fisher’s Friends

Mr. Fisher’s employment with prominent people implies connections. Perhaps President Grant offered him a personal letter of introduction. Or perhaps the elite group of “friends” listed in Mrs. Fisher’s book preface—who had connections to either President Grant’s military service, the cotton industry, the Republican Party, Comstock Silver Kings, or “fashionable” boarding houses—smoothed his path.

By 1884, Alexander was a regular speaker at the Colored Central Democratic Club. Sadly, in 1886 the Fishers’ third child, Eliza, passed away at the age of 17.

In 1885, Mrs. Fisher is listed in the San Francisco directory as a caterer, professional cook, and giving “lessons in cookery.” Her final business listing appears in 1890. In that same year, Alexander Fisher, now 54 years old, was profiled in *Democracy’s Colored Army: Sketches and Portraits of Some of the Leaders*, appearing in the *San Francisco Examiner*. The following year, the mayor’s office reported, “A. C. Fisher, the colored messenger who has so faithfully performed the duties of his position for eight years past, retires.”

By 1888, the family was residing near the corner of 27th and Sanchez streets in Noe Valley. The following year, their address was specified in the city directory as 436 27th St. In 1892, they moved to the 300 block of 27th Street.

By 1910, the census records the Fisher home as “free of mortgage.” While Mrs. Fisher had claimed in her book she could



The Fishers’ home from 1892 to 1954 was in the 300 block of 27th Street. Image from the San Francisco Office of Assessor-Recorder Photographs, San Francisco Library, ca 1945.

neither read nor write, in this census for the first time the answer is marked in the affirmative.

Abby Fisher passed away in 1915, and Alexander followed seven years later. Both are buried at Cypress Lawn Cemetery in Colma in unmarked graves, later joined by three of their children.

The Fishers’ Descendants

Members of the family remained at the 27th Street residence for nearly seven decades until the deaths of daughters Jennie in 1938 and Tillie in 1954.

Robert King, 79, a longtime resident in a home on César Chávez Street at 27th Street, remembers how his family, sitting in their kitchen, could look out their win-

dow into Tillie Fisher’s kitchen and strike up a conversation.

“Tillie was a very nice lady,” King recalls. “She worked downtown at one of the theaters [the Curran] and was a matron there. She was a real lady. When she went out, she wore the hats and the gloves.”

King remembers the Fishers’ large back yard (now smaller after the footprint of the home was enlarged in recent years) and how Tillie would tend to her flowers and vegetables. King said Tillie never mentioned her mother’s cookbook.

“She lived alone and had converted the house into two units. She had grown fond of the young couple living upstairs with their young children and when she passed, she left the home to them.”

Mrs. Fisher’s Legacy

In her review of Mrs. Fisher’s recipes, culinary historian Toni Tipton-Martin notes how “touches of artistic excellence show up in embellished European recipes such as roast venison seasoned with a little green (fresh) thyme, or Crab Croquettes and Compound Tomato Sauce (ketchup), spiked with a bit of fine red pepper, as ‘crabs should be seasoned high to be nice’; ... and her Stuffed Ham laced with sherry and baked with a sprinkle of nutmeg.”

Tipton-Martin further writes, Abby Fisher “pushed notions about black cooking as an art beyond survival.”

Indeed, the Noe Valley resident left a trove of recipes and a lasting legacy. While we’ll never know everything that Mrs. Fisher knew, we now know a bit more.”

Evelyn Rose is the director and founder of the Glen Park Neighborhoods History Project, a group that holds history walks (both real and virtual) in Glen Park, Glen Canyon Park, Sunnyside, Fairmount Heights, and Diamond Heights. If you would like to support the project, join in activities, or add your memories to the research, go to www.GlenParkHistory.org or contact Evelyn Rose at GlenParkHistory@gmail.com. To view a digital copy of Abby Fisher’s cookbook, visit the Internet Archive at archive.org/details/whatmrsfisherkno00fishrich/mode/2up.

A Taste of Mrs. Fisher’s Recipes

Here are a few of the selections from Abby Fisher’s *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking, Soups, Pickles, Preserves, etc.* (San Francisco: 1881). The cookbook can be found at archive.org/details/whatmrsfisherkno00fishrich/mode/2up.

Baked Fish

See that fish is well cleaned. Then salt and pepper inside and out, two or three hours before stuffing it or baking.

For the stuffing, grate stale bread enough to fill the fish, then put it on fire in a skillet, and add one tablespoon of butter and one of lard. Chop fine one slice of onion and four sprigs of parsley; season with pepper and salt; let the stuffing stay 5 or 10 minutes, stirring it to keep from burning; then stuff the fish until it is perfectly full. Sow it up with a needle and thread and put it to bake in a medium hot stove; pour about half a tea cup of water in bottom of pan when you put fish on; while fish is baking, baste or spread a little butter on top of fish until it browns, when it will be ready for table.

Jumberlie—A Creole Dish

Take one chicken and cut it up, separating every joint, and adding to it one pint of cleanly washed rice. Take about half a dozen large tomatoes, scalding them well and taking the skins off with a knife. Cut them in small pieces and put them with the chicken in a pot or large porcelain saucepan. Then cut in small pieces two large pieces of sweet ham and add to the rest, seasoning high with pepper and salt. It will cook in 25 minutes. Do not put any water on it.

Boiled Corn

Always put the corn on in boiling water and salt, cooking for seven minutes; a longer cooking than this will take all the sweetness from the corn.

Stewed Tomatoes

First scald the tomatoes in boiling water and then peel the skin from them, then cut them up in small pieces, cutting also one slice of onion fine in them; add no water; bread crumbs, one tablespoonful of butter, pepper and salt to taste. To one dozen of tomatoes, half a tea-cupful of bread crumbs.

Chicken Soup for the Sick

Take an old chicken and put on with one gallon of water; boil down to half a gallon. Take the yelks [yolks] of two eggs, tie them up in a clean cloth with a little thyme and put in the soup after you have strained the meat from it, and put back to boil till down to three pints. Dish up and send to table hot. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

The Cost of Living in Noe

Limp Sales in May

By Corrie M. Anders

The month of May was pretty much a dud for real estate sales in Noe Valley. Just four single-family detached homes closed escrow during what is normally one of the busiest months of the year, according to data supplied to the *Noe Valley Voice* by Corcoran Global Living San Francisco.

That's a decline of 56 percent from May of 2019, when nine homes changed hands.

Condominium sales suffered an even harder fall. Corcoran reported only three deals this May, compared with 11 the same month last year—a decline of 73 percent.

It was the second consecutive month of weak trading.

“It’s all because of the coronavirus,” said Corcoran President Randall Kostick in explaining the anemic real estate sales.

As part of the city’s March 16 shut-down to prevent the spread of coronavirus, “open house” tours were prohibited. The restriction prevented potential buyers from wandering through homes to scope out kitchens, bedrooms, and other features that might grab their eye.

“People were hesitant to close [escrow] on a property they had not seen,” Kostick said. People want “to walk through the interior, and we couldn’t do that in April.”

The rules were relaxed May 6 to allow shoppers, under certain conditions, to



This iconic Victorian on 23rd Street sold in May for its \$4.5 million asking price. The home sits on a 4,500-square-foot lot and is detached on all sides. Photo by Corrie M. Anders

visit properties for sale. Agents could now offer a private showing of a house, but to no more than two people at a time.

As could have been expected, the prices of the homes that sold in May showed a decline, too. The average price buyers paid for a single-family detached home was \$2.7 million, almost 12 percent lower than last year’s average (\$3 million). Condo values also fell, going from \$1.4 million to \$1.3 million, a 6.5 percent decline for the handful of properties sold. Still, don’t bet money on those trends—the samples are too small.

The most expensive residential property traded in May was an elegant Queen Anne in the 4200 block of 23rd Street at Eureka Street, with five bedrooms and 3.5 baths in 3,190 square feet of living space.

Built in 1893 by famed architect William S. Mooser, the home had been updated to include a spacious living room with a gas fireplace, a custom-designed kitchen, lofty ceilings throughout the main floor, a breakfast room with sun deck overlooking the garden, and a grand staircase descending to a family room and au pair or guest suite. The iconic Victorian, known for gardens on all sides and poppy murals by artist fnch, sold for its \$4.5 million asking price.

For Noe Valley’s costliest condominium in May, the final price was \$1,565,000, 8.3 percent less than the seller’s listed price for the home (\$1,695,000).

Located in a two-story 1908 building in the 3600 block of 26th Street between Church and Sanchez streets, the renovated residence—with three bedrooms and two baths—featured an open-plan living and dining area, a luxury kitchen, radiant floor heating, a shared roof deck with soaring views, a private patio, common garden, and a one-car garage.



Noe Valley’s costliest condominium in May, a bi-level residence on 26th Street, sold for \$1,565,000—8.3 percent less than the seller’s asking price. Photo by Sally Smith

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						
May 2020	4	\$1,900,000	\$4,500,000	\$2,693,750	13	107%
April 2020	2	\$1,850,000	\$3,500,000	\$2,675,000	10	107%
May 2019	9	\$1,815,000	\$5,395,000	\$3,050,000	23	109%
Condominiums/TICs						
May 2020	3	\$925,000	\$1,565,000	\$1,348,333	75	100%
April 2020	4	\$1,275,000	\$2,175,000	\$1,715,000	10	112%
May 2019	11	\$580,000	\$1,740,000	\$1,442,727	10	119%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
May 2020	2	\$2,225,000	\$2,800,000	\$2,512,500	78	98%
April 2020	1	\$3,350,000	\$3,350,000	\$3,350,000	64	96%
May 2019	4	\$2,000,000	\$3,736,495	\$2,864,124	17	114%
5+-unit buildings						
May 2020	2	\$2,225,000	\$2,800,000	\$2,512,500	78	98%
April 2020	2	\$5,750,000	\$6,965,000	\$6,357,500	46	100%
May 2019	3	\$7,600,000	\$9,900,000	\$8,833,333	189	96%

*Survey includes all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley for purposes of this survey is loosely defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Noe Valley Voice* thanks Corcoran Global Living San Francisco for providing sales data. NVV7/2020

Noe Valley Rents**

Unit	No. in Sample	Range June 2020	Average June 2020	Average May 2020	Average June 2019
Studio	9	\$1,895 - \$2,600	\$2,292 / mo.	\$2,571 / mo.	\$2,425 / mo.
1-bdrm	42	\$2,350 - \$4,450	\$3,099 / mo.	\$3,218 / mo.	\$3,167 / mo.
2-bdrm	49	\$2,900 - \$6,995	\$4,125 / mo.	\$4,672 / mo.	\$4,593 / mo.
3-bdrm	32	\$3,995 - \$12,500	\$6,118 / mo.	\$5,630 / mo.	\$7,433 / mo.
4+-bdrm	11	\$5,295 - \$19,000	\$8,840 / mo.	\$9,126 / mo.	\$11,450 / mo.

**This survey is based on a sample of 143 Noe Valley apartment listings appearing on Craigslist.org from June 5 to 12, 2020. NVV7/2020



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Cat and Dog Lover - Responsible: Services offered: In home visits, fresh food and water, medication, companionship and waste cleanup. Overnights are available. Daily text, photo and home security. References available by request. Mary 415-994-4853.

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Even when it's breezy, Lola and Felix Pizzato-Smith enjoy scaling the local peak Billy Goat Hill. From there, they can see the houses of Noe Valley and the boats on the bay. Photos by Art Bodner

NOE
KIDS
BY KATIE BURKE

Lola and Felix
Pizzato-Smith

Lola, who will turn 11 in July, and Felix, 7, live on Noe Street with their mom and dad, Tonia Pizzato and Simon Smith.

“Mama is a full-time mama,” says Lola. “She’s probably the best mama ever. She puts her whole life into it. Oh, and she’s going to be a preschool teacher. She just got her preschool license. She’s really good with young ones.”

Felix chimes in, “My dad is a director of films.”

Over the past few months, Lola and Felix have been Zoom-schooling and making face masks for their neighbors, using Lola’s sewing machine.

“We searched up many prototypes,” says Lola. “I made 11 different mask types. Felix is awesome at cutting and pinning. He’s my pinning helper.”

When not sequestering at home, they attend La Scuola Italian-Immersion School. Lola will be in sixth grade this fall, and Felix in second—though each will be at a different campus. The family pet is a gecko named Piccola.

Asked how she plans to celebrate her birthday, Lola says, “I like to wait until my birthday and then decide. That’s the kind of person I am. But I’ll probably invite a couple of friends over. We could just hang out and talk—of course, keep our distance. A lot of my best friends live in Noe Valley.”

Lola is a synchronized swimmer with the San Francisco Merionettes, competing both locally and out of state.

In 2016, while watching the Olympics on TV, Lola saw synchronized swimming for the first time. “I said, ‘Mom, I want to do that.’ I was already swimming and dancing, so it was the perfect combo.”

Lola also plays on a soccer team. Felix swims too, and both kids do taiko (Japanese percussion) drumming.

Prompted by Mama to describe a taiko drum, Felix says, “I’d love to tell her. It’s a really big drum made out of wood, and the top’s made out of animal skin. Then it’s really, really loud.”

He adds, “The tradition of Japanese taiko drums is actually for the farmers. They would put them into the fields of

their grasses, and they’d bang on them to the sun god, and then it would rain and help their crops. So it was traditionally to alert the gods up in the higher level.”

Lola and Felix miss the buzz of their former classrooms.

“I’m a very kinesthetic learner,” Lola says, “which means I learn by doing, and you can’t be hands-on when you’re on screens all day. It’s really hard.”

“It’s boring,” Felix says of distance learning. “It’s hard to pay attention, because you can change your name and share your screen without people knowing, and you can text privately.”

Lola wishes the family had a cavapoo

or a Pomeranian husky. “I like the names Giya, Destiny, Calvin, and Keith,” she says.

Felix’s desired pet? “A turtle named Jeff.”

As for neighborhood places they’ve missed during the shut-in, Lola names the Noe Valley Town Square (“because I meet lots of dogs to hang out with”), Mitchell’s Ice Cream, the Upper Hand Nail Spa (for manicures and pedicures, and for haircuts with Alex Rocha), and Terra Mia Pottery.

What was Lola’s favorite thing she made at Terra Mia? “Hard to say,” she answers. “I made a little teacup set, and I put flowers on it.”

“I did a turtle,” Felix says.

For his Noe Valley spots, Felix favors Easy Breezy, where he enjoys topping his yogurt with mochi and boba balls. “I like Noe Valley Bakery, and then I like Eric’s [Restaurant],” he says. “Charlie’s Corner is also very nice to go to.”

Asked what they will do when shelter-in-place is over, Lola says, “Hard to say. We’re going to invite everybody over for a big celebration. I’m going in the pool with all my synchro friends, and we’re going to have a sleepover.”

Felix has other plans. “I’m going to watch TV.”

“You’ve been doing that all of quarantine,” Lola says.

“I’ve got it,” Felix says. “The movie theater!”



Lola and Felix have been busy this year making masks for themselves and their neighbors.

Katie Burke is a writer and family law attorney, who lives where Noe Valley meets the Mission. Her Noe Kids column features interviews with Noe Valley kids ages 4 to 12. In April, Burke published a collection of profiles of San Francisco children titled *Urban Playground* (SparkPress). Know a great Noe Valley kid? Email katie@noevalleyvoice.com.

· JULY & AUGUST 2020 ·

July 1-Aug. 20: Girls 15 and under are invited to send a 5-minute film to the fifth annual Noe Valley GIRLS FILM FESTIVAL, streaming on Sept. 12. Submission deadline: Aug. 20. nvgff.com.

July 1-29 & Aug. 5-26: The Castro FARMERS MARKET is open Wednesdays 2:30 to 7 pm, with the first hour reserved for seniors and others at greater risk. Noe at Market. pcfma.com.

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

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

July 1-Aug. 31: Charlie's Corner holds virtual STORY TIMES daily on YouTube. Noon and 3 pm. For info: charliescorner.com.

July 1-Aug. 31: Yoga Mayu offers online classes and OUTDOOR YOGA classes, with reservations required before class. 4159B 24th. For a schedule, yogamayu.com.

July 1-31 & Aug. 1-31: The San Francisco Public LIBRARY offers story times and career coaching online; access the events page at sfpl.org.

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

July 2: LITQUAKE on Lockdown features an online reading especially for 4- to 8-year olds, by surfer/journalist/dad Jaimal Yogis, from *Mop Rides the Waves of Life*. 4-5 pm. Sign up at litquake.org.

July 3-31; Aug. 1-29: Bird & Beckett bookstore hosts Friday JAZZ live-streaming from the shop. 7-8:30 pm. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

July 4-25 & Aug. 1-29: The Saturday Noe Valley FARMERS MARKET is open from 8 am to 1 pm (8 to 9 am for seniors); masks are required, 6 feet distancing. Prepared foods available to go only. 3861 24th. 248-1332; noevalleyfarmersmarket.com.

July 4-Oct. 24: The SF MIME TROUPE releases a nine-part series of radio play podcasts, "Tales of the Resistance," every two weeks, on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. sfmt.org.

July 5: The open-air Outer Sunset FARMERS MARKET & Mercantile features goods and food from 9 am to 3 pm. 38th Ave. between Ortega and Pacheco. sunsetmercantilesf.com

July 5: Shaping San Francisco leads a four-hour BIKE TOUR of the city's labor history. Noon-4 pm. Meet at 518 Valencia. RSVP to shaping@foundsf.org.

July 5 & Aug. 5: Political group ACTION SF hosts a virtual meeting, open to all, from 1 to 2:30 pm. Email actionsfsolidarity@gmail.com to receive the Zoom meeting link.

July 5-Aug. 16: The Stern Grove Festival streams free Sunday CONCERTS, "Best of the Fest," featuring past performers in various genres. 5 pm. sterngrove.org.

July 9: LITQUAKE on Lockdown features an online reading by Ilana Masad from *All My Mother's Lovers*. 6-7:15 pm. Sign up at litquake.org.

July 9: The NOE MUSIC Listening Club, formerly the NV Chamber Music Series, features "Textures," the second of Kai Christiansen's three-part series, "Motives that Move Us." 7 pm. Visit noemusic.org for info on how to join and upcoming concerts.

July 9: LITQUAKE hosts a memoir-writing "Workshop in the Woods" with Joyce Maynard, in Inverness, California. For information: litquake.org.

July 12: Melissa Clark discusses *DINNER in French: My Recipes by Way of France*. 3 pm. Omnivore Books, 3885A Cesar Chavez. Check to confirm: 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com.

July 12: LITQUAKE on Lockdown features a digital panel discussion, "A Family Divided," about immigration, with authors Kristen Millares Young, Donna Hemans, Aimee Liu, and Ellen Meeropol. 6-7:15 pm. Sign up at litquake.org.

July 12 & Aug. 9: The Seducers perform "outlaw, classic, and HONKY-TONK" country music at Bird & Beckett. 7:30-10 pm. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

July 14: LITQUAKE on Lockdown features Wayétu Moore's online discussion of her new memoir, *The Dragons The Giant The Women*. 6-7:15 pm. Sign up at litquake.org.

July 15: Emily Freeman discusses her book, *Failure to Appear*, at Bird & Beckett. 4-5 pm. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

July 16: LITQUAKE on Lockdown features an online discussion with Alexandra Petr about her new book of essays, *Nothing Is Wrong and Here Is Why*. 6-7:15 pm. Sign up at litquake.org.

July 20; Aug. 3 & 17: Bird & Beckett bookstore hosts POETRY READINGS followed by a virtual open mic on YouTube. 7-9 pm. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

July 23: LITQUAKE on Lockdown features an online reading by Canadian Billy-Ray Belcourt from his memoir, *A History of My Brief Body*. 6-7:15 pm. Sign up at litquake.org.

July 23: The Asian Art Museum streams a CONCERT by indie singer and songwriter Thao Nguyen. 7 pm. Go to asianart.org for log-in information.

July 31: Folio Books' BOOKWORMS Club on Zoom features Judd Winick discussing *Hilo Book 6: All the Pieces Fit*. 5 pm. RSVP for sign-in, foliosf.com/bookworms; 821-3477.

A Socially Distant Summer

The next *Noe Valley Voice* Calendar will appear in the **September 2020** issue. The deadline for items is August 15. Write to us! calendar@noevalleyvoice.com



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SHORT TAKES

Prepare for a Scavenger Hunt

Sick of staying inside? Ready for some physically distant, mask-wearing fun? An out-and-about scavenger hunt is being organized this summer by Resilient Noe Valley, our neighborhood disaster-preparedness umbrella group.

Are there things a scavenger hunt can tell us about disaster preparedness? Resilient spokesperson Dave Olson says, “None directly, but preparedness is all about relationships and familiarity with the neighborhood.”

The scavenger hunt will help with both. Participants will traverse the valley, working in teams. Teams can be made up of families or friends. Each team will be looking for locations of neighborhood note and will be provided with clues to find them. Once one is located, a team member will snap a photo and forward it to scavenger hunt central. We can have fun, get exercise, and learn more about the place we all call home. For free!

The hunt’s date was TBD as the *Voice* went to press. For updates, check the website empowersf.org/resilient-noe-valley or sign up for the Resilient Noe Valley newsletter and receive information on a range of topics, like what’s open and what’s not, how to handle a fire extinguisher, and whom to call about what.

It’s a Dog’s Life

Dogs never had to obey stay-at-home, but they were locked out of our local dog parks for more than two months. Not anymore! Both Joby’s Run and Upper Douglass Dog Park are open for dogs to do their essential business, meet old friends, and have a romp.

Joby’s Run is located in the park at Upper Noe Recreation Center. You can enter on either the Day Street or 30th Street side. Dogs may roam inside the fenced-in gravel area during normal rec center park hours, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week.

Upper Douglass Dog Park is at 800 Douglass St., at the corner of 27th Street. The grass is open to canines and their humans from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

In other doggone news, your pooches can now get a professional haircut (even if you can’t). Both neighborhood doggie-grooming salons are open by appointment only, no veterinarian order needed. Book your dog’s appointment at VIP Scrub Club, 1734 Church St., at 415-970-2231, or at VIP Grooming, 4299 24th St., 415-282-1393. No cheating and pretending to be Fluffy or Rover!

And we all know a dog—or cat, parrot, rabbit, or guinea pig—has got to eat. Further good news: Curbside pickup is no longer required at our two neighborhood pet supply stores, Noe Valley Pet Company at 1451 Church St., and The Animal Company, 1307 Castro St. You can browse inside again. Check the store websites for hours, be sure to wear a mask, and keep your social distance.

Make a Film, Girl

The Noe Valley Girls Film Festival wants you to make a movie and submit it to the fifth annual festival, which will be Saturday, Sept. 12. The rules are simple. The filmmaker has to be female and 15 years old or younger. The film can’t be longer than five minutes and must be G-rated. The deadline for submissions is Aug. 20, 2020.

Sisters Charlotte and Caitlin Kane, two of the event’s organizers, are encouraging newcomers. Caitlin says, “Anyone can



Noe Valley canines leapt for joy in June after the city gave them free rein to play at local dog parks, including Joby’s Run (above) and Upper Douglass Dog Park. Photo by Dave Emanuel



Photo by Nancy McGinnis

make a film. Be creative. Make something cool.” Charlotte adds, “We want to inspire people.”

Girls from Noe Valley and from all over the world can enter, since the committee uses filmfreeway.com for submissions, a free website that connects festivals and filmmakers.

Charlotte and Caitlin particularly urge girls 10 and under to submit a film. “That’s how we got started back in fourth grade,” Caitlin says. “On an old Apple computer. We put googly eyes on it, and we went on adventures.”

Five finalists will be named Sept. 5 in each of two categories, girls 10 and under and girls 11 to 15. All 10 finalist films will be shown festival night, which will be live-streamed this year.

Winners will be announced at the event. Prizes for the top three winners in each age group are \$100, \$200, and \$350. There will also be an audience award. Last year’s winner of that was San Francisco fourth-grader Mollie Weiss, for her

humorous *Lady Tiffin’s Travel Secrets*.

For inspiration, you can watch the 2017 and 2018 films at nvgff.com (click on Past Festivals). Under Resources, there are links to movie-making tutorials, animation and editing software, and royalty-free music and sound effects. Oh, and there’s a Submit button.

Bookworms Find Stories

Folio Books and Charlie’s Corner bookstores will offer more live-streaming events for children this summer. Folio Books continues its Bookworms book club for middle readers (8 to 11 years old) and Charlie’s Corner its readings for the picture book crowd.

Judd Winick will join the Bookworms kids online Friday, July 31, at 5 p.m. (Winick’s May in-person event had to be cancelled due to city health orders.) He is the author and illustrator of the popular Hilo books, about a hero robot come to earth. Winick will read from and answer questions about *All the Pieces Fit*, his

Spread the Word

Word Week is Noe Valley’s annual celebration of words—written, spoken, sung, and thought about. Although this year’s event had to be cancelled due to the novel coronavirus, hope is springing (eternally) for 2021.

Rick May, the Word Week committee chair for the residents group Friends of Noe Valley, says planning for next year will begin in August, and he’s looking for “authors, readers, and thinkers of all stripes” who can help brainstorm ideas and pick panelists for a week of events at venues in Noe Valley.

If you are interested in fun, literacy, and literature, contact May at wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com to volunteer.

sixth and final book in the Hilo series. The event is free, but registration at foliosf.com is required. You can buy copies of *All the Pieces Fit* and the five other Hilo books by calling the store at 415-275-1839 or emailing orders@foliosf.com.

Charlie’s Corner children’s bookstore continues daily story times at noon and 3 p.m. over its YouTube channel. You can access story-time archives at charliescorner.com. Click on Watch Charlie Time Videos.

No events yet at Omnivore Books on Food, according to owner Celia Sack, but you can browse and buy online at omnivorebooks.myshopify.com or at the store, 3885A Cesar Chavez St., Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

An Ear for Noe Music

Our venerable institution, Noe Valley Chamber Music, is getting a 28-year overhaul by co-artistic directors, musicians, and spouses Meena Bhasin and Owen Dalby, who took the helm last year. For one thing, the name has changed to Noe Music.

Bhasin explains that the change isn’t in name only. “We are trying to expand our audiences and better represent the actual demographic and age range” of the neighborhood. The new name also allows “more flexibility with different offerings we will develop.”

Some of this season’s new repertoire unfortunately had to be put on hold because of stay-at-home orders. Live presentations of three current series—Sundays at Four, Noe Music Kids, and Up Close and Personal—all were cancelled. Only the Noe Listening Club, which went online, has continued. In fact, it’s been expanded.

Twice a month on Thursdays, NLC offers digital music experiences from the Bhasin-Dalby living room. Some, led by musicologist Kai Christiansen, focus on great classical pieces. Others host guest artists, who entertain and educate listeners about their work. Recent guests have included opera composer Jake Heggie, movie score composer Nicholas Britell, and the St. Lawrence Quartet. To join the club, go to noemusic.org. Listening is a sliding scale from \$20 to free.

Plans for next season are under way, too. “September through May,” Bhasin says, “we will be featuring entirely local artists,” in virtual performances and live concerts, as health concerns allow. To hear the latest, sign up for the group’s email newsletter or follow Noe Music on Facebook or Instagram.



Caitlin Kane was clearly thrilled to hold the Oscar that the producers of the award-winning film *Bao* brought to last year’s Noe Valley Girls Film Festival. She invites girls to submit their films to this year’s event, to be held on Sept. 12. Copyright © 2019 Ted Weinstein

Short Takes were compiled and written by Richard May.

STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular Voice feature profiling new stores and businesses in Noe Valley. This month, we spotlight a new cafe that offers fresh pastries and “home-brewed” coffee and tea.

NOE VALLEY CAFE
1299 Sanchez St. at 26th Street
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The washing machines may be history but the donuts are back at the newly transformed coffeehouse on the corner of Sanchez and 26th streets. In 2015, Pacifica resident Maricar Lagura began operating a small coffee kiosk inside what was the Spin City Launderette & Coffee Bar at Sanchez and 26th streets. Patrons were quick to discover the donuts and other confections from the Mission-based bakery Dynamo Donuts. Lagura soon teamed up with Christian Ritter, the founder of local coffee roaster Noe Valley Coffee. He created a special roast just for Spin City, the Spin City Blend Hyperlocal Coffee, a medium roast using beans from Ethiopia and Central America. The pair then decided to join forces and revamp the laundromat space to focus solely on drinks and food. In late 2017, they began applying for the special permits they needed to build out the space and use it as a location to roast coffee beans. After navigating the planning process



Christian Ritter has brought his Noe Valley Coffee beans and a new roaster to the cafe he and Maricar Lagura opened in June at Sanchez and 26th streets.



The seating inside the new Noe Cafe on Sanchez Street was still off limits in June due to the city’s health guidelines. But the coffeehouse placed several tables outside on the sidewalk for customers to enjoy. Photos by Pamela Gerard

for two years, the co-owners started construction of their Noe Valley Cafe last December. The interior was completely gutted in order to turn the space into a coffeehouse. To the left in the back are three custom-built wood booths, while on the right-side wall are four small wood tables mounted to the floor which each seat two people. The Covid-19 pandemic and the shelter-in-place orders issued in mid-March delayed the cafe’s construction timeline by about two weeks. For now, the cafe’s indoor seating is not available to diners because of health restrictions. Still, with the city designating Sanchez Street a “slow street”—closed to through-traffic but inviting to cyclists, joggers, and walkers—the coffeehouse has seen a steady stream of customers since opening June 10. To accommodate the flow, Lagura and Ritter have put several tables and chairs outside on the sidewalk. Reaction from the neighborhood to the renovated space has been “truly amazing and just so welcoming,” said Ritter, who lives nearby. “We have had not one single negative interaction, which is just incredible. No angry customers, just 100 percent smiles—behind their masks, of course.” The middle of the storefront is now

dedicated to brewing their selection of coffee and tea drinks. There are also taps for beer and wine, which the cafe expects to begin serving in mid-July, when it also plans to allow customers to sit inside. “What we are hoping is it all kind of coincides,” said Ritter. To the left and right of the cash register are cases for various baked goods, including the Dynamo Donuts (\$3.50), which come in a variety of flavors from bacon to lemon poppyseed. Also available are croissants (\$4 or \$4.50 for almond or chocolate), scones (\$3.75), banana bread (\$3.75), and muffins (\$4.50), from another Mission-based business, Kahnfections. Also for purchase are cookies (\$3.25) from the locally owned Karen’s Cookie Kitchen. Customers can also buy 12-ounce bags (\$15) of every type of coffee bean the cafe roasts. Behind the coffee counter in the back of the space is a walled-off area where sits a shiny coffee-roasting machine. Customers can order brewed coffee (\$3.75), cappuccinos (\$4), and lattes (\$4.75), or teas in various blends from the California-based company Leaves & Flowers (\$4.75). “Our most popular drink has been our cold brew. We also have it on nitro, so it

is super cold and refreshing,” said Ritter. (A 16-ounce cold-brewed coffee is \$5, and the extra-cold nitro is \$5.50.) More food offerings will be added as the owners gauge what customers would like. The plan is for the space to serve as a coffeehouse in the mornings and more of a gastropub in the evenings, where people can grab dinner and a drink and relax with their friends or family. The hours of operation will be adjusted in the coming weeks. As of mid-June, the coffeehouse, which the owners call Noe Cafe for short, was open daily from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. —Matthew S. Bajko

LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters. Email: editor@noevalleyvoice.com. Or write Noe Valley Voice Letters, P. O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include your name, street, 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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SF LGBT CENTER

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and now for the

RUMORS

behind the news

Noe Valleyland

By Mazook

TWENTY-FOURTH STREET BEAT: In mid-June, businesses in Downtown Noe Valley were starting to open their doors, in response to Mayor London Breed’s partial lifting of stay-at-home orders in place since March 15. Restaurants could now open with outside seating, and retail stores could welcome their clamoring customers under strict masking and social-distancing rules. Even the mayor visited our commercial corridor to promote patronage of small businesses in the city.

In Noe Valley last month, barriers were lifted at Just for Fun, Folio Books, Cotton Basics, Xela Imports, Basil Racuk, Small Frys, When Modern Was, Wink, and Ambiance, to just name a few.

But we also learned many of our small businesses would never open again or were on the verge of closing soon. Gone after more than 40 years was Astrid’s Rabat Shoes at 3909 24th (which we lamented last month). Soon to close after 48 years in the neighborhood was Rabat clothing store, at 4001 24th.

Two Birds women’s boutique, at 1309 Castro, had its doors closed but we’re still hoping it will reopen. The almost three-year-old boutique at 3920 24th St., once filled with fashions by Youngjee Ahn, also appeared closed. It has no name now, but was Arte Bella in its heyday.

Soon to leave after a zillion years on 24th Street was the popular clothing store for both men and women, Cotton Basics (see below).

The Fit Lite gym on the corner of 24th and Church has closed. The 24 Hour Fitness chain filed for bankruptcy and announced it was closing 10 locations in the Bay Area, including Noe Valley’s and the one in the Castro.

The Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, according to President Rachel Swann, is “currently working on discussing closing parts of [24th] street on the weekends [to offer] more chances for people to enjoy outdoor food/drinks/shopping, as they are going to do in the Castro and on Valencia.”

Then, on Monday, June 29, a number of businesses that were poised to open—including hair and nail salons, tattoo studios, and bars—had to hit the pause button, due to a recent rise in Covid-19 cases in the city. Damn. My José de Jesús Noe tattoo will have to wait.



LONDON COMES TO NOE: Two weeks earlier, at around noon on June 15, Mayor Breed drew a large crowd as she, along with Supervisor Rafael Mandelman, began a tour of 24th Street. First they stopped at Nancyland Kids. Then they headed to Just for Fun, after which they walked to Novy’s for lunch.

In the entourage were folks from the Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development, as well as reporters with long microphone poles and camera crews from channels KTVU-2, KNTV-3, KRON-4, KPIX-5, ABC-7, and KDTV-Univision 14. Even Jeffrey Schaub of KCBS radio showed up for the event.

Each reporter took turns going into the small and very narrow Nancyland to interview Nancy Guettier about her reopening of her store, which caters to babies and kids. She told ABC reporter Kris

Reyes (who interviewed her outside) that she was a bit overwhelmed by all the attention and was sorry “my mask is hiding my best attribute: my smile.”

At the legacy store Just for Fun, which had just opened for people to come in and look over the fun and games stocked in the store, the mayor and supervisor browsed at length, along with several masked parents and children, who stayed socially distanced. Mayor Breed bought three items: a Dominoes set, a diary for herself, and a fancy candle for Supervisor Mandelman.

I had to laugh when I saw my face reflected in the plexiglass in front of the checkout counter on the ABC-7 coverage that aired later that afternoon. My own mask is seriously colorful.

Finally, there was a short press conference at Novy’s. After it, Breed and Mandelman sat down at one of the outside tables (which had been sanitized) and had lunch together. It was a cozy scene of political bliss. By the way, Breed had a kale salad with chicken added (“and no cheese, please”) and Mandelman had a Novy favorite, the Cobb Salad.



EATS, AL FRESCO: In addition to Novy, which has seven tables on the sidewalk, other eateries have opened and are serving outdoors. Patxi’s Pizza has four tables out front. Hi-Way Burger & Fry at 24th and Vicksburg assembled two outdoor tables, and the Valley Tavern has an open beer garden in the back.

Tables have popped up outside the Dubliner—on the sidewalk and in the parking space in front. The Diamond Cafe at Diamond and 24th has several outdoor tables, and two doors down at Bacco, which was one of the first restaurants in Noe Valley to open daily, you can sit at eight outdoor tables. Also, both locations of Martha & Bros. Coffee, 24th Street and Church Street, now have tables outside.

Down at Church and 30th, Cafe XO has put their tables back on the sidewalk, as has Toast Eatery a block away at Church and Day. The very popular Chloe’s at Church and 26th has set out their outside tables, as has Noeteca Wine Bar & Cafe at 1551 Dolores St.

It will be good news to many that Double Rainbow, on 24th Street in the mid-1970s and ’80s, will open a new shop two doors down from its original location in the Castro, at 415 Castro, just north of the Castro Theatre.



BLAME COVID: The *New York Times* sent writer Kerry Hannon to Noe Valley to do a story about what local restaurateur Azalina Eusope was doing during these pandemic times at Mahila, her Malaysian restaurant at 1320 Castro.

Eusope told the *Times* (June 19 issue) that she had had to change her business model at Mahila to survive. She didn’t lay off any of her employees at her Noe Valley restaurant or at her huge commissary kitchen (including a 7,000-square-foot hydroponic garden) in the Bayview when her large corporate catering business evaporated, but she almost had to.

“My catering business was my bread and butter,” Eusope told Hannon, “and all my large corporate clients—Salesforce, Twitter, and Google—closed their offices in the middle of March when the stay-at-home order happened and nobody was going to work. I had to close my food bar on Market (in the Twitter building) as well as Mahila here in Noe Valley.”

She stressed that her employees were her priority and paying the rent, “so now we are selling products to grocery stores like Rainbow.” She also started a GoFundMe site with a \$25,000 goal and has so far received over \$16,000. She also



Patty Woody, owner of Rabat at the corner of 24th and Noe streets, smiles as she welcomes old friends back to the store she opened 48 years ago in Noe Valley. Sadly, she has to tell customers she is closing in July and taking her inventory (just the shoes) to her store in Berkeley. The closing sale in Noe Valley will go “until we run out, so come soon.” We will.

Photo by Sally Smith

may apply for a permit from the city to set up tables on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant.

(Sorry to note that on Tuesday, June 30, someone broke into Mahila, causing \$13,000 in damages, according to ABC News. —Ed.)

Meanwhile, Ambiance, at 3979 24th St., reopened to shopping June 15, and gave 10 percent of the sales from its first week to Black Girls Code, an organization that empowers girls of color to become innovators in STEM fields.

And since the fashion shop was closed for three months, it’s holding a big sale, with 20 percent off full-price items and 50 percent off sale items (see ambiancesf.com). Owner Donna O’Leary says the store’s shorter pandemic hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and more discounts may be coming. Go get ’em.



DON’T BLAME COVID for the imminent closings of two anchor stores in Downtown Noe Valley. Rabat clothing store, which has stood on the corner of 24th and Noe for the last 43 of the 48 years it has been on 24th Street, will be closing on or before July 31.

Says owner Patty Woody, who used to live in Noe Valley, “Our lease is over at the end of July, and I will put all my efforts in our women’s shoe store at 1825 Fourth Street in Berkeley, which I have operated for the past 12 years in a shopping mall that has been very successful.

“I am so sad to leave Noe Valley and appreciate all the support we’ve received over the years from our customers, who came back to shop even after they moved out of the neighborhood,” she said. “But retail has gone down the past five years. It seems younger people are not shopping in stores anymore but rather online.”

Woody says Noe Valley’s Rabat will have to liquidate its entire inventory by the end of July, and true values can be found. Don’t wait.

Speculation that Cotton Basics was closing started at the beginning of June when a “For Lease” sign appeared in the window of the store, at 24th and Castro for over 30 years. Its original incarnation, Cotton & Company, opened eight years before that, in a store across from what was then Bell Market (Whole Foods). However, the store’s closing has no certain date yet, probably in the fall, and the space is now for sub-lease by Cotton, which is looking for a retailer to take over the space.

“I simply want to make my life simpler,” say co-founder Susan Ciochetto,

“since I moved to the East Bay a while ago and we make all our garments over there. We have two retail stores there, one in Oakland we opened last year and the other in Berkeley, and now things have become too difficult to manage...and I am not getting any younger.”

She says she has had to spend up to four hours commuting back and forth from the East Bay and [it’s hard to] staff the store with sales people. “I have been planning to do this for quite a while, and now the time seems right, so you might say we are shrinking but not closing.”

She also points out that all of your favorites will still be available online.



CIRCLING THE SQUARE: The Noe Valley Town Square will soon be putting out tables and chairs for visitors to sit and relax in. Program coordinator Leslie Crawford says this should happen “around the second week in July, as soon as we get the go-ahead from the city and the Park Department.”

“We will be setting up the tables and chairs with appropriate distancing and we will be washing them down every four hours, and we will provide a ‘washing station’ for everyone to use with sanitizers before they sit down and when the leave, as well as take all their trash with them,” says Crawford. “Groups should be from the same household with no more than six per table with all wearing masks unless they are eating.

“We hope that everybody acts responsibly and follows the rules, so we won’t have to roll it back,” Crawford says.

The Noe Valley Farmers Market has partnered with the non-profit Friends of the Children, SF Bay Area, who “serve children who face the greatest obstacles, providing each with a professional, salaried—not volunteer—mentor to walk beside them from kindergarten through high school graduation.”

Farmers Market board member Peter Gabel says that Friends of the Children has about 90 families in the Bayview neighborhood who are in dire need of food, so each week on Saturday mornings, the Farmers Market donates around \$500 of food purchased from the market’s vendors. Noe Valleon Michael Rugen, the group’s co-founder and executive director, and Frederique Clermont, the director of programs, pick up the weekly food and drop it off to be bagged and delivered to the families by the mentors.



KUDOS GO OUT to the business or property owners with boarded-up storefronts partnering with local artists to create murals up and down 24th Street and all over San Francisco. Two groups—Project Artivism (with its program Restore 49) and Paint the Void—have been active during these Covid daze in painting murals in our downtown.

Artist Renee DeCarlo of Artivism, who has a studio in the Mission, has been painting a mural on the building under construction where Small Frys used to be, at 4066 24th St. Lots of color!

“I am grateful for the opportunity to work and enjoy working on this kind of project,” DeCarlo says. “It is fun and a great opportunity to meet new people and work with the building owners on the design.”

Carol Yenne, one of Small Frys’ owners and a retired “mayor” of Noe Valley, says she is pleased with the mural and the color it adds to our main drag.



THAT’S 30, NOE FOLK: Have a safe, healthy, and happy summer. As the Tempos sang back in 1959 and the Happenings echoed in 1966, “See You in September.”

Adult Fiction

“Merry Prankster” Ed McClanahan revisits his early years in Kentucky in **Not Even Immortality Lasts Forever**.

Two fishermen try to stay alive after being stranded in the Pacific Ocean in **Beyond the Sea** by Paul Lynch.

Set in 1960s Martha’s Vineyard, **Summer Darlings** by Brooke Lea Foster is about a girl working as a nanny who aspires to a better life.

In Romesh Gunsekera’s coming-of-age novel **Suncatcher**, two boys—one a loner, the other a rebel with a wild streak—explore the changing world of 1960s Sri Lanka.

Inspired by historical events, **Keep Saying Their Names** by Simon Stranger follows a Nazi war criminal and a family of World War II survivors who at different times shared the same home.

Adult Nonfiction

In **Our Time Is Now: Power, Purpose, and the Fight for a Fair America**, political leader Stacey Abrams offers a blueprint to empower citizens to take back their country.

Black Imagination: Black Voices on Black Futures, edited by Natasha Marin, includes writings from people in diverse walks of life.

Rome Favourite Recipes: Traditional Cooking by Carla Magrelli includes 30 classic recipes.

Adult Movies on Kanopy

The leader of the Preservation Hall Jazz Band in New Orleans retraces his roots in the 2018 documentary **A Tuba to Cuba**.

Scotty and the Secret History of Hollywood is based on a scandalous memoir about Tinseltown movie stars written in 2012 by escort Scotty Bowers.

The 2010 historical epic **Princess Ka’iulani** unfolds during the last years of the 19th century as the female heir to the throne fights to defend Hawaiian independence.

The 1954 thriller **Dial M for Murder**, starring Ray Milland and Grace Kelly, is considered one of Alfred Hitchcock’s finest.

Adult eBooks

A social media influencer falls in love with a Cuban firefighter in **Island Affair** by Priscilla Oliveras.

In **The Burning** by Laura Bates, a girl running away from her past researches the life of a 17th-century woman accused of witchcraft.

Tara Nolan’s **Gardening Your Front Yard: Projects and Ideas for Big and Small Spaces** gives advice on treating your front yard like a back yard.

Chinese author Fang Fang describes the early days of the Covid-19 outbreak in

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Hollywood in Noe by Michael Blake

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MORE BOOKS TO READ

Summer, by the Book

With many of us staying at home curled up in a chair, this could be a record year for **Summer Stride**, the San Francisco Public Library’s annual summer reading program. Although the fun kicked off in June, Noe Valley Librarians Denise Sanderson and Catherine Starr invite you to start your own race to reach 20 hours of reading by Aug. 16. That will entitle you to this year’s prize, a Summer Stride Library book tote featuring art by picture book author Alison Farrell. The library has lots of eBook recommendations, as well as weekly online programs and STEM challenges to help you accomplish the goal. Go to YouTube and search for the tutorial “Show and Tell with SFPL” or “Sweet Stories with SFPL” for children.

The librarians also recommend you follow sfpl.org or these social channels to get updates on library services:

Facebook: [@sfpl.org](https://www.facebook.com/sfpl.org)
Instagram/Twitter: [@sfpubliclibrary](https://www.instagram.com/sfpubliclibrary)
YouTube: [San Francisco Public Library](https://www.youtube.com/San Francisco Public Library)

Staff members are still functioning as essential workers at branches all over the city. However, change is coming. The San Francisco Public Library says it anticipates reopening slowly over the summer for curbside pickup.

Until that happens, you can explore the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch online or commune with our librarians by perusing the new books and films they’ve suggested on this page. If you need assistance with your library card or have other questions, please call 415-557-4400, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Now, ready, set, *read!*

Wuhan Diary: Dispatches From a Quarantined City.

Abigail Gerwitz suggests ways to approach difficult emotional issues in **When the World Feels Like a Scary Place: Essential Conversations for Anxious Parents and Worried Kids**.

Children’s Fiction

Summer Song, written by Kevin Henkes and illustrated by Laura Dronzek, celebrates the sights and sounds of the season. Ages 3 to 7.

Two children experience the extremes

of weather in **Desert Girl, Monsoon Boy**, written by Tara Dairman, illustrated by Archana Sreenivasan. Ages 4 to 8.

In **This Way, Charlie**, written by Caron Levis, illustrated by Charles Santoso, a blind horse and a gruff goat make friends. Ages 4 to 8.

Author and illustrator Corinna Luyken playfully turns her accidental splotches into art in **The Book of Mistakes**. Ages 4 to 12.

In **Facts vs. Opinions vs. Robots**, Michael Rex points out the facts, with the help of cartoon robots. Ages 5 to 8.

Author Renée Watson and illustrator Nina Mata bring us **Ways to Make Sunshine**, a book about a kind girl named Ryan Hart. Ages 8 to 10.

Graphic novel **Yorick and Bones**, by father-daughter duo Jeremy Tankard and Hermione Tankard, is about a skeleton and the dog who unearths him. Ages 8 to 11.

A 10-year-old goes on a quest to find his great-uncle in **Horten’s Miraculous Mechanisms: Magic, Mystery and a Very Strange Adventure**, by Lissa Evans. Ages 9 to 14.

In **Mary Underwater** by Shannon Doleski, a girl accomplishes the feat of building a submarine. Ages 10 to 14.

Children’s Nonfiction

Meghan McCarthy explains firefighters’ training and everyday responsibilities in **Firefighters’ Handbook**. Ages 4 to 8.

Musicians ages 6 to 10 will be inspired by **Guitar Genius: How Les Paul Engineered the Solid-Body Electric Guitar and Rocked the World**, written by Kim Tomsic and illustrated by Brett Helquist.

Smile: How Young Charlie Chaplin Taught the World to Laugh (and Cry), by Gary Golio with illustrations by Ed Young, covers the childhood and early stages of the actor’s career. Ages 8 to 12.

Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai features first-person accounts in **We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World**. Ages 12 and up.

Children’s eBooks

A mother rabbit and her young bunny look at their neighborhood in **The Way Home in the Night**, written and illustrated by Akiko Miyakoshi. Ages 3 to 7.

In **Town Is by the Sea**, written by Joanne Schwartz and illustrated by Sydney Smith, a young boy thinks about his father, who digs for coal under the sea. Ages 5 to 8.

A grandfather travels to the North Pole to see real polar bears, in **The Last Polar Bears** by Harry Horse. Ages 6 to 9.

In **The Best Man** by Richard Peck, a middle school boy is chosen to stand up in the gay wedding of two of his personal role models. Ages 8 to 12.

In Anna Meriano’s **A Dash of Trouble**, a Texas girl prepares for the Dia de los Muertos festival. Ages 8 to 12.

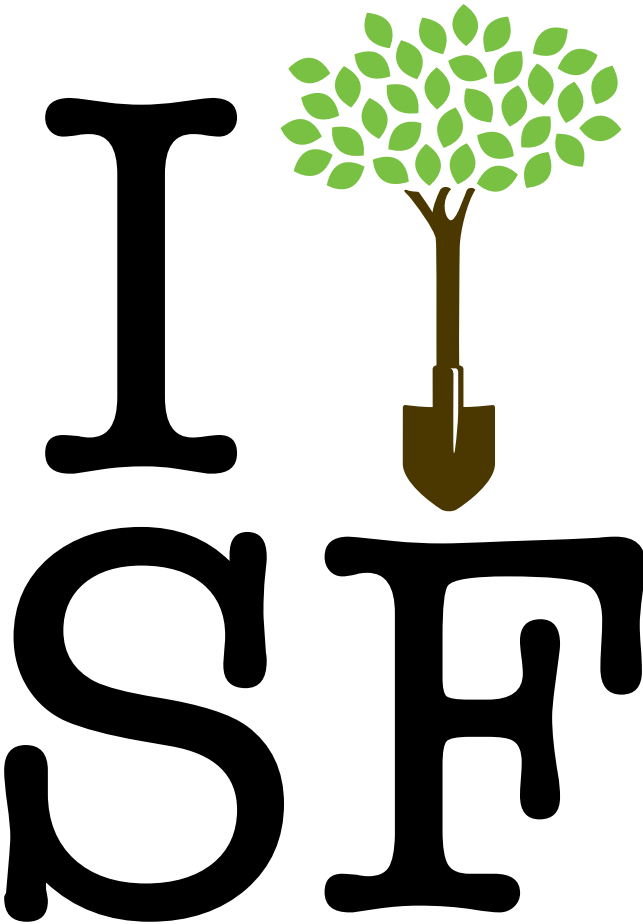
A young boy in France is drawn into an international band of child thieves in **The Whiz Mob and the Grenadine Kid**, by Colin Meloy, with illustrations by Carson Ellis. Ages 8 to 12.

A girl skips school to investigate family secrets in **Apartment 1986** by Lisa Papademetriou. Ages 10 to 14.

Annotations by Noe Valley Voice
bookworm Karol Barske

BRANCH HOURS*

Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library* 451 Jersey St., 355-5707							
Sun 1-5	Mon 12-6	Tues 10-9	Wed 1-9	Thurs 10-6	Fri 1-6	Sat 10-6	
Mission Branch Library* 300 Bartlett St., 355-2800							
Sun 1-5	Mon 1-6	Tues 10-9	Wed 10-9	Thurs 10-9	Fri 1-6	Sat 10-6	
Glen Park Branch Library* 2825 Diamond St., 355-2858							
Sun 1-5	Mon 10-6	Tues 10-6	Wed 12-8	Thurs 12-7	Fri 1-6	Sat 1-6	
Eureka Valley–Harvey Milk Branch Library* 1 José Sarria Ct. (3555 16th St.), 355-5616							
Sun 12-6	Mon 10-9	Tues 12-9	Wed 10-6	Thurs 1-6	Fri 12-6	Sat 12-6	
*Note: In compliance with city health orders, all San Francisco libraries have been temporarily closed to the general public. For updates, go to www.sfpl.org .							



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www.fuf.net
415-268-0772

Action SF, The National Movement in Your Neighborhood
www.facebook.com/actionsfsolidarity,
http://resistrypac.org
Email: actionsfsolidarity@gmail.com; Zoom
virtual meeting: first Sundays, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
All welcome.

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

Castro Community on Patrol
Website: castropatrol.org
Next volunteer patrol training Tuesday,
March 10, 7-10 p.m. Sign up via website.
Email: info@castropatrol.org

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

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

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

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

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

Friends of Billy Goat Hill
Contact: Lisa and Mo Ghotbi, 821-0122
Website: www.billygoathill.net

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

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

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

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

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

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

Friends of Upper Noe Dog Owners Group (FUND OG)
Contacts: Chris Faust, David Emanuel
Email: info@fundogsf.org
Website: www.fundogsf.org

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

Juri Commoners
Contact: Dave Schweisguth, M17-6290
Email: dave@schweisguth.org
Website: meetup.com/Juri-Commoners
Meetings: Most last Saturdays, 9-noon.

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

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

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

Noe Valley Association—24th Street Community Benefit District
Contact: Debra Niemann, 519-0093
Dispatch: To report spills, debris, or garbage
on 24th Street, call Ron Vanini, 596-7089.
Email: info@noevalleyassociation.org.
Website: noevalleyassociation.org
Board meetings: Quarterly. See website.

Noe Valley Farmers Market
Open Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., and
Tuesdays, 3 to 7 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: Rachel Swann, 225-7743
Meetings: Last Thursdays, Old Republic,
4045A 24th St., 9 a.m. Call to confirm.
Website: www.NoeValleyMerchants.com

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

Noe Valley Parents, San Francisco
Listserv contact: noevalleyparent-
owner@yahooogroups.com. Subscribe:
noevalleyparentssubscribe@yahooogroups.com

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

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

Resilient Noe Valley
Contact: Antoinette or Jessica
Email: resilientnoevalley@gmail.com
Newsletter signup:
http://eepurl.com/gYuCD5
Website: www.empowersf.org/resilient-noe-
valley/

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

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

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

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

All phone numbers are in the 415 area code.



be willing
be patient
be super
be home.

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GLOBAL LIVING



Goodbye Old Friend. Our changing neighborhood now marks the closing of Rabat at the corner of Noe and 24th Street. It's a particular loss for local women who will now have fewer choices when shopping for clothes in downtown Noe Valley. *Photo by Jack Tipple*

rabat Noe Valley

CLOSING!

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