



# THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

## Readers Weigh In On Cesar Chavez Street Renaming

Voice Poll Prompts 700 Ideas—  
Some Serious, Some Not

By Corrie M. Anders and Sally Smith

One person thought Carlos Santana was the perfect replacement name for Cesar Chavez Street. Another suggested the honor should go to artist Ruth Asawa.

But not everyone picked a local icon. Nearly 700 people responded to an informal *Noe Valley Voice* survey on Facebook. It asked their choices for renaming Cesar Chavez Street.

When we began polling March 19, San Francisco seemed ready to erase “Cesar Chavez”—across streets, schools, and parks. The day before, a *New York Times* story had revealed allegations that the civil rights leader, who co-founded the United Farm Workers in the 1960s, had used his position of power to abuse women, including UFW co-founder Dolores Huerta.

“It is inevitable that [Cesar Chavez] street will be renamed,” said District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman, president of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Mission District Super-

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## Xela Imports Weathers Uncertain Times

Shop Faces Tariffs, Rising  
Costs, and Shifting Habits

By Matthew S. Bajko

Since 1984, Xela Imports has been a staple retail store in Noe Valley, selling jewelry, clothing, and handmade goods from around the globe. In 1992, Alessandro Bifulco took over the business and was joined a year later by his sister, Paola Heins.

From their store on 24th Street—which began in a “subterranean” space at 3961-1/2 24th St., then moved to 3925 24th St.—the siblings have watched the neighborhood change around them. They remember when the Second Spanish Baptist Church across the street was torn down and replaced with condos over commercial spaces and when the grocery store next door went from being Bell Market to Whole Foods.

They’ve said goodbye to fellow small retailers, who closed their doors as younger residents moved into the neighborhood and began to buy online rather than in brick-and-mortar shops. The forced closure of non-essential stores in 2020 due to Covid led to further disruptions to their business.

The siblings had just started to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



**Street Name Swap?** Noe Valley residents were quick to erase “Cesar Chavez” from home addresses last month, after learning disturbing news about the once revered co-founder of the United Farm Workers movement.

Photo by Renee Koury

## From Porch Songs to Music In the Square

How Gil Guillermo Is Shaping  
Noe Valley’s Sound

By Maria Verissimo

After years of acoustic-only performances, the Noe Valley Town Square has a new sound. Thanks to a recently granted amplification permit, music booker Gil Guillermo is expanding the lineup, bringing in diverse performers, and changing the experience for musicians and audiences alike.

When thinking of 2020, the need for social distancing instantly comes to mind as we remember the first days of the pandemic. The distance between neighbors, loved ones, and friends was established: 6 feet. However, times of hardship usually lead to innovation and creativity, and the need for community was a driving force for many in Noe Valley.

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## Cameras Ready?

Girls Film Fest Rolls Into Year 11

By Corrie M. Anders

The Noe Valley Girls Film Festival, now in its 11th year, has set the date for the 2026 event. It’s Saturday, Sept. 12, 4 p.m., at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.

The NVGFF has also started accepting film submissions via the Noe Valley Girls Film Festival page at the site <https://filmfreeway.com/NoeValleyGirlsFilmFestival>.

The rules invite girls to submit films in two age groups: 10 and under and 11 to 16. Entries can be comedic or serious



but should be G-rated and no longer than 5 minutes.

Festival organizers are also seeking volunteers, who are under 18 years old, live in San Francisco, and love seeing or making movies, to join the team that stages the event. Volunteers hold bake sales, review movies, solicit new submissions, find sponsors, and do other planning. (They also decide where to put the popcorn stand.)

The festival hands out prizes, including a first-place cash award of \$250, second place \$150, and third place \$50—in each age group.

The submission deadline is Aug. 15. Finalists are expected to be announced by Sept. 1, with winners revealed at the festival event. For more information or to volunteer, email [info@nvfff.com](mailto:info@nvfff.com) or the FilmFreeway platform above. ■



**A Local Gem:** With their eclectic store Xela Imports, Paola Heins and Alessandro Bifulco have spent 34 years adding sparkle to 24th Street.

Photo by Sally Smith



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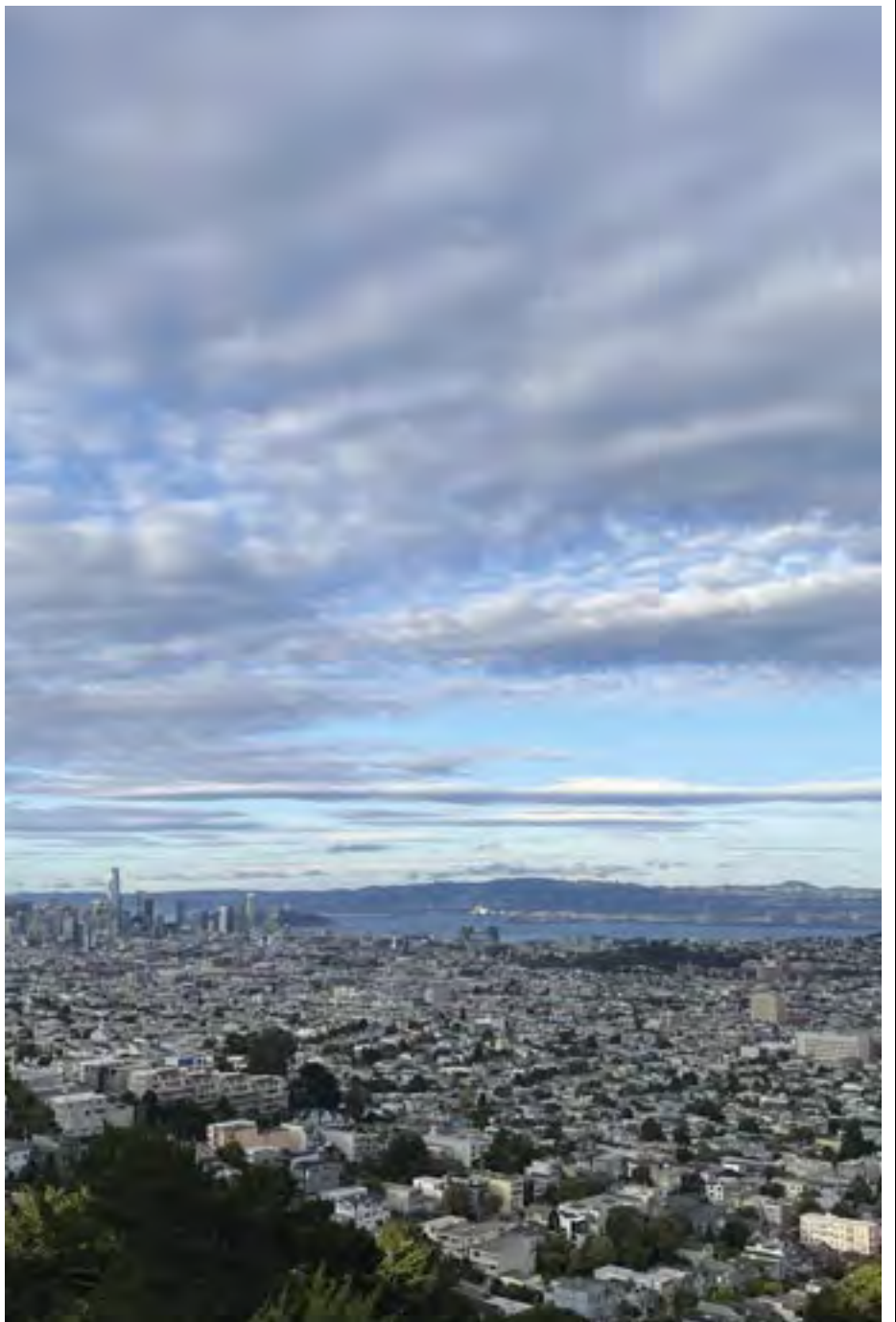
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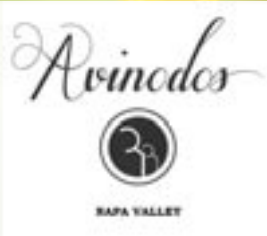
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CO-PUBLISHERS/EDITORS  
 Sally Smith, Jack Tipple

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS AND EDITORS  
 Corrie M. Anders, Associate Editor  
 Heidi Anderson, Matthew S. Bajko, Owen Baker-Flynn, Karol Barske, Michael Blake, John Ferrannini, Matt Fisher, Kathryn Guta, Emily Hayes, Jeff Kaliss, Megan Robertson, Roger Rubin, Maria Verissimo

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS  
 Art Bodner, Pamela Gerard, Najib Joe Hakim, Charles Kennard, Beverly Tharp

PRODUCTION  
 Sally Smith, Jack Tipple

DISTRIBUTION  
 Jack Tipple

WEB GURU  
 Jon Elkin

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 Pat Rose, Jack Tipple

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# LETTERS 78¢

## Last Season for Moonshot

Friends:

You may be familiar with one of the popular descriptions of friendships—that friends are in your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. Well, I've found that the same is true for businesses. So, with very mixed feelings, I wanted to share that the season for Moonshot Studio [4066 24th St.] is coming to an end in 2026.

For all of you who contributed to this post-corporate career venture of mine—as friends, helpers, long-distance cheerleaders, advisors, customers, event organizers, social media followers, staff & parents of staff, and fellow NVPMA members, as well as everyone who stops in for friendly visits while in the neighborhood, thank you very, very much. Every bit of your support has been greatly appreciated!

I'm planning to close the store sometime after June and before the end of the current lease in September. Committing to another five-year lease isn't the right choice for my family—me, David, and Grace—and, unfortunately, my request for a shorter term didn't work for my landlords.

I've loved opening and running Moonshot Studio as a transitional step between a corporate career and retirement. I had no idea how hard or rewarding being a small business owner would be, and I have absolutely no regrets, just gratitude. I will spend my time finishing this season in the most positive way possible, sharing the fun of scent-blending and product-making with as many people as possible. It will be "business

as usual" until mid-June, and then we'll likely have more limited hours through the summer. Wonderful Moonshot Studio staff have been among the greatest joys of the whole experience and I'm very grateful to them! All current staff are aware of the plans, and we're working together for transitions that work best for each individual. (If you are hiring, please let me know. A couple of great staffers will be looking for new positions.)

If you have availability to pop in, I'd love to see you! Regardless, thank you, thank you, thank you for your interest and support for my very rewarding, nearly five-year, retirement-postponing business venture. Soon, in addition to having lots more time to spend with family, I'll have more availability for get-togethers with friends, and I look forward to all of that very much!

Teresa Fitzgerald  
 Owner, Moonshot Studio  
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www.MoonshotStudioSF.com

## A Towering Mistake

Editor:

Regarding your February story on rumors that ICE agents detained someone: Well, the Board of Supervisors, led by our Supervisor Rafael Mandelman, just approved a 10-story Macro Antenna Tower in Diamond Heights so "FirstNet," currently being used for ICE communications with a bonus contract for AT&T, can provide coverage throughout our neighborhoods.

Other less intrusive systems were available, but FirstNet testified that the Macro Tower was required. So, welcome ICE to the neighborhood. Police and Fire do not require first responders to use FirstNet. Thanks, Supervisor Mandelman, for protecting corporate greed over neighborhood concerns.

Catherine Dodd, Diamond Heights

# CRIME SNAPSHOT

## A Small February Bump in Crime

An uptick in residential burglaries and fraud reports contributed to a slight increase in crime in Noe Valley in February, according to San Francisco Police Department statistics.

The February total—68 incidents—was five more than in January, based on a *Noe Valley Voice* review of 10 categories of crime tracked on the SFPD's digital incident map.

The 10 reported burglaries—up from six in January but down from 16 last February—included nine home or garage break-ins and one forced entry at an unidentified property.

Seven fraud incidents were reported, including four ATM or card-related thefts and three cases involving false impersonation or other schemes to obtain money. In January, there were only three such incidents.

As usual, the largest crime category was larceny-theft. Police logged 37 incidents, one fewer than in January. These included 21 shoplifting reports—most near Castro and Jersey streets—five car break-ins, four package thefts, one stolen license plate, and six other unspecified thefts.

Noe Valley, one of the safest neighborhoods in the city, recorded zero robberies and just one assault in February. However, four vehicles were reported stolen.

The *Voice* gathered the February data on March 13, 2026, from the SFPD's "Map of Police Department Incident Reports: 2018 to Present" at data.sfgov.org.

As with the Police Department, the *Voice* does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of the information, as the data is subject to change.

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

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

Anonymous tips can be texted to 847411 using the keyword "SFPD".

You also may call Mission Police Station at 415-558-5400 or use its tip line, 415-552-4558. Email is SFPDMissionStation@sfgov.org.

Call Ingleside Police Station at 415-404-4000; tip line 415-575-4444. Email is SFPDInglesideStation@sfgov.org.

Mission Station (630 Valencia St.) generally covers the northern and central parts of Noe Valley, while Ingleside Station (1 Sgt. John V. Young Lane) covers Upper Noe and areas near Bernal Heights and Glen Park.

Currently, Capt. Sean Perdomo (Sean.Perdomo@sfgov.org) leads Mission Station, and Capt. Gerald Newbeck heads Ingleside Station (Gerald.Newbeck@sfgov.org).

—Corrie M. Anders, Sally Smith

## CRIME SNAPSHOT

### Noe Valley Incident Reports January 2025 – February 2026

Crime Category	Y2024	Jan25	Feb25	Mar25	Apr25	May25	Jun25	Jul25	Aug25	Sep25	Oct25	Nov25	Dec25	Y2025	Jan26	Feb26
Larceny/Theft	460	42	26	45	29	44	27	28	31	36	35	33	43	419	38	37
Burglary	243	17	16	13	11	16	6	14	18	16	11	10	9	157	6	10
Malicious Mischief	79	9	4	5	3	2	5	7	6	9	4	6	8	68	2	2
Motor Veh. Theft	109	6	5	6	3	4	7	6	4	9	5	2	4	61	1	4
Assault	32	2	2	2	0	5	2	2	0	4	6	0	1	26	1	1
Robbery	16	0	0	3	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0
Other Misc	117	13	9	8	5	10	2	2	4	4	7	4	4	72	2	4
Fraud	40	0	3	2	3	9	7	4	1	2	11	5	2	49	3	7
Family D.Violence	22	0	0	4	4	3	4	1	1	1	1	3	3	25	8	3
Vandalism	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,122</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>68</b>

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

Noe Valley Voice April 2026

## THE CARTOON BY OWEN BAKER-FLYNN



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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



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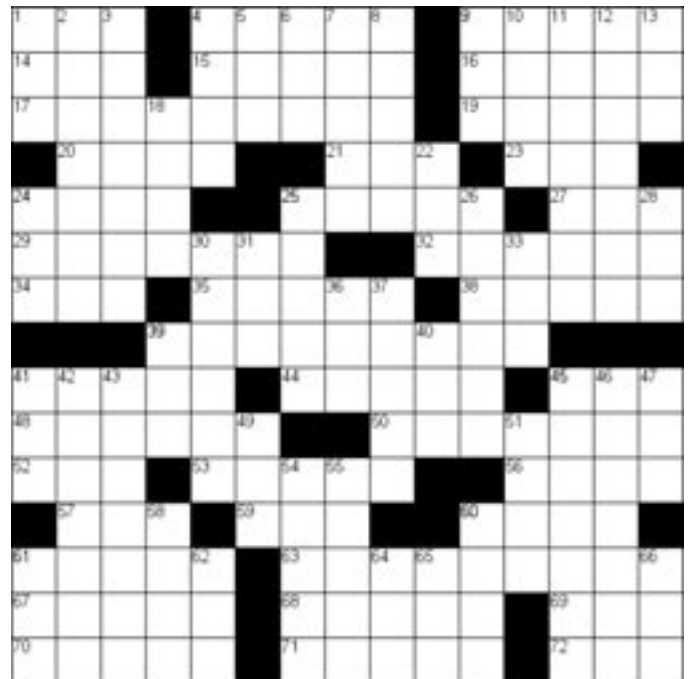
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THE CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

**What's That Sound?**

**ACROSS**

- 1. Auto navigation aid: Abbr.
- 4. Gives a darn
- 9. 2008 "Yes We Can" sloganeer
- 14. Gun advocacy grp.
- 15. On one's toes
- 16. Battery parts
- 17. \*Voltage carrier on a high tower
- 19. Actress Hayek of "Frida"
- 20. 1/2 oz. meas.
- 21. \_\_\_ League colleges
- 23. In addition
- 24. "\_\_\_ ex machina"
- 25. Swim competitions
- 27. By way of
- 29. \*Critters sometimes mistakenly called "17-year locusts"
- 32. Gobi or Mojave
- 34. Confident crossword solver's choice
- 35. "I Love Lucy" co-star
- 38. Part of a poem
- 39. \*Wasp's fatter cousin
- 41. Scour
- 44. Labor activist Chavez
- 45. Compliment "on the back"
- 48. Brand behind Foods Co. on Folsom St.
- 50. \*Church Street hair-cutter, or what unites this puzzle's starred entries
- 52. Half of us
- 53. Journal
- 56. Germany's Konrad Adenauer; Der \_\_\_
- 57. "The Racer's Edge" oil additive
- 59. Debate position
- 60. She, in Cherbourg
- 61. Like the cuisine at Mamahuhu
- 63. \*Chase Center



- 10. Watercraft
- 11. Everywhere
- 12. Written recollections
- 13. "\_\_\_ matter of fact..."
- 18. She, in Salerno
- 22. Since Jan. 1, in financials
- 24. 601, to Caesar
- 25. "Morning Joe" TV channel
- 26. Like some winter weather
- 28. Consumed
- 30. Did some finger-painting
- 31. Logan Webb's pride
- 33. Get a look at
- 36. Tap choice at The Dubliner
- 37. Full of flavor
- 39. Pester
- 40. Scrooge exclamation
- 41. "Look! Up in the \_\_\_!"
- 42. Finished a "t"
- 43. Everyday
- 45. Withdraw, as from a treaty
- 46. Like Tenochtitlan's builders
- 47. Philosopher Lao-\_\_\_
- 49. Abbr. on a tombstone
- 51. "I Love Lucy" co-star
- 54. Dispute
- 55. Cook in the oven
- 58. "Que \_\_\_?"; "Whassup?"
- 60. Business school subj.
- 61. "\_\_\_ was saying..."
- 62. Super \_\_\_ (game system)
- 64. "Doesn't thrill me"
- 65. SFO abbr.
- 66. Valley Tavern container

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

# Renaming Cesar Chavez Street: Voices From Noe

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

visor Jackie Fielder appeared to agree. “My office will support community efforts to remove Cesar Chavez’s name from any District 9 institutions,” Fielder said.

Meanwhile, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed legislation to change “Cesar Chavez Day” to “Farmworkers Day,” just in time for the March 31 holiday. (Cesar Chavez died in 1993 at age 66.)

The street that bears his name in San Francisco runs east-west from Maryland Street in the Bayview to Douglass Street in Noe Valley.

It was originally called Army Street, as shown on an 1854 map drawn by John Meirs Horner for his “suburban” development, Horner’s Addition.

The name remained Army Street until 1995, when after much controversy the Board of Supervisors adopted the Cesar Chavez moniker.

## An Army of Voters

The *Voice* collected answers to our admittedly unscientific survey for a full week. As might be expected, suggestions ranged from the rational to the ridiculous.

But it was somewhat of a surprise that over half of the respondents—350 to be exact—favored restoring the name Army Street. Clearly, the question had stirred a lot of emotions.



Symbols long tolerated. Photo by Jack Tipple

“Please bring back our beloved Army Street,” pleaded Catherine Lawton.

MJ Jasinski was also emphatic: “Army Street—always has been, always will be, no matter what you guys come up with.”

Raul Pleitez too was firmly in the Army Street camp. “It honors everyone who serves or has served the country in that branch of the military, regardless of race, color, or gender.”

Others, like Rudy Helprey, cited history or practicality.

“When the city decided to change it to Cesar Chavez, they didn’t ask the neighborhood whether they would agree with the change,” Helprey avowed. “Many were upset. Not that they had an issue at the time with Mr. Chavez. But they had to do address changes, etc.... Many would still have liked it to go back to Army Street. The old neighborhood would have liked that even without this current discovery.”

Lydia Wrench offered, “Maybe we still have the old [Army Street] signs somewhere, so we don’t have to spend millions of dollars to change it back.”

## City of Peace

But nostalgia was not shared by all. “No to Army Street,” wrote Steve Rosewarne. “We dropped it for good

reason. I love Low Rider Way, though. It would be a fab event to christen it with a low-rider fest, repeated annually.”

Lianne Minez lent a fresh perspective. “As a newer SF resident, I had no idea that it used to be called Army Street. While I love history and really support the opinions of people who grew up here, Army Street as a name shocked me for sure, given the news of the day.”

Linda J. Wells noted that “Army Street was named for its use as a military route. Hardly what I’d want in my city of peace and love.”

“All the [Baby] Boomers saying Army Street really highlights the average Facebook user age,” commented Leigh Allen.

## Dolores Huerta: ‘Sí, Se Puede’

The second most popular suggestion was Dolores Huerta, seen as a true champion in the fight for equal rights. The Bakersfield, Calif., resident, who will turn 96 on April 10, currently heads the Dolores Huerta Foundation and is helping to build a new Dolores Huerta Peace and Justice Center.

Full disclosure: The *Voice* had noted on Facebook that “Huerta Street” and “Farm Workers Way” were already in the running. So poll respondents might have searched for other options.

Still, votes poured in for Huerta and the union she helped form.

“How about Huerta Street, to honor her and all others who quietly and without fame, visibility, or selfish gain have sacrificed so much for important causes,” wrote Jan Brittenson.

“Dolores Huerta Street,” agreed Stuart Koplowitz. “Honor a person who has dedicated her entire life to the betterment of a cause.”

“Dolores Huerta. Absolutely,” said Debra Hannula.

Katie Steiman suggested we use Huerta’s rallying cry: “How about Se Puede or Sí Se Puede Way? As a born and raised San Franciscan, please don’t go back to Army Street. Why glorify war? I never liked that name. I like Huerta, but don’t add the Dolores. It will confuse people.”

In declaring for Huerta Street, Allen pointed out, “Then we’ll have the intersection at Dolores and Huerta.”

## Political and Historical Names

A good number of respondents wanted to honor political figures. Tim McGowan liked Gavin Newsom Street, Dimitrus Alexander preferred Feinstein Fairway, and Brian Mayfield backed Paul Pelosi Boulevard.

Saul Jean advanced the name Donald Trump, as did half a dozen other supporters of the President.



Numerous street signs, like this one on Dolores Street, will need to be changed, should “Cesar Chavez” be removed.

Photo by Corrie M. Anders

Trust us, that choice for renaming Cesar Chavez Street is a long shot in San Francisco.

Wrote Noe resident Tom Walker, “In light of our current political situation, I’d rename it Immigration Avenue.”

Anne-Marie Russo preferred “Ohlone Street.”

Robert Meslinsky explained why: “We should rename Cesar Chavez Street for its original area inhabitants... ‘The Ohlone Trail.’ With the arrival of Spanish missions (1769–1834) and later California statehood, the Ohlone faced displacement, disease, and violence.”

(Note: Ohlone Way already exists as a street in Glen Park.)

Others proposed honoring guerrilla leader Che Guevara or Joaquin Murrieta, the Mexican vaquero who allegedly avenged his family’s murder by targeting Anglo-American settlers during the Gold Rush.

## Local Artists to Honor

The survey attracted many names of artists and musicians.

Robert Farina suggested Santana because “his family had a business on 24th Street in the 1960s called Santana Paints.... Perfectly befitting Carlos Santana, who grew up in the Mission. He went to James Lick Junior High School and Mission High School, and he is a Latino gentleman.”

Rudy Ferretti was thinking Santana

when he wrote, “One idea I’ve had is ‘Oye Como Va Way.’”

Jeff Steinman offered similar affection for another artist who’s achieved international fame. “How about naming it after Ruth Asawa [1926–2013]. She lived right nearby in Noe Valley,” he noted of the local icon. Asawa was cherished not only for her remarkable sculptures but for the many arts programs she founded and inspired in San Francisco.

## Stoned Soul Picnic

Some respondents couldn’t resist ‘60s heroes.

David Budd was fond of “Wavy Gravy Way,” a nod to a famous San Francisco entertainer and peace activist.

There were votes for Bob Weir and Jerry Garcia of The Grateful Dead.

Faxon Bishop had this answer: “Just stick ‘Julio’ in front of ‘Cesar Chavez’. Problem solved.” Then we could salute the Mexican boxer considered the world’s best in the 1990s.

But to Lucas Adam the obvious choice was “Cesar Salad Street.”

## People Aren’t Perfect

Joining the jokesters was Peter Werner, who suggested: “Nobody Goodenoff Street.”

But there was a kernel of truth in that idea.

Kris Ruck wrote, “Maybe we should stop using people’s names, since something bad could be said about everyone, except maybe Jesus Christ.”

And “since no one seems to stand up in history as perfectly good characters, why don’t we stop naming streets and schools after individuals,” offered Sarah Love. “I am tired of people fighting over things. Please do not misconstrue that I approve of the behavior of Cesar Chavez, but the farm workers movement was really important to the welfare of a lot of people.”

When our survey came to an end on or about March 26, a consensus was building to match the wishes of Dolores Huerta herself. Huerta had told the public radio program *Latino USA* and other media in L.A. and San Francisco that streets should not be named after her but “for the martyrs of the farm workers movement.”

In our poll, Harry Ballard got the last word: “Farm Workers Way.” ■



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## Gil Guillermo— Music Maestro For the Square

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Gil Guillermo, who had recently moved to a house at the corner of Sanchez and Duncan streets, became a central pillar of the community.

The formula included Guillermo's life-long dedication to music and community-building and the lucky accident of his popping up on a Slow Street, where local efforts worked with city officials to close blocks to traffic, allowing for people to gather while respecting social-distancing policies.

"It was about a month into the pandemic, and I started going out onto the front steps of the house with a guitar and a little speaker and a set list that I hung up at the gate," Guillermo said, recalling the spontaneous community his actions generated.

"As people walked by, I sat out there and said, 'Hey, if you want me to sing you a song, pick a song off the set list,'" Guillermo said. "This caught on super fast, and within a few weeks I was doing what I ended up calling Tiny Porch Concerts."

Guillermo's reference to NPR's *Tiny Desk* is a nod to the beloved show, where musicians perform in an intimate atmosphere inside a cramped office in Washington, D.C.

Noe Valley's own Tiny Porch Concerts, which started as one man with a guitar, quickly grew into a neighborhood ritual. Neighbors arrived with picnic baskets and blankets, sometimes even folding tables, turning his front steps into an impromptu gathering spot. For nearly six months, crowds of 30 to nearly 100 people would spread out on the sidewalk and slow street, finding connection through live music in a time when both felt scarce.

The Tiny Porch Concerts eventually came to an end, but Guillermo's role in the neighborhood was just beginning.

Among those who had watched the gatherings grow was Rich Hildreth, the longtime booker for Saturday mornings at the Noe Valley Farmers Market and for other events held in the Town Square, at 3861 24th St. between Sanchez and Vicksburg streets.

When Hildreth decided to pass the torch, he knew exactly whom to ask.

### Two-Person Rhythm Section

Guillermo, a retired public school teacher, saw the opportunity as an extension of the work he'd always done. "I've done a lot of work that really was about community-building," Guillermo said. "So this was just a kind of perfect marriage of my passion, which is music, and enhancing and building community."

Guillermo's years as a teacher taught him that building community was rarely a solo endeavor. At the Town Square, his closest collaborator is Leslie Crawford, whom he calls his "work spouse."

"On the ground, it's pretty much Leslie and me working hand in hand," Guillermo said.

Their dynamic is built on trust and collaboration: Crawford is the overall event organizer for the Noe Valley Town Square, overseeing the bigger picture, while Guillermo handles the music.

"She and I will sit down and come up with a calendar for the year, every year. We say, OK, let's have a big event on such and such a date, and then we fill in what kind of event," Guillermo



Besides booking groups for the Noe Valley Farmers Market and Sunday Music in the Square Gil Guillermo performs in two bands: Projeto Novo and Alie & Me. Photo by Art Bodner

said. "I ask her: what do you think about this music or this band? If it involves live music, I'm usually the one who books. But it's really a collaborative effort."

They're supported by a wider team: Sylvia Vientulis handles promotion and Debra Niemann the funding, which includes public and private grants funneled through the Noe Valley Association, the park's fiscal agent.

### Gently Amplified

Guillermo and Crawford's collaboration has touched every aspect of the square's events. Lately, a big change is transforming the music experience, especially on Sundays.

For years, the Sunday afternoon events at the Town Square carried a simple name: Acoustic Sunday. "It was called Acoustic Sunday because we worked under the auspices of Parks and Rec, and they did not give us a sound permit," Guillermo said.

That changed this year. Guillermo asked Crawford to approach the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department, and in January it awarded the square a permit for amplified sound equipment.

"I kind of pushed Leslie to approach the parks department eventually, a few years into my job, and they actually granted us a permit to have sound equipment," he said. "That's a huge game changer."

Now called Sunday Music in the Square, the concerts operate under what Guillermo calls "gentle amplification."

"The idea is not to rock the plaza," he said. "We have neighbors that we want to be considerate of. So when I tell musicians, I say we have permission to gently amplify. It's really helpful for singers, because they're not spending two hours trying to project, which can be a strain on the voice. It also allows bands to balance their instruments—oh, we need a little more

performers, and female performers."

That commitment has shown up in the lineup. Guillermo has brought in Afro Indigenous music from Puerto Rico, Afro Peruvian music, Cuban music, and music from Brazil.

Musicians interested in playing can reach out through the square's website—noevalleytownsquare.com—or simply look for Guillermo near the microphone. He manages many of the shows.

"A lot of it is word of mouth," Guillermo said. "If you are a musician, you might have been to the farmers market and seen that there's live music [Saturday mornings]. Some people go straight to our website and write a note there. Sometimes I look for specific types of music, and so I just ask around. We're pretty informal and casual about things."

Performers are compensated, though the space is a community hub, not a commercial venue.

### More Music on the Way

For those looking to catch a show, Sunday Music in the Square happens roughly every two weeks. All events are free, family-friendly, and pets are welcome. Guillermo encourages attendees to support local businesses: "Part of the vision is to help promote the local businesses as well."

And sometimes the man booking the music will be the one performing it. Guillermo plays with two bands: Projeto Novo, a trio playing a well-curated list of music from the Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking world, as well as songs in Tagalog, Japanese, and French; and Alie & Me, a duo that performs an eclectic array of original and cover songs, including R&B, vocal jazz, country, Americana, and pop.

The Sunday Music in the Square series continues April 12, with a double bill: the Cabernet Quartet performs classical music from 1 to 2 p.m. and guitarist Luke Schwartz plays jazz, rock, and funk from 2 to 3 p.m.

You can come sing or bring an instrument to the "Community Music Hangout" on Sunday, April 26, from 1 to 3 p.m.

On Sunday, May 10, the Trikonaut jazz trio will get things moving with swing, Latin jazz, blues, and funk.

Upcoming "Big Events" at the Square include "April in Paris" on Saturday, April 11, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. with live music by the Au Contraires, and "A Night in Mexico" on Saturday, May 2, from 6 to 8 p.m., featuring the all-female mariachi group Mariachi Femenil Orgullo Mexicano. ■

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# A Bumpy Ride for Xela Imports

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

recover when the second term of President Donald Trump arrived, bringing with it the constant threat or imposition of tariffs on their imported goods. Other Trump policies upended long-established good relations between the U.S. and its trading partners. With a business centered on merchandise from overseas, Bifulco and Heins have had to deal with one headache after another.

“I mean, is a rollercoaster, you know. It is a rollercoaster,” said Heins. “So I don’t feel like saying is bad. I don’t feel like saying is good. I have good days. I have days so-so.”

Bifulco acknowledged, “The business has been slowing down dramatically, unfortunately.”

## Customers Like Family

Nonetheless, the pair remain committed to keeping the store open. Over the years, they have gotten to know their customers, whose children now shop at the store.

“With a small business, the customers grow with you. They trust you,” said Bifulco. “We become kind of bound with them and get to know their children like family members. We know what they need and want they want.”

Xela Imports is open every day—Mondays through Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Heins and Bifulco will open the store early for those who say they need a special item and call ahead (415-695-1323).

They are headed into one of their busiest times of the year, with people in need of presents for Easter baskets, Mother’s Day gifts, and gifts for graduating students. Popular purchases for such occasions are their jewelry made from Italian corals and ones from Naples fashioned as red horns that look like chile peppers and are considered good luck.

“I would like to see more people shopping in Noe Valley, coming here to support the small businesses,” Bifulco told the *Voice* over iced coffee at La Boulangerie in mid-March.

Asked if he would close the store for good this year, Bifulco said he didn’t plan to, joking he was “stubborn.”

For Heins, her devotion to keeping the store open is rooted in her interactions with customers.

“My personal thing is, I build a relationship with this neighborhood, with the people that live in this neighborhood,” she said. “For me right now, it’s more I talk a lot with my customers. It’s not ... of course, we want to be productive, but you know, we’ve been doing this for many, many years.”

## From Naples to Noe

Bifulco initially relocated from Naples, Italy, to San Francisco at the age of 28 in the early 1990s at the invitation of a friend who had married a woman from the U.S. The couple owned a Guatemalan import store in the city’s Castro neighborhood and hired Bifulco to work there.

“I worked for them in their shop on 18th and Castro,” recalled Bifulco, adding that the store also would have booths to sell their wares at street fairs held in neighborhoods around the city. “I really got to know the city via these street fairs.”

Thirty-four years ago, Bifulco happened to be at a party in the Haight and met the founder of Xela Imports, Seth Hennings, an expat from South Africa.



Paola Heins and Alessandro Bifulco have steered Xela Imports through thick and thin, buoyed by the loyalty of their Noe Valley customers. Photo by Sally Smith

Hennings ran the business with his life partner, Jan Mayor, as the *Voice* noted in a 1986 profile about the couple (reprinted on page 13 of this issue). In talking to Hennings, Bifulco learned he wanted to sell the business and move to Australia.

They worked out a deal for Bifulco to take over Xela, with Bifulco shortly thereafter moving into one of the apartments above the store.

Heins, who also lives in the building, had liked San Francisco when she came to visit her brother and moved to the city permanently to work with him at Xela Imports.

Back in Naples, she had been hired to do window displays for local stores in addition to working at a development company for the Italian government. At Xela Imports, she took on the role of manager for the store.

One reason the siblings have been able to keep Xela going is that Bifulco bought the building when his landlord decided to retire. Rather than putting it on the market, she struck a deal with him.

Thus, they don’t have to worry about being hit with drastic rent increases like other retailers when lease renewal time rolls around.

“If I were not owning the building, I would not be able to stay in business,” Bifulco admits.

## Tariffs a Moving Target

Navigating Trump’s tariff wars has been trickier. Like many merchants in the neighborhood, Bifulco and Heins had to contend last year with seesawing tariff rates that Trump seemed to change on a whim, going from 150 percent to 50 percent, then to 30 percent, depending on what countries were able to appease him. It made it difficult for longtime suppliers in Asia to commit to filling orders from Bifulco.

“With the up and down prices, I can’t go to Thailand and Indonesia where I was going for a long time. They say [Trump’s tariff policy] is absurd and we

don’t know how much to charge you,” Bifulco said of his suppliers, with whom he’s built relationships over the years during frequent trips.

This February, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that found Trump had misused his authority to impose the tariffs. In response, Trump imposed a 10 percent across-the-board tariff on all imports.

But Bifulco is still finding a lot of uncertainty among his suppliers. Prices continue to fluctuate and problems persist due to new rules and increased costs on shipments from overseas.

“I cannot promise, if I go to Asia, I will find this statue my customer wants. The people there cannot guarantee the price and whether they can ship to the U.S. Everything is uncertain right now,” said Bifulco. “A big problem for me, and a lot of small businesses, is the uncertainty of the market.”

## Rising Costs, Global Strains

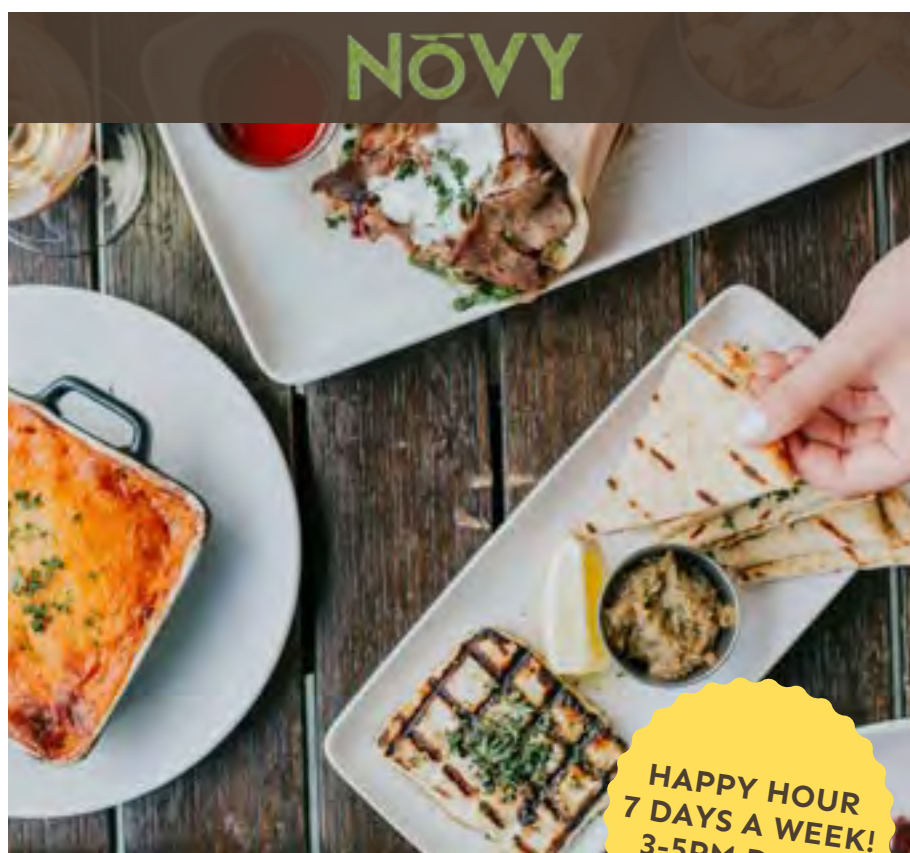
The disruption in global oil supplies due to the U.S.–Israeli war with Iran is also impacting the business. Bifulco said he already had heard from his Southeast Asian suppliers they would be raising their prices due to last month’s hike in gas prices.

“It looks like prices will really, really be different. I don’t know yet,” Bifulco said about how much he might have to raise his own prices.

He is planning to travel for two weeks in July to Southeast Asia to check in on his longtime partners. In October 2023 he was in Bali and Thailand for four weeks, but he is cutting his trip short this year due to the increased travel costs.

“I will see what the market conditions are and what is the reality,” said Bifulco, who expects to place orders on merchandise that should arrive by October for this year’s shopping

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



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# South African Expatriates Talk About Their Homeland

By Mark Phillips Green

Seth Hennings imports jewelry, clothing and bags from places merely distant, like Mexico, to those utterly removed, like Burma and Nepal. Along with his business partner and wife, Jan Meyer, he owns XELA Imports on 24th Street. Their business is a modest one, but it manages to ultimately fit one of them in their suburban store, while sending the other off to a Third World flea market.

XELA Imports has been his usual ticket.

"I don't think there's anything we can do because the people in power are really pig-headed. The U.S. should pull all the money out and let them [white South Africans] go to hell, because they're not willing to negotiate."

—Seth Hennings

For 18 months, but better that. 25-year-old Hennings was importing independently, making purses and selling home-copies in Berkeley and, in general, setting out life in what is for him a new country.

Meyers-van der Merwe is also new

XELA's modest success in "hard work," but admits, "It's like a baby, you've got to be there all the time." Despite the weight of responsibility, Hennings brims with enthusiasm. "I love what I'm doing, even when it gets hectic." On the subject of his former homeland, however, he is considerably less sanguine.

Hennings' childhood was spent in a "liberal part of Capetown near the inner city." His family remains there. In violation of the apartheid laws that confined blacks to "homelands," his parents had a live-in black "nanny" who dated on him in the exclusion of even her own family. He recalls a continuous stream of black servants throughout his early years. "It was like living in a restaurant," he says.

Historically, Hennings' pumped (black) blood provoked more personal sympathy for the black condition than for prevailing white attitudes. His concern for the welfare of the South African majority population, however, brought him "up against a lot of Afrikaners who resisted change."

Hennings was still a teenager when, in 1976, the first major black uprising took place in Soweto. It was never the same for him after that.

"I was pushed away from South Africa by politics," he says. "The vibes became very heavy over the years." That, coupled with a deteriorating home life and parents, in whom he "was never close," finally led to his break from the only life he knew. "There was just so much bigotry and hatred," he says with



Meyers-van der Merwe, a former coffee and jewelry store 24th Street, says she left South Africa in 1976 to find a better life in San Francisco. She's now in charge of XELA Imports, a business she and her husband, Seth Hennings, own together. PHOTO BY MARIELLA POLI

"I was born in South Africa for 13 years, then and on the farm for Afrikaners." Although she's now very much adjusted to American life, she learned English at 19 and now, at 27, brings with her a slightly aristocratic presence. She speaks modestly of her background but with pride. She says there are two hundred (permanent) black workers on the farm. With government assistance, her family provides schooling ("very basic") and shelter ("huts") for their black workers, some of whom have been there for generations.

After the death of her father six years ago, van der Merwe's sister and her husband (a practicing attorney) up and they returned to the family farm to help her mother carry on. It's a background that's reminiscent of a Disney picture starring Haley Mills, except that she isn't at all behind, for reasons that were "justly political."

Van der Merwe explains that "in terms of thinking about the future and children, I wouldn't even think about having children in South Africa." With some sadness, she recalls her mother's continuing inquiry: "When are you coming back?" To that, she replies there can be no coming back—she's not at all sure her mother is concerned. She, like Hennings, is not planning to return.

Both van der Merwe and Hennings want to stress clear of the escalating violence in their homeland. "I see a non-Afrikaner," Hennings says. "A lot of blood's going to flow."

In Hennings' view, however, an immediate shift to one-man, one-vote is not feasible at this time. "They [the blacks] are not going to get it, and it would be a stupid move on their part [the white Afrikaners] if they did." He believes that to properly transform the South African nation requires "a 10- to 15-year plan."

Van der Merwe also stresses the need for time in solving that country's difficulties. "I have a lot of sympathy for the South African situation," she says, "a lot of understanding, even though I don't agree with it. It's the circumstances

which have created it, the history. "In the beginning, because the cultures were so different, it wasn't so unacceptable that people (black and white) lived apart. . . . A lot of them still don't realize that they're doing something terribly

"I'm kind of divided. It's very easy to criticize, but I don't know if outside criticism is really helping the situation. Afrikaners worry about the loss of their culture. Every change that's made in South Africa, to the people who live there, is a big change; but to the outside world it's almost nothing."

—Meyers-van der Merwe

wrong. They just think that's the way their lifestyle is. . . . But they put it together through the explanation of the black."

Van der Merwe is about this time: "Sanctions are the only way to bring the government and whites to their knees to make change, which other way are you going to make those people realize?"

One thing is clear: whatever unfolds in South Africa will affect us all.



Seth Hennings (left) and his partner Jan Meyer (right) in a conversation with a customer in front of XELA Imports, a business they and her husband, Seth Hennings, own together. PHOTO BY MARIELLA POLI

to the U.S. He works as a photographer and as a waitress at Noe Valley Pizza. Her impeccable English belies its status in her second language (her first is Dutch).

She and Hennings have never met but were similarly propelled from their birthplace, South Africa. For both, expatriating to the U.S. has been a stimulating and at times arduous challenge. Leaving everything behind is rarely easy.

Hennings and van der Merwe left South Africa at different times and with different expectations. Van der Merwe landed in New York City a little more than three years ago but "in the middle of a heat wave, and I left as soon as I arrived." Upon seeing San Francisco, however, the "itch at home immediately."

Hennings took a more circuitous route to the Bay Area. He spent the first seven months away from his homeland on a kibbutz in Israel, but in late 1979 arrived in the Big Apple. For him, New York City was "impressive," but when he drove into San Francisco after a cross-country trip in a van, his feeling was "This is it!" The regional bonding was further enhanced by his view that "everybody looked just as wild and crazy as me."

Now that he's weathered six years in England by the Bay, Hennings says, "I've been to Italy. I've been to . . . the attributes

of my situation."

He remains passionately about the prospects for a peaceful solution to the conflict. "I don't think there's anything we [the U.S.] can do because the people in power are really pig-headed. They're just like ticks."

Even in the face of American divestment, he expects the white South Africans to "just bear it."

"The U.S. should pull all the money out and let them [white South Africans] go to hell, because they're not willing to negotiate."

Meyers-van der Merwe also admits to "feeling very negative" about the current situation in South Africa, but takes a softer line on possible sanctions. "I'm kind of divided. It's very easy to criticize [the government], but I don't know if outside criticism is really helping the situation. Afrikaners worry about the loss of their culture. Every change that's made in South Africa, to the people who live there, is a big change; but to the outside world it's almost nothing."

Van der Merwe's childhood was spent on an expansive farm in a Dutch-speaking province "two hundred miles from the nearest city." Hers was a "very conservative Afrikaner family," and she remains close to them. She says her family

# Xela Buffeted by Trade Winds

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

season.

Last Christmas was a relatively good one, he said, helped by the fact that the store had merchandise on the shelves, such as Mexican tiles and products made with Bali fabric, from shawls and sarongs to head wraps and tablecloths. They continue to be well stocked ahead of this year's holiday, said Bifulco, but he is concerned about being able to replenish his storeroom in time for Christmas 2027.

The advice Bifulco has for customers is to buy now if they find something they like, because the price may go up in a month or two. And the item may not be in stock, he added, if they decide to come back later in the fall during the holiday shopping season.

"I don't know this year around November what you will find and what the price will be," he said.

## More Than Just a Store

He hopes newer residents of the neighborhood will make it a point to patronize the local businesses. Doing so not only ensures a lively commercial corridor, but it builds a sense of community, said Bifulco, through face-to-face interaction with owners like himself.

"This is a place where you can come in and say hi. It is important," he said.

Keeping the store open also keeps alive for Heins the artistic vibe she encountered when she first moved to San Francisco in the 1990s.

"I have this memory and my shop gives me this memory every day, and even my customers. They come in my shop, and new people, they come in my shop. You know, they always tell me, 'My God, my God, it's a shop!'"

"So I'd like it to be here," said Heins, who is traveling back to Naples this summer to help care for their aging mother. "Until we can do it [manage the store], we'll do it, until we do not enjoy... I think we still enjoy." ■

**LEFT:** As this reprint from the November 1986 issue of the *Noe Valley Voice* shows, the first decade of Xela Imports' existence was as affected by world affairs as the current one. In October 1986, the U.S. Congress imposed anti-apartheid sanctions on South Africa, severely limiting trade.

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# SHORT TAKES

## Garden Tour Turns 20— With a Block Party Bonus

The Friends of Noe Valley Garden Tour marks a milestone this spring, celebrating its 20th anniversary—on Saturday, May 16, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.—along with a neighborhood block party.

This year's tour features 10 private gardens and seven sidewalk plots, offering a wide range of styles, from a lush tropical oasis and a peaceful shade retreat to a sculptural succulent "wave" garden and a hillside terrace with vegetables. A pair of century-old redwoods anchors one stop, while another showcases a compact "jewel box" bursting with color and texture.

Organizers Peggy Cling, Linda Lockyer, and Rose Griffin are once again leading the effort, with more than 20 local businesses pitching in as sponsors.

For the first time, the tour is pairing with the annual Slow Sanchez Block Party, closing Sanchez Street (26th to Clipper) to cars for a day of music, food, and kids' activities. The event also includes a plant swap and gardening talks—on growing California natives, re-potting houseplants, and attracting friendly birds, bees, and butterflies.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors, and free for children, and are available at the Noe Valley Farmers Market (starting April 25), the Noe Valley Night Market (April 28), or online at [friendsofnoevalley.com](http://friendsofnoevalley.com). You can find them also at Just for Fun, Noe Valley Books, Olive This Olive That, Omnivore Books, Urban Scout, and When Modern Was.

## Free Popup in Noe Music's Lineup

Noe Valley's spring soundtrack will get a big boost as Noe Music rolls out a trio of April concerts, kicked off by a rare free pop-up in the Noe Valley Town Square.

On Saturday, April 18, the 13-member Grammy-nominated Palaver Strings will play a 30-minute "Dancing Home" concert in the Square at 3861 24th St., starting at 5 p.m.

Billed as "Strings in the Square," the event is a chance to hear world-class music from the internationally known ensemble, which hails from Portland, Maine.

The music will continue Sunday, April 19, with a Noe Music Kids edition of Palaver Strings at 1021 Sanchez



While touring back yards at the Friends of Noe Valley Garden Tour May 16, look for the New Zealand tea trees. In March, the trees' pink-flowered fronds were waving at passersby on local streets. Photo by Sally Smith

St., from 2:30 to 3:15 p.m. At this event, kids and families can clap, move, and sing along with the musicians, playing a mix of classical, folk, and world music.

That evening, Grammy-winning tenor Nicholas Phan joins Palaver Strings for the main-stage concert "A Change Is Gonna Come" (5 to 7 p.m.), which promises to wow listeners with unique renditions of traditional protest songs and works inspired by contemporary social movements.

And mark your calendars for Noe Music's May 10 event: "Together We Rise." It's a Mother's Day concert featuring the San Francisco Girls Chorus alongside Iranian artist Mahsa Vahdat, Mexican singer/songwriter Diana Gámez, and Palestinian-American oud virtuoso Clarissa Bitar.

Noe Music notes, "At a time when power is being wielded as a divisive force, this gathering affirms the power of music to unite and uplift."

For ticket information, go to [noemusic.org](http://noemusic.org).

## New Pastor Named at St. Paul's

Father Thomas V. Martin, a long-time Catholic leader in the Bay Area, has been appointed pastor of the three-parish "cluster" of St. Paul's, St. Philip the Apostle, and St. James.

The Most Reverend Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone on March 22 celebrated a Mass of Installation for Father Tom before a standing-room-only crowd at St. Paul's Catholic

Church on Church Street.

Martin, 61, is the second pastor to lead the Noe Valley cluster and had been serving as its administrator since November. He succeeds Father Mario Farana, the popular St. Paul's priest who died last August.

Archbishop Cordileone told the gathering that he was especially grateful for Father Tom, a familiar figure working as an associate vicar for clergy.

"He has a special gift for service. He is always ready to serve. He is a key collaborator in the archdiocese, and I never cease to be amazed by his capacity for work—in the kitchen as well as in the office and in church."

Martin addressed the crowd at the end of the mass.

"I look forward to building a future with you upon what is already a strong foundation from those who came before us. God has given us this time to flourish a future here in Noe Valley of faith, hope, love, and charity."

Father Tom will be based at St. Paul's, which the archdiocese described as "the centerpiece of the cluster." He will serve as lead pastor there and coordinate functions with the priests at St. Philip and St. James.

St. Paul's, known for its English Gothic architecture, unique twin spires, and role in the 1992 movie *Sister Act*, is located at 221 Valley St.

St. Philip the Apostle sits just off the 24th Street commercial corridor at 725 Diamond St.

St. James Church is located at 1086 Guerrero St. near 22nd Street.

Father Tom's last assignment was at St. Pius X Church in Redwood City. Martin, who grew up in the Sunset District and attended Sacred Heart Cathedral High School, also has served as chaplain for the San Francisco Giants and the San Francisco Fire Department.

—Corrie M. Anders



The Avenue Winds quintet, formed by (l. to r.) James Pytko, Daniel Wood, Laura Reynolds, Jamael Smith, and Victoria Hauk, will play a variety of "Gallic delights" at Music on the Hill classical series April 26.

## Avenue Winds at Music on the Hill

In the final concert of its 2025–26 season, Music on the Hill in Diamond Heights will feature the woodwind ensemble Avenue Winds performing a concert of 19th- and 20th-century French music on Sunday, April 26, at St. Aidan's Church, 101 Gold Mine Drive.

"Prepare your senses for a sweet musical evening of Gallic delights," the quintet entices, including works by Darius Milhaud, Jacques Ibert, Claude Debussy, Eugène Bozza, and Jean Françaix.

Music on the Hill tempts us also with food and drink before the concert, starting at 7:30 p.m., and during intermission.

Tickets are available through Eventbrite or at [musiconthehill.org](http://musiconthehill.org). Adults are asked to pay \$25 and students \$15. Children 12 and under are free.

Currently composed of Victoria Hauk on flute, James Pytko on clarinet, Laura Reynolds on oboe, Jamael Smith on

## Supervisor Candidates Face Off in Forum

The Noe Valley Democratic Club will host a forum this month featuring at least three candidates hoping to succeed Rafael Mandelman, outgoing District 8 supervisor and current president of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

The event will take place Thursday, April 23, from 6 to 8 p.m., at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. "It will be a town hall style discussion of their different visions for the district," said Democratic Club President Sam Maslin. The audience will be able to quiz the candidates on issues ranging from housing and homelessness to crime and business viability.

The event also is a prelude to the club's making an endorsement in what is expected to be one of the hottest races in the Nov. 3 election.

At press time, the roster of candidates wishing to replace Mandelman, who cannot run again after serving two terms as District 8's representative, included:

—Gary McCoy, longtime aide to U.S. Congressional Representative Nancy Pelosi and a former co-chair of the Alice B. Toklas LGBTQ Democratic Club and president of the Harvey Milk Democratic Club;

—Michael Nguyen, a patent attorney and a member of the San Francisco Democratic County Central Committee; and

—Manny Yekutieli, a community organizer and owner of Manny's, a restaurant and community meeting space on Valencia Street.

Maslin said the forum would be open only to NVDC members and those of the San Francisco Women's Political Committee, which is co-sponsoring the event. He said guests could join the club at the door with a \$30 yearly membership (or \$15 for students and seniors).

The club will follow up with endorsement discussions May 11 at a location to be announced.

Participants can vote on endorsements only if they have "attended three total meetings and at least one in the past 12 months," Maslin said. The actual endorsement voting will run May 25 through May 29, he said.

District 8 includes Noe Valley, the Castro, Glen Park, Diamond Heights, Cole Valley, Corona Heights, Mission Dolores, Dolores Heights, Ashbury Heights, Duboce Triangle, Buena Vista Park, and part of Twin Peaks.

To RSVP for the event, go to [noevalleydemocrats.org](http://noevalleydemocrats.org).

—Corrie M. Anders



As part of a trio of Noe Music events, the Portland (Maine) group Palaver Strings will play a free concert April 18 from 5 to 5:30 in the Noe Valley Town Square. Photo by Titilayo Ayangade

bassoon, and Daniel Wood on French horn, Avenue Winds was founded at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. The group has performed at numerous venues, including the Rossmoor Concert Series, University of San Francisco, the Presidio, Berkeley Chamber Performances, and the Old First Concert Series.

Unless otherwise noted, this month's Short Takes were compiled and written by Sally Smith.

# SHORT TAKES

## Residents Await Quake Shack Hearing

Valley Street Cottage Wrapped in Plastic

By Matthew S. Bajko

After an Oakland-based housing developer caused a public outcry last fall for demolishing a historic earthquake shack structure in Noe Valley, the city halted his plans to construct a single-family residence at the site.

Meanwhile, residents who have waged a years-long fight to preserve the existing cottage are renewing their calls that it remain situated where it has long sat at the back of the property.

Located at 369 Valley St., the structure was composed from combining two shacks originally built to house survivors of the 1906 earthquake. For more than a decade, neighbors and preservationists have tried to convince planning officials to require that it not be moved.

In 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department concluded the structure was of historical value and eligible for listing on a statewide register of historic properties in California. The decision prompted then owner-developer John Schrader to rework his plans so

the shack structure would be incorporated into a larger residential home.

Although residents objected to his doing so, Schrader ultimately secured the permits he needed to move the shack structure closer to Valley Street, raise it off the ground, and repurpose it as part of the front façade of a new home to be built on the sloped site. The plans called for it to have four bedrooms and three bathrooms.

Last year, Oakland developer Benjamin Steiner of Citadel Property Group acquired the property and began work on building the approved home. But in November he was ordered by city officials to halt work at the site when it was discovered workers completely dismantled the shack structure rather than preserving it for relocation.

The city's acting zoning administrator suspended his permits, and Steiner was ordered to rebuild the quake structure, under supervision by planning staff, and reapply for a building permit. In an email to planning staff, Steiner chalked up the dismantling of the shack as a "misunderstanding" that was "unintentional" and pledged "to taking every corrective measure necessary" to rectify the matter.

"We followed all protocols with the pre-move paperwork and the city meeting prior to this occurrence, and we never intended to proceed outside of compliance," wrote Steiner. "I apologize for the inconvenience this has caused, and I want to emphasize that I value the historical significance of this structure."

The earthquake shack has been reconstituted at the site with its façades wrapped in a protective covering to shield them from the elements. Steiner has engaged architecture firm Page & Turnbull to devise a restoration plan

that will be vetted by the planning department.

The Planning Commission will then hold a hearing on the project and vote on granting Steiner a conditional use permit to restart construction. San Francisco Planning Chief of Staff Daniel A. Sider told the *Voice* last month that a hearing date had yet to be scheduled.

Twenty-ninth Street resident Marc Norton, a vocal critic of the project, told the *Voice* in March that he and his neighbors would once again be asking the oversight body to require that the twin-shack structure remain at the back of the property.

"We asked Steiner if he would reconsider his plans and work with our alternative plan, which would leave the earthquake cottage where it is. He said no," said Norton. ■



San Francisco's first all-female mariachi will perform at "A Night in Mexico" at the Noe Valley Town Square May 2, 6 to 8 p.m. Photo courtesy Mariachi Femenil Orgullo Mexicano

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# The Cost of Living in Noe

## Three Homes Sell for \$1 Million Over Asking

By Corrie M. Anders

The spring home-buying season in Noe Valley began with a burst of activity, including three sales that topped asking prices by more than \$1 million.

Nine single-family homes closed escrow in February, according to data provided to the *Voice* by Corcoran Icon Properties. That was a notable increase from January, when just two residential properties—a house and a condominium—had sold.

The rebound reflected both a seasonal upswing and an increase in available listings, said Christine Lopatowski, manager of Corcoran Icon’s 24th Street office. Limited inventory earlier in the winter had slowed sales. “If it’s not out there, they can’t buy it,” she said.

Demand remained high, particularly for updated homes.

“We live in a high-tech area with



A buyer paid \$2.25 million for a four-bedroom condominium in this elegant two-unit Edwardian on Dolores Street.

Photos by Corrie M. Anders

### Noe Valley Home Sales\*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price as % of List Price
<b>Single-family homes</b>						
February 2026	9	\$1,450,000	\$7,250,000	\$3,807,778	10	119%
January 2026	1	\$4,750,000	\$4,750,000	\$4,750,000	0	113%
February 2025	6	\$1,720,000	\$5,500,000	\$2,949,583	15	104%
<b>Condominiums/TICs</b>						
February 2026	3	\$815,000	\$2,250,000	\$1,580,000	72	116%
January 2026	1	\$989,000	\$989,000	\$989,000	25	100%
February 2025	4	\$2,150,000	\$3,300,000	\$2,227,500	10	118%
<b>2- to 4-unit buildings</b>						
February 2026	0	—	—	—	—	—
January 2026	0	—	—	—	—	—
February 2025	4	\$1,400,000	\$2,901,000	\$1,662,500	48	115%
<b>5+-unit buildings</b>						
February 2026	1	\$3,440,000	\$3,440,000	\$3,440,000	28	98%
January 2026	0	—	—	—	—	—
February 2025	2	\$1,685,000	\$2,020,000	\$1,852,500	108	88%

\*This survey includes all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley is loosely defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The Noe Valley Voice thanks Corcoran Icon Properties, San Francisco, for providing sales data. NVV4/2026

high-paying jobs,” noted Lopatowski. “AI has come on board, and people are getting really great salaries and stock options.”

Eight of the nine February sales closed above their asking prices, averaging 19 percent over list. Many were all-cash deals, said Lopatowski. Buyer enthusiasm pushed the average sale price over \$3.8 million.

Three remodeled Victorian homes accounted for the largest overbids:

- A four-bedroom, four-bath home in the 800 block of Douglass Street sold for \$7.25 million—about \$1.35 million, or 23 percent, above its asking price (\$5.9 million).

- A renovated 1900-era house in the 800 block of Diamond Street sold for \$4.65 million, roughly 33 percent over its \$3.5 million list price. It also offered four bedrooms and four baths.

- An updated 1890s home in the 100 block of Vicksburg Street, which included a former carriage house, fetched \$3.75 million, 39 percent above asking (\$2.7 million).

Kevin Ho, a real estate agent with Vanguard Properties, said his clients

moved quickly to make a “super compelling and absolutely strong” bid on the Douglass Street house after they’d seen 15 to 20 prospective buyers touring the home the morning of the Super Bowl. “We knew what we had to do to get a property in this competitive market.”

When his clients’ bid was accepted, “they were so excited,” Ho said.

The month’s top seller had been renovated by design-builder Eastwood Development. Though it retained its classic 1900 façade, the house now boasted 3,434 square feet of living space and featured a chef’s kitchen with a waterfall island and Thermador appliances, skylights, high ceilings, sliding glass walls, a family room leading to a deck and garden, a primary suite with a spa-like bathroom, two balconies, a media room with a wet bar, and two-car parking.

The run on homes in Noe Valley also sparked condominium sales.

Buyers paid an average 16 percent over asking for three condominiums in February, two more than in January.

The highest-priced sale was a four-bedroom Edwardian that sold for \$2.25 million, about 28 percent above its list price.

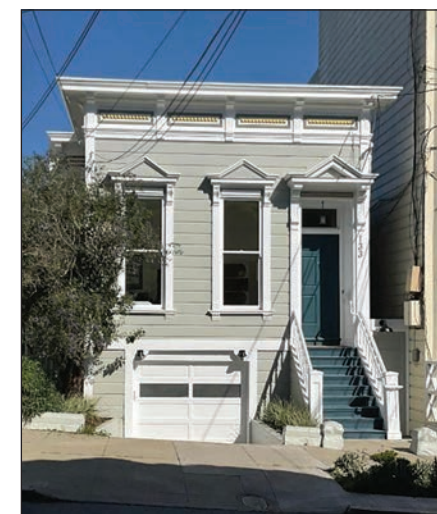
Located in a two-unit building in the 1100 block of Dolores Street, the 1,948-square-foot home spanned two levels and featured hardwood floors, classic wainscoting, an eat-in kitchen, new appliances, a deck, panoramic views, and one-car parking. ■



Behind this modest Victorian façade is newly renovated home on Douglass Street, which sold in February for \$7,250,000—\$1.35 million over its asking price.



A four-bedroom Victorian on Diamond Street, given a complete makeover in 2015, sold in February for \$4,650,000—\$1.16 million over its listed price.



A buyer paid \$3.75 million for this three-bedroom 1890s-era Victorian cottage on Vicksburg Street. That amounted to \$1.06 million over asking.

### Noe Valley Rents\*\*

Unit	No. in Sample	Range March 2026	Average March 2026	Average February 2026	Average March 2025
Studio	0	N/A	N/A	\$1,950 / mo.	\$2,400 / mo.
1-bdrm	7	\$3,300 – \$4,250	\$3,841 / mo.	\$3,477 / mo.	\$3,466 / mo.
2-bdrm	8	\$3,200 – \$5,595	\$4,609 / mo.	\$5,409 / mo.	\$4,117 / mo.
3-bdrm	0	N/A	N/A	\$5,065 / mo.	\$5,538 / mo.
4+-bdrm	1	N/A	\$24,000 / mo.	\$15,000 / mo.	\$13,500 / mo.

\*\*This survey is based on a sample of 16 Noe Valley rental listings appearing on Craigslist.org from March 9 to 17, 2026. Last year, in March 2025, there were 47 listings. NVV4/2026

Karen Kane

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We are accepting applications for the 2026-2027 Civil Grand Jury now through May 1, 2026. The Civil Grand Jury is comprised of 19 members randomly drawn from a pool of applicants who volunteer to serve for a one-year term, from July 1 through June 30 of the following year. Qualified applicants will be invited to participate in selection. During selection, a panel of Superior Court Judges will interview each applicant and recommend the most qualified to be part of the pool from which the Civil Grand Jury's 19 members will be randomly selected. For more information, and to apply please visit our webpage: <https://www.sf.gov/apply-join-civil-grand-jury>

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24th St. Castro St

# STORE TREK

*Store Trek is a regular Voice feature on new stores and restaurants in Noe Valley. This month, we spotlight a cowboy boot store called Routier.*

**ROUTIER LEATHER GOODS**  
3920B 24th Street at Sanchez Street  
323-632-6493  
<https://routierla.com/>

At his store selling handmade cowboy boots for men and women, Xavier Granados only stocks footwear from Stallion Boots & Leather Goods, a 46-year-old company based in El Paso, Texas.

Displayed on the left side of the shop as you walk in are the men's products; on the right are the women's. Adorning the walls in different colors are alligator skins, one of the leathers used to make the boots.

Other options include ostrich, calfskin, and shell cordovan, an expensive leather made from a membrane (the "shell") under the skin of a horse's rump.

"My boots, you can line dance in them, but you can also wear them for going out to dinner or a show," says Granados. "It doesn't have to be a country show either. It can be rock and roll."

Granados opened his Routier Leather Goods at 3920B 24th St., between Sanchez and Noe streets, on Feb. 5. Most recently leased by the ceramics store New Classic Gallery, the narrow storefront had long been home to magazine shop Good News until it shuttered in 2017. (In February, New Classic Gallery moved to Speckle Studio at 416 Cortland Ave.)

A basic boot at Routier starts at \$1,195 and goes up from there, depending on the material and style. Granados can also help design a custom-made boot for you. A custom pair takes 12 to 16 weeks to produce and starts at \$1,295.

"The boots are expensive, but they will last a lifetime if you take care of them," Granados maintains. "They are also sustainable, since you don't need to toss them out and you instead can get them resoled. It is like having a new boot."

He also sells bolo ties, belts, and buckles. A vintage belt buckle starts at \$95, while sterling silver ones cost \$1,395, due to the current high price of commodity goods. "Everything is real. Nothing is fake or imitation," Granados says.

He has not been impacted by Trump's tariffs, he says, because the products he sells are all made in the U.S. However, he has noticed a slight uptick in costs for leathers that originate from overseas factories. Because it is illegal to do so in California, he does not carry anything made from python skins.

Granados says the cowboy style is what attracts customers—that and the arch support that the boots have.

"Once you get into a pair of boots, you could be hooked. I've seen it happen many times," he says. "These are the finest handmade cowboy boots on the market."

Granados, who lives in Mission Terrace, has been staying with friends since moving to San Francisco two years ago this May. The Southern California native first got into the leather boots business 23 years ago,



After close to 25 years selling leather goods, Routier owner Xavier Granados has found the perfect niche for his western footwear in Noe Valley, at the former Good News on 24th Street.

Photo by Art Bodner

when he was hired to work at a store on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. It was the first time he bought his own pair of boots.

"Ever since, they are all I wear," says Granados. He favors an ankle-high boot with a zipper known as a Zorro. "The one I am wearing looks western but is not screaming yeehaw!"

In 2020, Granados decided to launch his own business and focused solely on selling via his website, [routierla.com](http://routierla.com). His client base grew to include musicians Post Malone, Slash of Guns N' Roses, and Kiss cofounder Gene Simmons.

For reasons unclear to Granados, Routier's online sales began to dip by 2023, so he began scouting out a brick-and-mortar location.

To his surprise, he found cheaper rents for storefronts in San Francisco, where he'd often come to visit friends over the years.

He opened his first shop in the Cow Hollow neighborhood. It was meant to be a two-month popup. But he ended up staying for six months. Then he relocated to a space in Presidio Heights.

Needing to move again, Granados learned that the roughly 400-square-foot storefront in Noe Valley was available. He was familiar with the neighborhood, having spent time with friends in Noe and celebrated birthdays at the Valley Tavern bar.

"It's the perfect size," he notes of his commercial space. "I don't need much

more space than this."

As for the store's name, it comes from *routier*, the French word for truck stop. Granados says he was inspired by the late chef Anthony Bourdain, who once remarked on his TV show *Reservations* after dining at a *routier* in Burgundy, France, that the word would be a perfect name for a restaurant.

"I thought it would be a good name for a cowboy boot store. At some big truck stops, you can buy apparel," says Granados, adding that because it is a

French word, "it sounds fancy, so I like that."

Reaction to his opening in Noe Valley has been overwhelmingly positive, he says, with people popping in to welcome him to the neighborhood.

"I couldn't have asked for a better welcome, honestly," says Granados.

**Routier Leather Goods** is open Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. The shop is closed on Mondays.

—Matthew S. Bajko



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**April 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30:** STORYTIMES are Thursdays, 10:15 am and 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 2-30:** The BAR on Dolores hosts free BINGO for booze and prizes, on Tuesdays, free comedy on Thursdays, and mahjong on Saturdays, 8 pm. 1600 Dolores. 695-1745.

**April 3-24:** The Noe Valley RUN CLUB meets Fridays at Noe Cafe, 1299 Sanchez. 6:45 am for 4 miles, and 7:30 am for 2.5 miles. noevalleyrunclub.square.site

**April 3 & May 1:** The Bell Appeal Choir rings HANDBELLS at Bethany's "Ring Out Danger." 9:35-9:45 am. 1270 Sanchez. 647-8393; bethanysf.org

**April 4-25:** The FARMERS MARKET has fresh produce, food, and music Saturdays, 8 am to 1 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

**April 4-25:** The Noe WALKS group strides on Saturdays, 10 am, at 24th and Sanchez.

**April 6, 13, 20 & 27:** Toddler STORYTIMES are Mondays, 11:15-11:45 am. Tickets 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 6-27:** Mamahuhu hosts MAHJONG Mondays from 6 to 9 pm. 3991 24th. 374-7012; eatmamahuhu.com

**April 7-28:** Tuesday TRIVIA Night at The Dubliner begins at 8 pm. Wed., it's bingo. 3838 24th. 826-826-2279; dublinersf.com

**April 11:** UC master gardeners talk TOMATOES. 2-3:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 11:** The Noe Valley Town Square hosts an "April in Paris" DINNER DANCE with music by Innuendo; 5:30-7:30. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

**April 11:** Edd Kimber discusses the cookbook *Chocolate Baking*, 6:30 pm. OMNIVORE Books, 3885 Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

**April 12:** Sunday MUSIC IN THE SQUARE features the Cabernet Quartet from 1 to 2 pm, and guitarist Luke Schwartz from 2 to 3 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

**April 12:** Ages 10 to 18 can learn to play MANCALA, an ancient African board

game. 2-3 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707;sfpl.org

**April 12 & 26:** Free Sunday morning YOGA FLOW offers all-level classes; bring water and a mat. 11 am-noon. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

**April 14:** It's LEGO and Board Game Night at the Noe Valley Library. 6-7:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 16** Noe Valley Books BOOK CLUB reads *Almond* by Sohn Won-pyung. 7 pm. 3957 24th. Sign up 590-2961; noevalleybooks.com

**April 17:** The Friction Quartet performs a CONCERT, 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317; noevalleyministry.org

**April 18:** The Noe Valley Library hosts a PUZZLE SWAP, from 2 to 3 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 18:** The SF Chamber Orchestra performs a SENSORY FRIENDLY concert, designed with the neurodivergent community in mind. 11-11:45 am. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. thesfco.org

**April 18:** KIDS STORYTIME at Noe Valley Books features Jilanne Hoffmann, author of *The Ocean's Heart*. 3-4 pm. Bernie's Coffee, 3966 24th. 590-2961; noevalleybooks.com

**April 18:** Palaver Strings and tenor Nicholas Phan give a free POPUP concert, 5 to 5:30 pm, Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th; noemusic.org

**April 19:** City Guides offers a WALKING TOUR of Noe Valley, starting at 451 Jersey, at 2 pm. Register with City Guides, 375-0468; sfcityguides.org

**April 19:** The Noe Valley Library hosts a workshop on "Mending and Upcycling." 2 to 3:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 19:** NOE MUSIC Kids features Palaver Strings in a "Dancing Home" program for children and families, 2:30 to 3:15 pm, 1021 Sanchez. noemusic.org

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## C A L E N D A R

**April 19:** Tenor Nicholas Phan and the PALAVER Strings orchestra play protest music at "A Change Is Gonna Come," 5 to 7 pm. 1021 Sanchez. noemusic.org

**April 20:** Alone Together BOOK CLUB for teens runs from 4 to 5 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 21:** ACTION-SF strategizes on third Tuesdays, 6 to 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey; action-sf.com

**April 21-25:** COOKBOOK WEEK at Omnivore Books features lectures, dinners and pop-up events throughout the city. For schedule: 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

**April 23:** Noe Valley Spring WINE WALK moseys along 24th, from 4:30 to 7:30 pm. noemerchants.com

**April 23:** The Noe Valley Democratic Club hosts a FORUM with three candidates hoping to succeed Rafael Mandelman. 6-8 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez. noevalleydemocrats.org (see *Short Takes*)

**April 24:** Slow Sanchez HAPPY HOUR runs from 4:30 to 6:30 pm at Noe Cafe. 1299 Sanchez. 915-8876; slowsanchez.com

**April 24-May 4:** Castro Theatre screens the 69th SF International FILM FESTIVAL. 429 Castro. 621-6120; thecastro.com

**April 25:** Noe Valley Books celebrates BOOKSTORE DAY with a scavenger hunt, kids' activities, and live music. 10 am-8 pm. 3957 24th, 590-2961; noevalleybooks.com

**April 25:** A FAMILY DANCE Party at the Noe Valley Library welcomes all ages. 2:30-3:30 pm. 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**April 25:** Dance WORKOUT Rhythm & Motion is 4-5 pm. Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

**April 26:** Community MUSIC HANGOUT at the Town Square welcomes singers of all levels. 1-3 pm. 3861 24th. noevalleytownsquare.com

**April 26:** The Corner Sessions monthly JAZZ concert at Dolores Deluxe runs from 1-3 pm. 2500 22nd. doloresdeluxe.com

**April 26:** Music on the Hill hosts a CONCERT by woodwind quintet Avenue Winds. 7:30. St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 101 Gold Mine. musiconthehill.org

**April 28:** The Noe Valley Merchants NIGHT MARKET offers local vendors, food, and music, 5 to 8 pm. 3861 24th. noemerchants.com

**April 28:** AUTHOR Jeanne Carstensen introduces *A Greek Tragedy: One Day, A Deadly Shipwreck, and the Human Cost of the Refugee Crisis*. 7:30 pm. Bird & Beckett. 653 Chenery. 586-3733.

**May 2:** The Noe Valley KNITTING Circle meets from 10 am to noon. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**May 2:** The Civic Symphony performs a CONCERT of Chamber Music. 3-5 pm. 1021 Sanchez. 282-2317

**May 2:** Celebrate "A Night in Mexico" with the all-female MARIACHI group Mariachi Femenil Orgullo Mexicano in the Noe Valley Town Square, 3861 24th. 6-8 pm.

**May 3:** Vica Lew leads a PAINTING workshop for ages 10 and up, 2 pm. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; sfpl.org

**May 5:** Natasha MacAller discusses being *The Apothecary Chef*. 6:30 pm. OMNIVORE Books, 3885 Cesar Chavez. 282-4712; omnivorebooks.com

**May 9-June 20:** *Ruth Asawa: Untitled*, an exhibit featuring sculptures, paintings, and drawings by artist RUTH ASAWA, opens at a new gallery at 1275 Minnesota. Reception May 9. 11 am to 4 pm. Ruthasawa.com

**May 10:** Noe Music's "Together We Rise" CONCERT features the SF Girls Chorus, 5 to 7 pm. 1021 Sanchez. noemusic.org

**May 16:** Visit the Friends of Noe Valley GARDEN Tour, 10 am to 4 pm. Tickets at Town Square; friendsofnoevalley.com/news/

**May 16:** Slow Sanchez BLOCK PARTY includes plant swaps. 10 am-4 pm. Sanchez from Clipper to 26th. SlowSanchez.com

**May OUI:** The next Voice Calendar will be for the **May 2026** issue. The deadline for calendar items is April 20. Email [calendar@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:calendar@noevalleyvoice.com).

# MORE FOOD TO EAT

## Chocolate Milk Frozen Yogurt at Easy Breezy

Yes, yes, yes. Those are the only thoughts running through my mind with each bite of the **Chocolate Milk** frozen yogurt at **Easy Breezy Frozen Yogurt** (4028 24th St.).

It threads a perfect needle: the richness and satisfaction of ice cream without the heaviness. It's built on a low-fat yogurt base that almost tastes too good to be true.

Katie tends to go for the tanginess of the original **OG Tart** frozen yogurt, which I'll admit is a very close second for me. But I've always had a soft spot for chocolate—especially in ice cream and milkshake form—because there's something deeply refreshing about cold smooth chocolate done right.



This **Chocolate Milk** frozen yogurt hits that sweet spot perfectly, making it feel like a sustainable upgrade rather than an indulgent splurge. I also appreciate that I can calibrate my portion size to roughly match the calories it took us to walk over, keeping me neutral on calories but comfortably ahead on happiness.

I've never been much of a punch-card person, finding them easy to misplace, but the frequency with which I find myself at Easy Breezy has convinced me to collect the stamps—to get a free treat after 10 buys. Last year, the store made this easier with an app (how San Francisco). Gone are the days of carrying around a bent piece of cardboard. Now the tally is right there on your phone—ready for those nights when the soft-serve siren calls.

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

Have a suggestion for a dish to try in Noe Valley? Send an email to Matt Fisher at [MoreFoodtoEatNoeValley@gmail.com](mailto:MoreFoodtoEatNoeValley@gmail.com).

## UPPER NOE RECREATION CENTER



SF Youth Baseball players and spectators enjoy a hot March afternoon at Upper Noe. Look for the home team the Eagles to practice at Upper Noe on Tuesdays, 4:30 p.m.

Photo by Chris Faust

### We're Gardening, Wrestling, and Camping

Just so you know: Upper Noe Recreation Center—the building at 295 Day St.—will be closed for spring cleaning from March 29 through April 6. However, the ball field and the outdoor green will be open as usual.

Also, volunteers from the **Upper Noe Gardening Group** may be planning its next community gardening day, to tend the California native plants in Upper Noe's Native Plant Garden along Sanchez Street. The rec center is sprucing up its flower beds to take part in the Noe Valley Garden Tour on May 16. Visit <https://uppernoerecreationcenter.com/gardens/> to learn more.

**Spring Session** is sprinting through April and May with lots of invigorating sports and activities. Coed Wrestling, Coed Boxing, and Women's Boxing Fundamentals proved so popular during winter that they have been continued through spring. Also, there are new free activities, including Tweens/Women's Volleyball and Women's Basketball. Spectators are welcome to view the action at Girls League Volleyball games on Saturday afternoons.

**Summer Day Camp** registration opened March 21. Upper Noe will host nine one-week sessions from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays between June 8 and Aug. 14: Girls Play Sports Camp for 5- to 12-year-olds and Upper Noe Sports Camp for 9- to 14-year-olds. Check to see if the camps still have openings.

You can view the 2026 Spring Catalog and the 2026 Summer Day Camp Catalog at <https://sfrecpark.org/406/Recreation-Programs>.

Note that equipment for pickleball, ping-pong, and other activities is available from the office at 295 Day (415-970-8061). Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center is the park's stewardship group. To join or lend a hand, go to [www.uppernoerecreationcenter.com](http://www.uppernoerecreationcenter.com). To report issues at the park, contact office personnel and/or San Francisco Customer Service (3-1-1).

—Chris Faust, Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

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

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

<p><b>Tuesday</b>                  9 to 10 a.m. Zumba (outside) FREE                  9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play FREE                  9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pickleball (all ages)                  12 to 1 p.m. Pilates (18+)                  1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Strength &amp; Flexibility (18+)                  2 to 4 p.m. Open Basketball (ages 6-17) FREE                  4 to 6 p.m. Women's Open Basketball (18+) FREE                  6 to 7 p.m. Tennis—Beginning (ages 8-10)                  6 to 8:45 p.m. Open Basketball (18+) FREE                  6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Yoga Vinyasa (18+)                  7 to 8 p.m. Tennis—Beginning/Intermediate (18+)</p>	<p>1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Strength &amp; Flexibility (18+)                  2 to 4 p.m. Open Basketball (ages 6-17) FREE                  4 to 6 p.m. Women's Open Basketball (18+) FREE                  4 to 5 p.m. Petite Bakers (ages 3-5)                  6 to 8:45 p.m. Open Basketball (18+) FREE                  6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Yoga Vinyasa (18+)</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b>                  9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play FREE                  9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Pee Wee Basketball 4/15-5/20 (ages 3-5)                  12 to 1 p.m. Feldenkrais (18+)                  12 to 2 p.m. Open Basketball (18+) FREE                  2 to 5 p.m. Open Basketball (ages 6-17) FREE                  4 to 5 p.m. Karate Kidz—Little Kickers (ages 6-8)                  5 to 6 p.m. Karate Kidz (ages 9-12)                  6 to 8:45 p.m. Adult Advanced League Volleyball (18+)                  6:30 to 8 p.m. Coed Boxing for Adults (18+)</p>	<p><b>Friday</b>                  9 to 10 a.m. Zumba (outside) FREE                  9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play FREE                  10 to 11 a.m. Tot Futsal 4/10-5/29 (ages 3-4)                  12 to 2 p.m. Open Basketball (18+) FREE                  2 to 4 p.m. Open Basketball (ages 6-17) FREE                  4:15 to 6:30 p.m. Volleyball League—Girls (ages 10-12)                  6 to 7 p.m. Tennis—Beginning (ages 8-10)                  6:30 to 8 p.m. Women's Boxing Fundamentals (18+)                  6:30 to 8:45 p.m. Tweens/Women's Volleyball FREE                  7 to 8 p.m. Tennis—Beginning/Intermediate (18+)</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b>                  9 to 11:30 a.m. A Place to Play FREE                  9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Pickleball (18+) FREE                  12 to 1 p.m. Pilates (18+)</p>	<p><b>Saturday</b>                  9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Open Basketball (all ages) FREE                  9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Family Zumba—Play Pass \$5                  11 a.m. to 2 p.m. A Place to Play FREE                  1 to 4:30 p.m. Girls League Volleyball Games                  3 to 4 p.m. Coed Wrestling—Camp Grapple (ages 7-13)</p>

## Your Feedback Helped Shape Muni's Budget

Learn about our next two-year budget and how it affects Muni at an upcoming Board Meeting. Get information on proposed changes to fares, fees and fines and provide your comments.

### SFMTA Board of Directors Meetings: April 7 and 21 at 1 PM

Reunión de la Junta Directiva de la SFMTA  
 Martes 7 y 21 de abril 1 PM

董事會會議 4月7日 (星期二) 及4月21日 (星期二) 下午 1:00  
 Mga Pagpupulong ng Lupon ng mga Direktor Martes, Abril 7 at Martes, Abril 21 1PM

### San Francisco City Hall, Room 400

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place

Infórmese sobre nuestro próximo presupuesto bienal y cómo afecta a Muni. Infórmese sobre los cambios propuestos en tarifas, tasas y multas, y envíe sus comentarios.

了解我們下一個兩年期預算，以及它將如何影響 Muni。了解擬議中的票價、收費及罰款調整，並提供您的意見。

Alamin ang tungkol sa aming susunod na dalawang taong badyet at kung paano nito aapektuhan ang Muni. Kumuha ng impormasyon sa mga iminungkahing pagbabago sa pamasaha, bayarin at multa at ibigay ang iyong mga komento.

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415.646.4619: For free interpretation services, please submit your request 48 hours in advance of meeting. / Para servicios de interpretación gratuitos, por favor haga su petición 48 horas antes de la reunión. / 如果需要免費口語翻譯，請於會議之前48小時提出要求。 / Para sa libreng serbisyo sa interpretasyon, kailangan mag-request 48 oras bago ang miting. / Đối với dịch vụ thông dịch miễn phí, vui lòng gửi yêu cầu của bạn 48 giờ trước cuộc họp. / Для бесплатных услуг устного перевода просьба представить ваш запрос за 48 часов до начала собрания. / Pour les services d'interprétation gratuits, veuillez soumettre votre demande 48 heures avant la réunion. / 무료 통역 서비스를 원하시면 회의 48 시간 전에 귀하의 요청을 제출하십시오. / 無料通訳サービスをご希望の場合は、会議の48時間前までにリクエストを提出してください。 / عامتجالتال دعوم نم ٤٨ ساع 48 لبق كلبلط ميذوقت يجري، هيناجملا هيروفالامجرتالامذ عيلع لوصحجلل





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THURS APR 16	ALBERTO LANDGRAF WITH STUART BRIOZA • OTEQUE • 6:30 P.M. FREE!
SUN APR 19	DOMENICA MARCHETTI WITH KATE LEAHY • ITALIAN COOKIES • 3:00 P.M. FREE!
APR 21 - APR 25	SF COOKBOOK WEEK! Details: <a href="http://cookbookweek.com">cookbookweek.com</a>
WED APR 22	COOKBOOK WEEK PANEL DISCUSSION • HETTY MCKINNON, VIOLET WITCHEL, COLU HENRY & REILLY MEEHAN WITH ALLIE LEHMAN • 6:30 P.M. FREE! <small>Building Your Brand: Cookbook to Community (&amp; Back Again)</small>
THURS APR 23	COOKBOOK WEEK PANEL DISCUSSION • JOHN BIRDSALL, JUSTIN BURKE, SOLEIL HO & JON KUNG WITH CELIA SACK • 6:30 P.M. FREE! <small>Queer Voices, Bold Flavors</small>
MON APR 27	TRINITY MOUZON WOFFORD WITH LAUREN HAYNES • EATING AT HOME • 6:30 P.M. FREE!
TUES APR 28	KRIS BUTLER • DRINK MAPS IN VICTORIAN BRITAIN • 6:30 P.M. FREE!
THURS APR 30	ANISSA HELOU WITH SARA DESERAN • LEBANON • 6:30 P.M. FREE!
TUES MAY 5	NATASHA MACALLER WITH EMILY LUCHETTI • THE APOTHECARY CHEF • 6:30 P.M. FREE!
THURS MAY 7	PAUL STANGL WITH GABY MAEDA • SAN FRANCISCO SEAFOOD • 6:30 P.M. FREE!
SAT MAY 9	DIANE KOCHILAS • ATHENS: FOOD, STORIES, LOVE • 5:30 P.M. FREE!

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**CHILDREN'S FICTION**

Miriam Moore-Keish explains facial expressions in *This Is My Wonderful Face*, illustrated by Bece Luna. Ages 3-6.

*Bath Time for the Crayons*, by Drew Daywalt, illustrated by Oliver Jeffers, is the 15th in the "Crayons Celebrate" series. Ages 3-6.

All the felines find homes *At the Rescue Cat Café*, written by Anna Humphrey and illustrated by Kari Rust. Ages 4-7.

Cricket Yumi dreams of being a magical firefly in *The Firefly Crown* by Yxavel Magno Dino. Ages 8-11.

**CHILDREN'S NONFICTION**

*Dreams Take Flight: The Story of Deaf Pilot Nellie Zabel Willhite*, a book written by Brittany Richman, with illustrations by Alisha Monnin, is part of the "Own Voices, Own Stories" series. Ages 6-9.

DK Books offers step-by-step instructions in *How to Draw Favorite Characters* from Walt Disney's archive. Ages 6-12.

*Flick! The Truth About Lizards*, written by Annette Whipple and illustrated by Juanjuan Oliver, answers all your questions about the creatures. Ages 8-12.

Brian Skerry and Stephanie Warren Drummer wrote *The Ultimate Book of Whales: Up-Close Encounters With Earth's Mightiest Mammals*. Ages 8-12.

**CHILDREN'S EBOOKS**

Take a journey through a tunnel in the story/poem *My Subway Runs*, written by James Gladstone and illustrated by Pierre Pratt. Ages 3-6 years.

*Duck for President* is book 3 in Farmer Brown's Barnyard Tales by Doreen Cronin and Betsy Lewin. Ages 3-7.

Jashar Awan's picture book *What a Lucky Day!* encourages positive attitudes and avoiding judgment of others. Ages 4-8.

In *A Kid Like Me*, Norm Feuti's graphic novel, Ethan struggles to fit in at middle school. Ages 8-12.

**TEEN FICTION**

In *Twin Tides* by Hien Nguyen, twin sisters solve the mystery of their long separation. Ages 12 and up.

Accidents plague the shooting of a slasher film in *Final Cut* by Olivia Worley. Ages 13-18.

In the dual love story *There's Always Next Year*, by Leah Johnson and George M. Johnson, Andy and Dominique each overcome problems that seemed insurmountable. Ages 14-18.

Teens face jeopardy in a competitive gaming world in *How We Play the Game*, written by Alexis Nedd. Ages 14 and up.

**TEEN NONFICTION**

Rebecca Traister shows girls how their anger can be a positive force for change in *Angry Girls Will Get Us Through*. Ages 10-14.

*Trans History: A Graphic Novel From Ancient Times to the Present Day*, by Alex L. Combs and Andrew Eakett, gives evidence of gender nonconformity dating back 4,500 years. Ages 12-17.

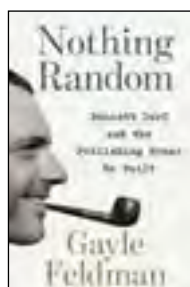
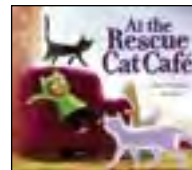
Find out what's toxic and what's not in *Fascinating Fungi: Nourishers, Killers, Connectors, and Healers*, by Karen

**MORE BOOKS TO READ**



**Here Comes the Sun**  
Sprouting up this month are the April titles from Children's Librarian Madeleine Felder, Youth Librarian Cristal Fiel, and Adult Services Librarian Amy Lewis, of the Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Library. We thank them for sharing the latest reads at the branch—and *Voice* scribe Karol Barske for the book descriptions.

To put items on hold, go to SFPL.org or get the mobile app at <https://sfpl.org/services/mobile-resources/library-catalog-mobile-apps/>. Better yet, take a walk to the beautiful building at 451 Jersey St. If you need to speak with Felder, Fiel, or Lewis call 415-355-5707. Have fun.



Latchana Kenney. Ages 12-18.

In *The Reality of Recycling*, Stuart A. Kallen exposes the problems caused by plastic and electronic waste and extols the benefits of reuse. Ages 12 and up.

**TEEN EBOOKS**

Ryan Douglass' *The Great Disillusionment of Nick and Jay* offers a new take on *The Great Gatsby*. Ages 13 and up.

Cory McCarthy's novel *Postscript* is set in a post-apocalyptic world where "a few sapiens are surviving off the last scraps of humanity." Ages 14-17.

On her wedding day, Aurora finds out she must fulfill her true destiny as an immortal being in *The Sun and the Starmaker* by Rachel Griffin. Ages 14-18.

In *The Cursed Queen's Daughter*, second in the "Thirstwood" series by Elly Blake, a warrior princess meets a shadow prince. Ages 14 and up.

**ADULT FICTION**

Lily, a bookshop apprentice, follows a trail of love letters found in a burned book in *The Bookbinder's Secret* by A. D. Bell.

In Nina McConigley's "silly but serious" novel, *How to Commit a Postcolonial Murder*, Indian-American sisters in 1980s Wyoming plot the death of an uncle.

Daniyal Mueenuddin "evokes contemporary feudal Pakistan" through characters joined by violence and tragedy, in *This Is Where the Serpent Lives*.

*Vigil* by George Saunders takes place on the final day in the life of an oil company CEO.

**ADULT NONFICTION**

*Fly, Wild Swans: My Mother, Myself, and China* is Jung Chang's memoir of her journey to Britain in 1978 and her yearnings for family left behind.

In *Kings and Pawns: Jackie Robinson and Paul Robeson in America*, Howard Bryant details the House Un-American Activities Committee's attempts to discredit Black heroes.

In *Nothing Random: Bennett Cerf and the Publishing House He Built*, Gayle Feldman catalogs the rise of 20th century popular literature.

Patrice Nganang remembers his tumultuous youth in Cameroon in *Scale Boy: An African Childhood*.

**ADULT EBOOKS**

Xiaolu Guo offers a feminist reimagining of Melville's *Moby Dick* in *Call Me Ishmaelle*.

In *The Elements of Power: A Story of War, Technology, and the Dirtiest Supply Chain on Earth*, Nicholas Niarchos reports on the global battle to control metals needed for batteries.

Maya Shankar tells how to function on *The Other Side of Change: Who We Become When Life Makes Other Plans*.

In *The Rest of Our Lives*, a novel by Benjamin Markovits, a middle-aged man confronts a crossroads.

**ADULT DVD/BLU-RAY**

*Hamnet* (2025), a film directed by Chloé Zhao, stars Paul Mescal as Shakespeare and Jessie Buckley as his wife Agnes.

*Marty Supreme* (2025), directed by Josh Safdie, features Timothée Chalamet as a narcissistic ping-pong player.

*Song Sung Blue* is a 2025 docudrama about a Neil Diamond tribute act, directed by Craig Brewer and starring Hugh Jackman and Kate Hudson.

*Wicked: For Good* is a 2025 musical fairytale directed by Jon M. Chu and starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande.

**LIBRARY EVENTS**

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

**Family Storytimes** are Thursdays, April 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, at 10:15 and 11 a.m. Tickets are available at 10 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; [sfpl.org](http://sfpl.org)

The Noe Valley **Knitting Circle** welcomes those who knit, crochet, or embroider, and meets on Saturdays, April 4 and May 2, 10 a.m. to noon.

Renda Dabit teaches a **Henna Workshop** for ages 9 and older Saturday, April 4, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Reservations required: 355-5707.

**Toddler Storytimes** are Mondays, April 6, 13, 20 & 27, 11:15 to 11:45 a.m. Tickets are available at the door, starting at 11 a.m. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey. 355-5707; [sfpl.org](http://sfpl.org)

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

*The Persian Version*, a 2023 film about an Iranian-American family, screens Friday, April 10, from 2 to 4 p.m.

UC Master Gardeners will show how to grow **Vibrant Tomatoes** in containers, on Saturday, April 11, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Learn to play **Mancala**, a two-player board game originating in Africa, on Sunday, April 12, from 2 to 3 p.m. For ages 10 to 18.

Drop in for **Tech Help** on Monday, April 13, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Family **LEGO and Board Game Night** is on Tuesday, April 14, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

The Noe Valley **Short Stack Book Club** features *Audition* by Katie Kitamura, on Friday, April 17, from 3 to 4 p.m. Copies are held at the circulation desk for checkout.

Bring a jigsaw puzzle in good condition to the **Puzzle Swap** on Saturday, April 18, from 2 to 3 p.m.

SF City Guides' **Walking Tour "Noe Valley: Village Within a City"** explores historic homes in the neighborhood Sundays, April 19 and May 17, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Reserve at 375-0468 (City Guides).

Lucy Ornelas of Youth Art Exchange leads a textile repair workshop on **Mending and Upcycling**. Kids ages 13 to 18 should bring a textile item to repair on Sunday, April 19, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Space limited.

Teens and tweens are invited to bring a book or a journal to the **Alone Together Book Club**, Monday, April 20, 4 to 5 p.m.

A **Family Dance Party** for children and their caregivers is on Saturday, April 25, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

**Pajama Storytime** for families happens on Tuesday, April 28, from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

Vica Lew introduces the **Basics of Watercolor Painting** for ages 10 and up. Sunday, May 3, from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Reservations required: 355-5707.

Make your own wall hanging patch or bookmark at **Weave Yourself in Your Story** with Cristina Edwards on Wednesday, May 6, from 4 to 5 p.m. Reservations required: 355-5707.

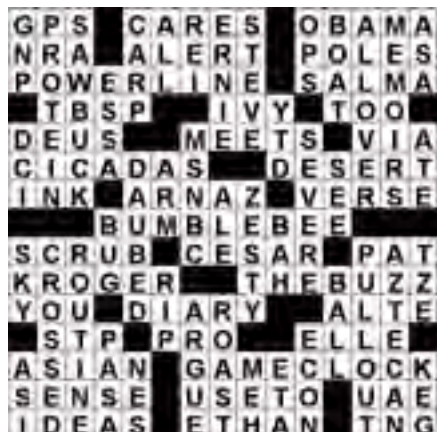
Annotations by Voice bookworm Karol Barske

**BRANCH HOURS**

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

**CROSSWORD SOLUTION**

What's That Sound? by Michael Blake



# MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

**Action SF, the National Movement in Your Neighborhood**

https://m.facebook.com/ActionSFactivism/  
 Website: <http://www.action-sf.com/>  
 Email: [ActionSFTeam@gmail.com](mailto:ActionSFTeam@gmail.com)  
 Meetings: Third Tuesday (April 21: contact [actionsolidarity@gmail.com](mailto:actionsolidarity@gmail.com) for zoom link), Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey, 6-7:30 p.m.

**Al-Anon Noe Valley**

Contact: 834-9940; [office@al-anonsf.org](mailto:office@al-anonsf.org)  
 Meetings: Wednesdays, 7:30-9 p.m., St. Philip Church, 725 Diamond St. (park on Elizabeth Street side; enter on 24th Street).  
 Thursdays, 7:15-8:30 p.m. Bethany UMC, 1270 Sanchez St. (enter through Clipper Street side door and go up the stairs)

**Castro Merchants**

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

**Comerford Greenway**

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

**Diamond Heights Community Association**

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

**Dolores Heights Improvement Club**

Email: [info@doloresheights.org](mailto:info@doloresheights.org)  
 Website: [www.doloresheights.org](http://www.doloresheights.org)  
 Meetings: Third Thursday of every second month. Bank of America, 18th and Castro.

**Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)**

Contacts: Deanna Mooney, 821-4045; Diane McCarney, 824-0303; or Lili Wu, 647-0235. Address: 560 Duncan St., SF, CA 94131. Meetings: Call for details.

**Eureka Valley Neighborhood Assn.**

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

**Fair Oaks Neighbors**

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

**Friends of Billy Goat Hill**

Contact: Lisa and Mo Ghotbi, 821-0122  
 Website: [www.billygoathill.net](http://www.billygoathill.net)

**Friends of Dolores Park Playground**

Contact: Nancy Gonzalez Madynski, 828-5772  
 Email: [friendsofdolorespark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdolorespark@gmail.com)  
 Website: [friendsofdolorespark.org](http://friendsofdolorespark.org)

**Friends of Christopher Park**

Contact: Brynna McNulty, 818-744-4230  
 Email: [friendsofchristopherpark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofchristopherpark@gmail.com)  
 Website: [FriendsOfChristopherPark.org](http://FriendsOfChristopherPark.org)

**Friends of Glen Canyon Park**

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

**Friends of Noe Courts Playground**

Contact: Laura Norman  
 Email: [noecourts@gmail.com](mailto:noecourts@gmail.com)  
 Address: P.O. Box 460953, SF, CA 94146  
 Meetings: Email for dates and times.

**Friends of Noe Valley (FNV)**

Contact: Todd David, 401-0625  
 Email: [info@friendsofnoevalley.com](mailto:info@friendsofnoevalley.com)  
 Website: [friendsofnoevalley.com](http://friendsofnoevalley.com)  
 Meetings: Two or three annually.

**Friends of Slow Sanchez**

Contacts: Christopher Keene, Andrew Casteel  
 Email: [info@SlowSanchez.com](mailto:info@SlowSanchez.com)  
 Website: [SlowSanchez.com](http://SlowSanchez.com)

**Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center**

Contact: Chris Faust  
 Email: [info@uppernoerecreationcenter.com](mailto:info@uppernoerecreationcenter.com)  
 Website: [uppernoerecreationcenter.com](http://uppernoerecreationcenter.com)  
 Meetings: Email or check website.

**Friends of Upper Noe Dog Owners Group (FUNDOG)**

Contact: David Emanuel  
 Email: [info@fundogsf.org](mailto:info@fundogsf.org)  
 Website: [www.fundogsf.org](http://www.fundogsf.org)

**Glen Park Association**

Contact: [info@glenparkassociation.org](mailto:info@glenparkassociation.org)  
 Website: [glenparkassociation.org](http://glenparkassociation.org)  
 Address: P.O. Box 31292, SF, CA 94131

**Juri Commoners**

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

**Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association**

Contact: Dr. Lisa Fromer, president  
 Email: [efromer3@gmail.com](mailto:efromer3@gmail.com)  
 Meetings: Quarterly. Email for details.

**Noe Neighborhood Council**

Contact: Ozzie Rohm or Matt McCabe  
 Email: [info@noeneighborhoodcouncil.com](mailto:info@noeneighborhoodcouncil.com)  
 Website: [noeneighborhoodcouncil.com](http://noeneighborhoodcouncil.com)  
 Meetings: Quarterly at Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey St.

**Noe Valley Association—24th Street Community Benefit District**

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

**Noe Valley Democratic Club**

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

**Noe Valley Farmers Market**

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

**Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)**

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

**Noe Valley Parent Network**

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

**Noe Walks**

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

**Progress Noe Valley**

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

**San Francisco NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Team)**

Contact: Noe Valley NERT Neighborhood Team co-coordinators Maxine Fasulis, [mfasulis@yahoo.com](mailto:mfasulis@yahoo.com); Carole Roberts, [carole\\_roberts@faludi.com](mailto:carole_roberts@faludi.com)  
 Website: <https://SF-fire.org/nert>  
 Visit the website to sign up for trainings.

**Upper Noe Merchants**

Contact: [Info@UpperNoeNeighbors.com](mailto:Info@UpperNoeNeighbors.com); <https://uppernoeneighbors.com/merchants/>

**Upper Noe Neighbors**

Contact: Chris Faust  
 Email: [Hello@UpperNoeNeighbors.com](mailto:Hello@UpperNoeNeighbors.com)  
 Website: [www.uppernoeneighbors.com](http://www.uppernoeneighbors.com)  
 Meetings: Bi-monthly on third Wednesdays. Confirm by email or check website.

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE  
[editor@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:editor@noevalleyvoice.com)  
 All phone numbers are in the 415 area code, unless otherwise noted.



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2026 is still going strong! Inventory is running roughly 20 to 25 percent below last year's levels. The anticipation of future IPOs from local AI giants like Anthropic and OpenAI is fueling a buying frenzy unlike anything seen in my 20 years of selling real estate here. (This year is my 20th anniversary!) Sales of San Francisco homes above \$5 million jumped more than 50 percent year over year in late 2025. Since then, the luxury surge has only intensified, with February 2026 showing a 220 percent year-over-year jump in sales above \$5 million. What we are seeing now is the effect of early liquidity. The larger wealth event still lies ahead. Experience matters in a fast market. Strategy matters even more. Jessica delivers both and more. Call Jessica for a confidential, no obligation valuation—and a chance to see what it's like to work with the best!

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and now for the  
**RUMORS**  
behind the news

**Lettuce Share Shops**

By Mazook

**CLOTHES CALL:** An artist from the East Bay is popping up in Noe Valley on weekends and wishes she could do so more.

Jil Cappuccio is doing a popup in the humorously named “Haus Next Door to Art Haus SF” (3977 24th St.) and filling half the shop with her unique clothing for men, women, and children.

Cappuccio is also a teacher, who shows her seventh- and eighth-grade students at Korematsu Middle School in El Cerrito the art of sewing on Singer sewing machines. In Noe Valley, her colorful shirts, jackets, and dresses, which Cappuccio pieces together using vintage and found fabrics, are attracting kids and moms “like bees to honey,” she says.

Cappuccio has been creating art clothing for decades. In the 1990s, she and her husband left Colorado to find a home in San Francisco and moved into the Castro (where she sold her pieces as well). “Then, after almost 10 years, we moved to the East Bay.”

Believe it or not, she loves her commute on BART and Muni to San Francisco and can’t believe how nice everyone is, especially in Noe Valley. “What a great neighborhood... I have met many wonderful people who shop on 24th Street, and the merchants on 24th Street are just great...I am just loving it all.”

The popup is happening on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

But another day might be added. Art Haus SF owner, art teacher, and artist Elizabeth Dekker plans to open the next-door gallery space for the Tuesday Night Markets at the Town Square.

The Haus Next Door displays and sells Dekker’s artwork and mid-century



Tending an abundant crop of fresh vegetables at the Saturday Farmers Market are Maria Gonzalez and Adan de Jesus, of Green Thumb Organics Farms in San Juan Bautista.



Chef Laurine Wickett offers samples of her Mighty Chia pudding at the Noe Valley Farmers Market. The jars, which come in four flavors, were going fast in March. Photos by Sally Smith

pottery too, along with the works of Dekker’s students on occasion. At her Art Haus SF studio/classroom, Dekker has been teaching art to neighborhood youngsters for the past six years.

She says ask if you want to take a peek in The Haus Next Door during the week or anytime. The space has its own tiny dressing room (a multicolored tent in the corner), where you can try on Cappuccio’s garments.

Speaking of wonderful artists, Teresa Fitzgerald announced in a March 11 email that her soap, candle, and fragrance emporium Moonshot Studio, at 4066 24th St., would be closing this summer. “I’m planning to close the store sometime after June, and before the end of the current lease in September. Committing to another five-year lease isn’t the right choice for my family...” You can find the rest of her message to customers in the Voice Letters section on page 5.

Fitzgerald thanks her customers and friends “for their support for my very rewarding, nearly five years, retirement-postponing business venture.” Space won’t be the same without Moonshot.



**FAMILY FOOD:** Friday, March 20, was the last day you could have a nice Italian dinner at Lupa Trattoria (4109 24th). Owner Stefano Coppola first opened the restaurant 20 years ago. “I had a good run,” he says, “but I am going to stop work and retire and do some traveling.”

Many of you old-timers might remember when the restaurant in that spot was Little Italy. Like Lupa in its heyday, Little Italy usually had a line of customers waiting, rain or shine. I remember walking by one night when the line was so long the city’s fire inspector was there, closing the restaurant. He told the crowd to leave because the place was a fire hazard and he was putting people on the sidewalk.

Another restaurant is coming in to replace Lupa. Called Perilla, it will be serving “Vietnamese fusion cuisine,” in the words of chef/owner Michael Ho. Ho opened his first restaurant in the Lower Haight several years ago, and he says he sold it to an employee and opened another restaurant in the Sunset, which he sold in 2024.

“I have been looking for a spot in Noe Valley for several months and feel very lucky to have found this space in early March and come to an agreement with Stefano and the landlord,” Ho says. He plans to open Perilla in early June, after redecorating the restaurant, creating his menu, and hiring people to manage the kitchen and dining room.

“I plan to serve dinner from 4:30 to 9:30 seven days a week, with a menu that will be reasonably priced and very filling.”

Also opening soon will be a Mexican restaurant in the former Tacolicious space at 4063 24th St., called Bonita Taqueria y Rotisserie. The poster on the front window says the taqueria will open “in the early spring,” which has already passed, so it could be opening in the early summer, in May or June.

Bonita Taqueria has two locations that have been open for a while, one on Polk Street and the other in the Marina. Both have a four-star rating. Their menu features tacos, including carnitas, al pastor, and fish; complimentary chips and dips; a paloma cocktail that goes down easy; and a range of salsas, which appear to be very popular. Featured will be various rotisserie chicken dishes.

Finally, Fiorella, in Noe Valley at 4042 24th, which opened in June 2024, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy (March 6, 2026). This location is legally known as Project Pizza Noe, LLC. The popular eatery serves wood-fired pizza and



Artist Jil Cappuccio smiles seeing that a stylish young customer has donned one of her creations at “The Haus Next Door to Art Haus SF” at 3977 24th St. Photo by Sally Smith

Photo by Sally Smith

Italian cuisine from 4:30 to 9 p.m. weekends, and 5 to 9 p.m., Monday through Friday. Under Chapter 11, it can continue to operate while Project Pizza restructures its finances.

The other Fiorellas—on Ninth Avenue, Clement Street, and Polk Street near the Presidio—all filed for Chapter 11 relief last year.



**THE FARMER IN THE SQUARE:** On recent Saturday mornings at the Noe Valley Farmers Market in the Town Square, you may have seen some new vendors. Says Town Square manager Leslie Crawford, “Our farmers market is coming back in force. It never went away, but after the reign of plagues—pandemics, fires, floods, economic hardship, and fierce competition among the city’s many markets for farmers—we lost several vendors. In 2026, we’re bouncing back.”

Among the new ones are Green Thumb Organics Farms, located in San Benito County, King Ranch from Watsonville, and David Upchurch Chocolatier and Mighty Chia pudding, both from San Francisco.

King Ranch has a spectacular array of 14 lettuces. The most popular, says farmer Jorge Silva, are the several varieties of radicchio. I tasted the green-leafed one, which was delicious.

Green Thumb is a family farm, where four generations have worked. Manager Maria Gonzalez says six teams provide fresh vegetables for several Bay Area farmers markets every week. They added Noe Valley to their list because “it is very family oriented, and we are very happy to have a space in this Saturday market,” she says.

Mighty Chia chef/owners Laurine Wickett and Jennifer Spiegel set out to make their own tasty version of chia seed pudding after discovering it on a trip to Iceland. The pudding flavors are honey matcha (tea), vanilla, berry, and mango. Sounds good to me.

David Upchurch, a true chocolatier, lives in Noe Valley and shares a communal kitchen in the South of Market. “I have been making chocolate bunnies for

15 years, using special-grade chocolates that I import from Ecuador. I use a rabbit mold created in Dresden, Germany, way back in 1920.” He says he “paid \$700 for the mold when I first started doing this hobby and have been offered \$15,000 for it, but this famous mold is priceless to me.”

On Sundays in the Town Square, from 1 to 3 p.m., gently amplified music is being played (see the story on maestro Gil Guillermo on page 1 this issue). Last month, the group Jazz Beaus rendered a fantastic set. They are Steve La Porta on drums, group leader Tom Donald on bass, Chris Aschman playing trumpet, Volcanic on steel drums, and keyboardist Rob Moellering. Encore, please!



**HONOR ROLL:** Congrats go out to Valley Chiropractic SF, Inc., at 1326 Church (between 25th and Clipper). In March it became an official legacy business, offering “gentle and compassionate chiropractic care.” Dr. Michelle Paris founded the practice in 1996. Three years later, Claudia Kindler purchased it. Kindler shortened the name from Valley Chiropractic Health Center to Valley Chiropractic, then added “SF, Inc.” in 2023. Here’s an interesting fact from their legacy application: “For nearly 20 years, Dr. Kindler had the privilege of treating the cast and crew of *Beach Blanket Babylon*, providing monthly chiropractic care until the production’s closure in December 2019.”

Congrats also to all of you Noe Valleyans who recently graduated from the SFFD’s NERT training. The NERT trainees spend up to 24 hours in six sessions, learning disaster medicine, fire safety, and light search and rescue.

Maxine Fasulis, who coordinates the Noe Valley NERT Team, told the Voice in a March email: “We just added a half dozen or so people to the Noe Team after the class at the church next to the Diamond Heights Safeway. Yippie!”

The neighborhood will be better prepared when the next quake rattles us.



THAT’S ALL, YOU ALL. Ciao. ■

# NOE VALLEY SPRING WINE WALK

**THURSDAY | APRIL 23**  
**4:30 - 7:30PM**

**MORE INFO @ [WWW.NOEMERCHANTS.COM](http://WWW.NOEMERCHANTS.COM)**

**PURCHASE TICKETS HERE**



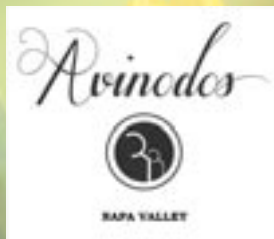
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