



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE



Word Week Looks to Wow: Feminist author and critic Naomi Wolf will kick off Noe Valley's seven-day lit fest on Monday, March 8, International Women's Day.

Photo courtesy Brian O'Shea

A Week to Raise The Words

Literary Luminaries Join Annual Noe Valley Celebration

By Matthew S. Bajko

Jeffrey Thomas Leong was all set to read from his book *Wild Geese Sorrow: The Chinese Wall Inscriptions at Angel Island* on a Saturday afternoon last March at Word Week 2020. Tea and cookies had been ordered for attendees to enjoy as they listened to the local author discuss the challenges of translating Tang poetry and give an overview of Asian immigration to the United States.

But weeks prior to Leong's planned talk, the Covid-19 virus had begun to spread rapidly across the country. Days before the Noe Valley literary festival was to kick off, the organizers announced they were heeding health officials' guidance and canceling the event.

As it turns out, for Leong it was a postponement rather than a cancellation. He will finally get to present his book Thurs-



A Seasonable Symbol on 23rd Street features this version of the Irish tricolor, and the reminder of the Irish blessing, a part of which is below. Erin go bragh. Photo by Jack Tipple

*May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back.
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home. And may the hand of a friend always be near.*

day, March 11, as part of the all-virtual Noe Valley Word Week 2021. It will mark the septuagenarian's first presentation via Zoom.

"It's been a long time. But I think it is going to be really great," said Leong, who is practicing how to show his slides on the online conferencing platform. "I usually have slides, so people can see images of the poems on the walls of Angel Island."

The 1.2-square-mile state park in San Francisco Bay off the shore from Tiburon was the site of the Angel Island Immigration Station, where nearly one million immigrants from mainly Asian countries were detained and processed between 1910 and 1940. In 1970, dozens of poems written in the ancient Chinese Tang form of poetry were rediscovered hidden be-

hind coats of paint on the walls of the former barracks. After visiting in 2013, Leong was inspired to retranslate the poems. His book, containing 70 poems, won a Northern California Book Award for Translation in Poetry.

These days, Leong is staying close to home and working on a memoir project.

When Word Week founder Rick May contacted him about coming back this year, he jumped at the chance.

"Because of all the cancellations of readings [due to the pandemic], it has been pretty quiet," said Leong. "I was excited when Rick told me they were going to do it online this year."

May is excited too, about Leong's return and about the equally stellar group of authors the festival has lined up for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Times Is of the Essence for Dorian Clair

Clock Shop Has Been Extra Busy During the Pandemic

By Gabe Castro-Root

For more than half a century, Dorian Clair has been fixing clocks. It's somewhat of an obsession, he says, a passion-turned-profession that began when he was 8 and has made him one of the top antique clock experts in the Bay Area, if not in all of California.

At 75 years old, Clair is among Noe Valley's longest-tenured shopkeepers. When he first moved to San Francisco, in 1982, he opened Dorian Clair Antique Clock Repair in the Sunset District. But the salty ocean air made his clocks rust, and in 1987 he relocated to the corner of Sanchez and 26th streets, where the shop remains today.

The shop hasn't changed much since it opened. Nor has he, says Clair, who describes his interest in clocks as a "weird character flaw." He starts most days a lit-

tle before 8 a.m. by working on "personal projects"—the antique clocks he's collected over six decades. "And then I get busy and start doing customer work, like this," he said, gesturing toward a disassembled clock on his desk with the year 1770 engraved on its case.

Clair's apprentice, 24-year-old Max Nesbet, is the shop's only other employee. Nesbet, who has worked with Clair for five years, is responsible for winding the clocks and doing "all the projects Mr. Clair doesn't want to do."

Nesbet didn't know how to fix clocks when he started working at the shop, he said, and instead devoted his time to watches. But he learned from Clair, and over the years he has become a skilled clock repairman.

"A single adjustment could change the entire way something works, and I think that's fascinating," Nesbet said, noting that a clock's internal parts must work together with exact precision to keep accurate time.

The shop also has a permanent resident: a black cat named Mike, who slinks around boxes of gears and sleeps in the warm sun of the shop's windows. (At least one neighborhood youngster is convinced Mike spends his nights baking cookies. Unfortunately, this reporter was unable to confirm the feline's confectionary skills.)

Clair has no shortage of timekeepers under his purview. He estimated that his shop housed 400 clocks, but to an uninitiated observer it could easily hold thousands. In addition to clocks, there are gears, tools, books, and a profusion of other objects filling every available inch of wall, floor, and shelf space in the shop's three levels. Maneuvering through the maze is a delicate art, requiring slow deliberate steps and the good fortune nothing topples to the floor.

For nine months of the year, Clair and Nesbet work six days a week. But every

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Renaming Schools A Good Way to Teach History

Among the Chosen 44, James Lick and Alvarado Communities Explore New and Old Names

By Tom Ruiz and Corrie M. Anders

What's in a name? once asked the Bard. Well, 20 years into the 21st century, the answer in San Francisco is a heck of a lot.

Last month, following a Jan. 27 vote by the San Francisco Board of Education to accept an advisory committee's recommendation to change the names of 44 schools on the grounds they were racist, sexist, or otherwise unworthy, communities all over the city—and across the nation—engaged in a heated debate over both the names and the timing of the process.

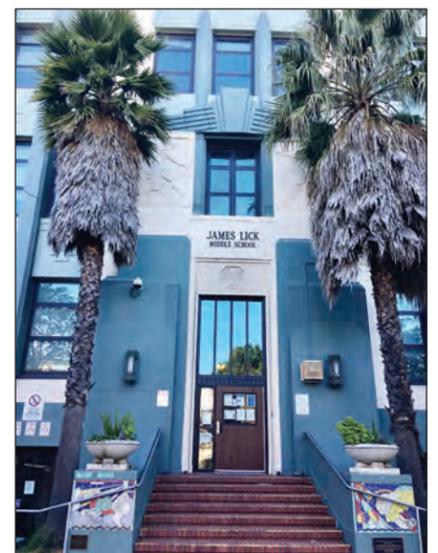
Noe Valley was no exception.

While most of the public drama centered on the renaming of high schools such as Washington, Lincoln, and Balboa, eyes were also focused on the two local schools put on the rename list: James Lick Middle School at 1220 Noe St., and Alvarado Elementary School at 625 Douglass St., at the corner of Alvarado Street.

In the case of James Lick, who was one of the wealthiest residents of California in the 1800s, his primary failing, according to the School Names Advisory Committee, was his estate's financing of a statue in the city's Civic Center. The statue, part of a mammoth multitiered group known as the Pioneer Monument, depicted Bay Area indigenous people in supplicant poses at the feet of padres and white settlers.

In the words of the committee, whose members began meeting in January 2020, "Lick financed the racist 'Early Days'

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



Who Was James Lick? The issue of renaming schools will be revisited by the San Francisco Board of Education, once students return to in-person learning. Likely affected will be the two main public schools in Noe Valley: James Lick Middle School and Alvarado Elementary School.

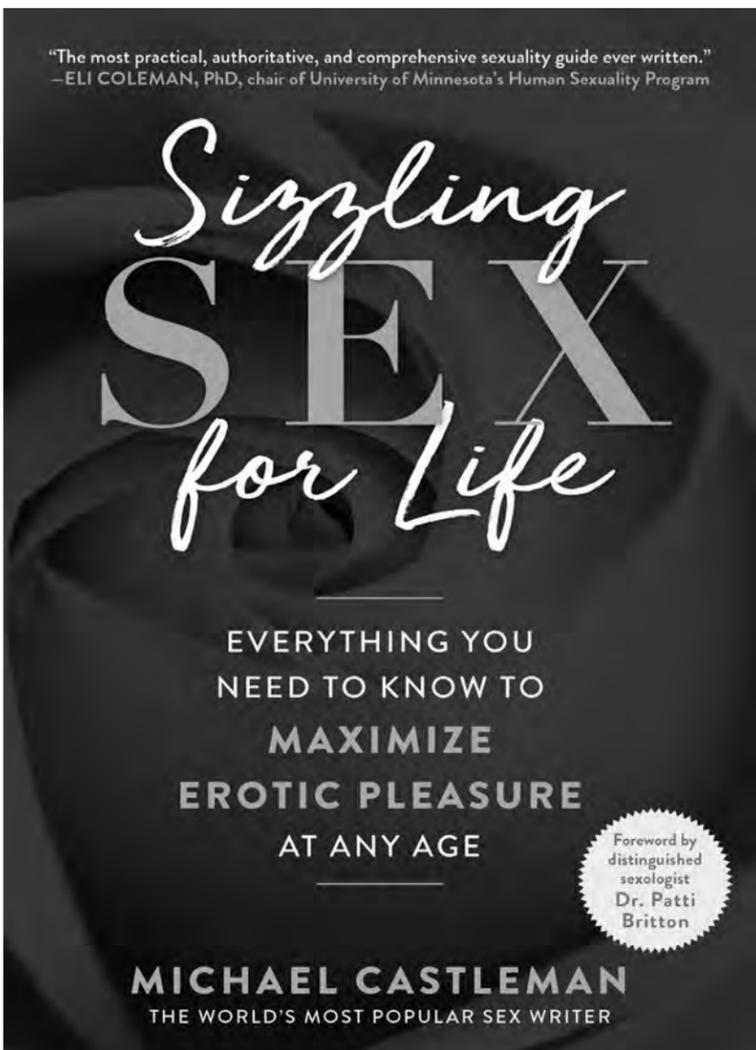
Photo by Corrie M. Anders

OPENSFHISTORY



I Hear The Train A-Comin'. Here's a view south near Valley Street on the elevated Southern Pacific Old Main line crossing Noe Valley. Engine #1381 chugs past 167-169 Valley visible at right. The Poole-Bell House on Laidley Street and undeveloped Diamond Heights are in the background right. Photo and information courtesy OpensFHHistory.org/Western Neighborhoods Project/David Gallagher

MAKE NOE WONDERFUL



That was fun, but if you really want to be my superhero...

Author Michael Castleman, a 40-year Noe Valley resident, is the world's most popular sex expert—his PsychologyToday.com blog, "All About Sex," and his Q&A site, GreatSexGuidance.com, have attracted more than 50 million views.

"I wish every man I've ever known had read this book! It's practical, positive, sexy, funny, kind, and humane. A terrific, helpful, reassuring resource."
—Katie Kleinsasser, communications, Planned Parenthood

"Sizzling Sex is the most practical, authoritative, and comprehensive sexuality guide ever written."—Eli Coleman, PhD, chair of the Human Sexuality Program, University of Minnesota

"A real stunner! I particularly like the book's comprehensiveness, and the brilliant, very accessible way Castleman discusses sex research. After 40 years as a sex therapist and author of several sex books myself, I still found Sizzling Sex fascinating and remarkably informative."
—Isadora Alman, MFT, former sex columnist, Bay Guardian.

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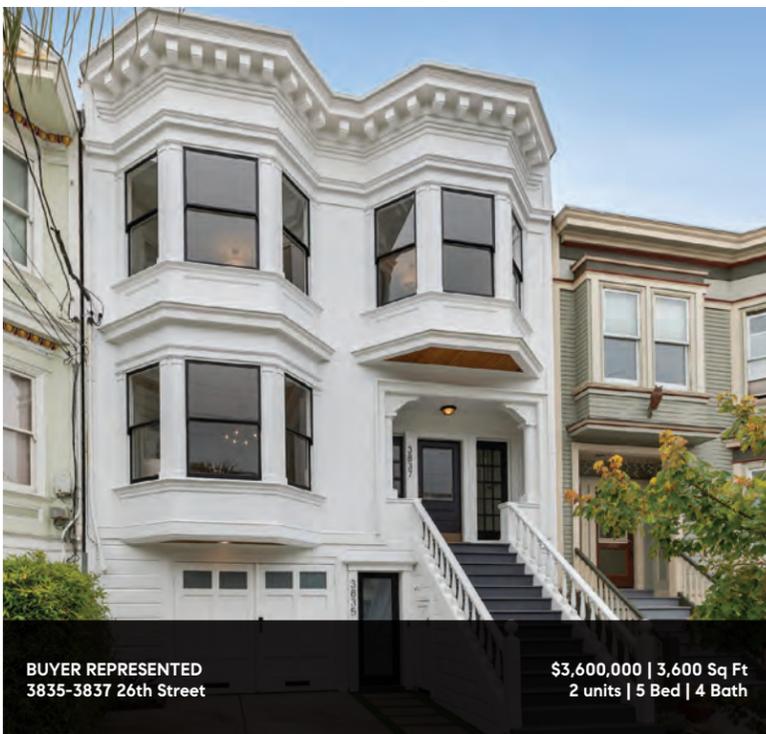


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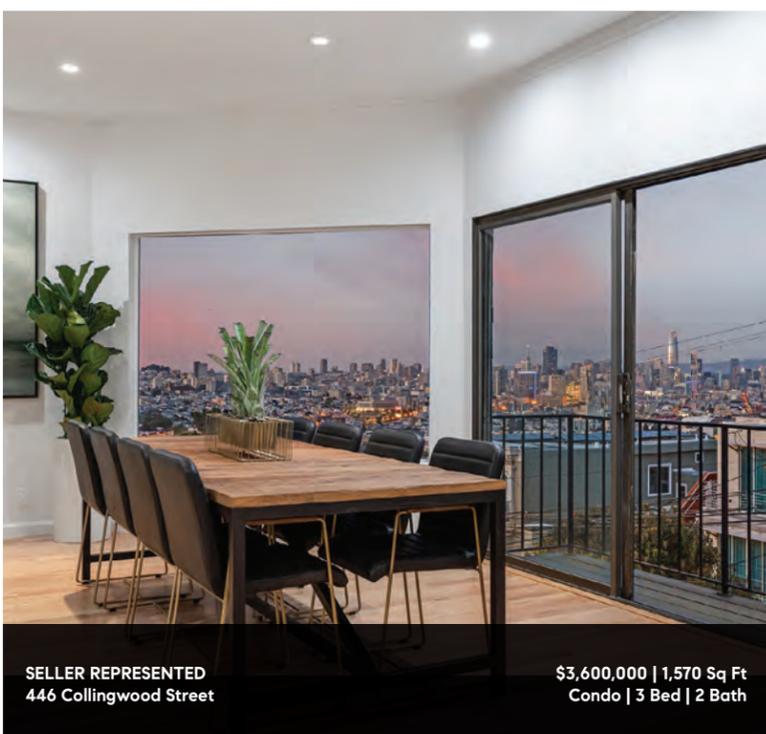
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2021's SF real estate market is off to an active start with lots of competition for desirable homes! Many listings are giving away double digit disclosure packages as buyers see a light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccine. Interest rates staying at record lows helps too. Jessica Branson, as one of SF's top Realtors adapted skillfully to the pandemic, broke sales records, and continues to lead her clients to success with intelligence and professionalism.

How long will this mini frenzy last? Economists predict weakness at the end of the year when we are past the virus but left with the economic fall out. Choosing the right time to sell is a skill. Jessica is among SF's top listing agents. She has been selling real estate here for 15 years, and with her finger directly on the pulse of the market, she has successful, proven strategies for sellers. If you are considering a sale, let her intelligence, experience, and wisdom guide you!

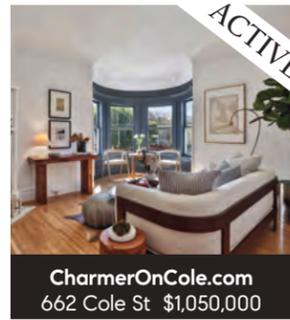
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THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

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

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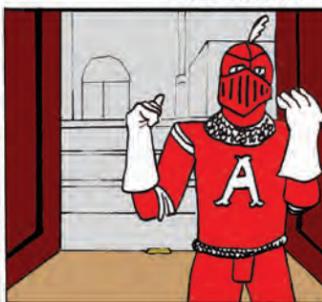
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THE CARTOON BY OWEN BAKER-FLYNN

THE KNIGHTS WHO SAY NOE



THE KNIGHT OF THE ROUND TABLE PIZZA STANDS IN SILENT VIGIL AGAINST UNWANTED CHAIN STORE INTRUSION IN THE NOE LANDS.



ONCE A YEAR, THE BACK-TO-SCHOOL KNIGHT USHERS FAMILIES INTO ALVARADO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.



THE FORTNITE KNITE GENTLY REMINDS NOE TEENS AND PRE-TEENS IT'S TIME TO SHUT IT DOWN AND GET SOME SLEEP.



AND FINALLY, THE HEATHER KNIGHT. SHE OFTEN CHRONICLES ABOUT THE NOE LANDS AND THE REALMS BEYOND.

THE BACK-TO-SCHOOL KNIGHT WAS USED WITH PERMISSION FROM AND CREATED BY ALVARADO 4TH GRADER SANTIAGO PICASSO.

LETTERS

Waste of Energy

Editor:

I suppose that it does not matter (especially for those owning PG&E stock), but the Noe Valley Branch Library lights have now blazed continuously 24/7 for at least 10 solid months. Number of patrons in that time: zero.

As an added note of discouragement, additional lights seem to have been turned on in December, and these too glow 24/7.

Bill Yenne
Noe Valley resident

Our Local Vaccine Expert

Editor:

Having helped some friends navigate the choppy waters of finding a vaccine in San Francisco, I created a Google doc to share what I've learned. It walks you through the steps to make an appointment—with website links and phone

numbers to call—and includes ways to be proactive in seeking a vaccine.

I'll be updating the information as things change. You can find the document at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1—nz_HujynVJ7wf1CTWL1uKs1YOZwQw/view?usp=sharing. Please feel free to use it or share it with anyone you know who might be interested.

If you don't have access to Google Docs, email sfvaccinetips@gmail.com and I'll send you a copy. Knowledge is power!

Stay safe.
Ruth Borenstein
24th Street

Green Twig Spreading Its Branches

Editor:

I would love to just let the *Voice* know how happy we are to be nestled in this quaint beautiful neighborhood.

I am the owner of Green Twig Salon on the corner of Church and 25th streets. We have been at this location for 11 years and in the neighborhood for 14 years.

We have graciously survived two Covid-19 shutdowns with the help of our community, and we feel positive about the future.

Surviving has not always been easy...

Some of the things that we have done during the shutdowns were to have regular salon Zoom meetings to check in with each other and take the pulse of our staff.

Some were uplifting and some were way too real.

One thing we decided to do was to give back to others less fortunate than we were, as a way to get out of ourselves and feel like we were making a difference, knowing that no matter how we were trudging through the pandemic, others were unfortunately unhoused and cold trudging through a pandemic.

We have worked with Larkin Street Youth Services for a couple of years and decided to do a fundraiser for them and make individual "warm" kits to give out

to the Larkin community. As many of you may or may not know, Larkin Street deals mostly with LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness, and they provide services for them to eradicate their situation for good, such as housing, employment, and physical and mental health programs.

We started a fundraiser Christmas week, and our community really pulled through by donating over \$2,000 to our cause.

With this donation we were able to put together 60 kits that consisted of a drawstring backpack, a warm scarf, beanie, hand cream, and gloves. We donated \$1,500 to them as well. I can't tell you how much it lifted my team's spirit to be able to help those young struggling adults. It really kept us going, and humble. This has been a tough time, but we are happy to be back and thriving as a team and as a salon.

It feels really great as well to give back to our Noe community by being open and creative and providing a safe respite from the outside world. We hope to continue to rebuild and thrive as a small business, female-owned, diverse salon in Noe Valley for years to come.

Check out our corner with its outdoor processing seating and plants galore. Wave when you come by!

Dana Nelson
Owner, Green Twig Salon
1299 Church St.

P.S.: The photo is all of us putting together the kits for Larkin Street!



Green Twig Salon staff—including (from left) Juan Moreano, Surannah Grover, Dana Nelson, Dustin Aguilar, and Ray Caldwell—found a way to raise their spirits during the pandemic. They prepared "warm kits" of clothing and supplies to donate to Larkin Street Youth Services. (See letter above.)

Photos by Cora Nelson

CRIME SNAPSHOT

Burglaries replaced car break-ins and package thefts as the most vexing crime in Noe Valley in January. The San Francisco Police Department's crime database recorded 36 burglaries in the neighborhood during the first month of the year. More than 40 percent of the incidents, 15, involved "hot prowls," in which people were inside their home or business when the crime occurred.

Two of the incidents involved heists at construction sites—one at 30th and Whitney streets and the other at Hoffman and 23rd streets. At the latter location, an adult carrying burglary tools was apprehended. Two businesses along 24th Street also were hit, one near Castro Street and the other near Church.

It was the first time since the *Noe Valley Voice* began charting local statistics—in January of last year—that burglary outpaced larceny/theft in our Crime Snapshot.

Still, there were almost as many incidents in the larceny/theft category (33), including three reports of stolen vehicle license plates.

Overall, 117 incidents were reported in Noe Valley in January in the 10 categories the *Voice* tracks.

The table below shows the numbers for the past four months. All have been culled from the city's **Digital Map of San Francisco Police Department Incident Reports From 2018 to the Present**, found under Public Safety at Data.sfgov.org. The *Voice* collected the January 2021 data on Feb. 12, 2021. Note the city's crime map defines Noe Valley as the area bordered by 21st Street, San Jose Avenue/Guerrero Street, 30th Street, and Grand View Avenue/Diamond Heights Boulevard.

To report an incident on your block, call the non-emergency number at 415-553-0123 or file a police report online at sanfranciscopolice.org.

To contact Mission Station Captain Rachel Moran, call 415-558-5400 or email Rachel.Moran@sfgov.org. Ingleside Station Captain Christopher Woon can be reached at 415-404-4000, or by emailing Chris.Woon@sfgov.org. In an emergency, call 911.

—Corrie M. Anders, Sally Smith

Noe Valley Incidents Reported October 2020 – January 2021

Incident Reports	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021
Larceny/Theft	34	38	45	33
Burglary	20	20	30	36
Malicious Mischief	7	4	8	13
Motor Vehicle Theft	18	18	25	18
Assault	3	3	4	4
Robbery	0	0	7	1
Other Miscellaneous	9	8	6	8
Fraud	1	2	4	3
Family Domestic Violence	2	3	1	1
Vandalism	1	0	0	0
TOTALS	95	96	130	117

In Memory Of

James B. “Jim” Ellis Dies at 87

A Texan Who Found His Home On a Hill in San Francisco

By Nathan L. Collie

A longtime resident of 22nd Street has died.

Born on Feb. 20, 1933, James Bryan Ellis—known to his Noe Valley friends and neighbors as “Jim” but to his niece and nephews as “Uncle Bryan”—was the youngest of three siblings born to the Honorable William N. Ellis and Laura Mae Ellis in the heart of Texas (Brady, Tex.). His father graduated with a law degree from University of Colorado, Boulder, and was elected Judge of McCulloch County at the foot of the Texas Hill country.

Unfortunately, his father passed away one year after Jim’s birth, so his mother raised Jim, his older brother Frank G., and sister, Betty L. Ellis, on a second-grade school teacher’s salary, a job she maintained for over 40 years in Brady.

Frank was a mechanical whiz who kept planes flying in the World War II Pacific theater, later becoming a top mechanic for Eastern Airlines, settling in Charlotte, N.C. His sister Betty, like her mom and dad, loved teaching. She graduated from what is now Texas State University and settled in Abilene, Tex.

Not to be outdone, Jim was a gifted student, originally headed for seminary studies, but soon settled on philosophy, studying on a full scholarship at Trinity



A lifelong lover of science, Jim Ellis and family made a visit to the Exploratorium in 2013. Photo courtesy Nathan Collie

University in San Antonio, a city that became his favorite in Texas. After graduation, he briefly tried teaching elementary students, but soon was accepted at Duke University, earning his M.A. in philosophy. Then came a stint in the Army, beginning in Las Cruces, N.M. Because he spoke fluent German, he was eventually stationed in Germany.

After Army life, Jim was unsure what to do next, so he took the federal civil service exam and aced the test. He then chose to work as a claims specialist for the Social Security Administration (SSA) and was stationed in the late 1950s in San Bernardino, Calif. Rapid advancement soon got him his dream position in San Francisco in around 1960. Interestingly, his first apartment was across the street from where Mark Zuckerberg would build his house decades later.

Eventually, Jim saved up enough money to buy the house at 3633 22nd St.,

where he lived for almost 60 years.

To this many of his neighbors can attest: Jim was fiercely independent. He was an accomplished musician, focused on wind instruments (especially the oboe), and loved classical music deeply (especially Richard Wagner). He collected original prints and lithographs, especially Miró, Calder, and Klee. His other love that we both shared was science, particularly biology. He read *Science* and *Nature* cover to cover weekly.

When I was doing undergraduate research at Texas Tech in 1976 at age 19, I had the chance to do a summer project at U.C. Berkeley, but couldn’t afford to live there. So he put me up for the entire summer in a room near his basement, so I could take BART across the Bay to Cal. My favorite memories of that summer were learning to cook Julia Child recipes, listening to music, reading Herb Caen, drinking coffee, and debating science with my uncle. This directly led to my doctoral studies in zoology at Cal.

After retiring from the SSA at the ripe old age of 53 (he knew his benefits!), Jim did most of his socializing on his beloved 24th Street, eating out at Lupa, Contigo, and a favorite pizza spot called Haystack. He was an avid exerciser and didn’t own a car, instead walking the steep hills to burn off those calories.

His favorite view was to climb up on his roof daily to attend to his plants and take in the view across Dolores Park, the San Francisco skyline (boy, the changes over 60 years!), and the East Bay.

Jim Ellis passed away Sept. 5, 2020, in his home on (he was proud to say) the steepest street in San Francisco.

He is survived and was dearly loved by his three nephews—Frank Ellis, Kim Collie, and Nathan Collie—and by his niece, Laurel Ellis Courtney. ■



Editor’s Note: Along with Nathan Collie’s sweet remembrance of his Uncle Bryan (Jim Ellis), at left, Michael Freethy of Compass Real Estate sent the Voice a few photos of Ellis’ house at 3633 22nd St., between Church and Vicksburg, which since its occupant’s death in September, had been shorn of its vine covering and remodeled in preparation to be sold. Freethy wrote again two weeks later, “As for the sale of the house, the list price was \$1,050,000. We took offers yesterday [Feb. 23], got 12 offers, and it went for \$1,450,000. Jim Ellis bought it in 1973 for \$36,000 (according to the tax records). Pretty good return on his investment.”

LETTERS

March 16—It Will Be a Year

Editor:

I am a native San Franciscan who has lived in Noe Valley for 31 years. On March 16, 2020, the day before the shelter-in-place started, I was at Martha & Brothers on 24th Street, and I started talking to a man who was sitting in the parklet. We had never talked before. We started talking about the virus and the future, and we pledged that we would meet there again on March 16, 2021.

At the time I thought this madness would be over well before now, and I started asking others if they wanted to meet us on March 16. I even told the peo-

ple who worked at Martha’s.

At first I had visions of a block party with music and dancing, etc. At the time, that made sense, because surely this insanity would be over in a couple of months.

This March 16, let’s say goodbye to this last year with smallish gatherings throughout the day at the Noe Valley Town Square with our masks on and our distance respected.

I will be there, in my PINK HAT, starting at 9 a.m. Maybe we can create a vision for our next party on March 16, 2022, when we can shed our masks and hold hands in a circle singing “Kumbaya.”

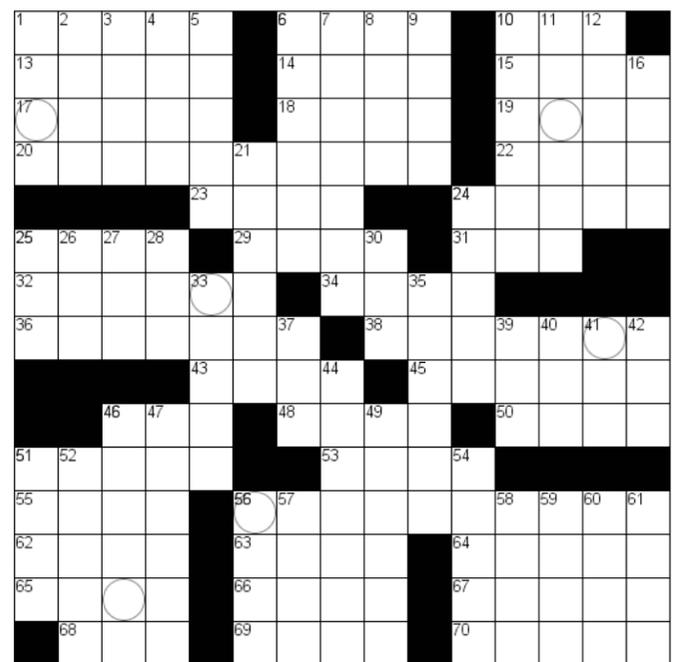
Ernie Vasquez

THE CROSSWORD BY MICHAEL BLAKE

In the Winners’ Circle

ACROSS

1. Prospector’s property
6. Campaign funders, for short
10. Pandemic-fighting agcy.
13. Trunk full of blood
14. Not-so-cute fruit
15. Dance at bar mitzvahs
17. “This door is locked”
18. H.S. math class
19. An egg, to Pierre
20. “Bye-bye!”
22. Motor-home owner, briefly
23. Alphabet quartet
24. Sotomayor colleague
25. “___ for the poor”
29. Long times
31. Broadband connection: Abbr.
32. Tile game
34. Where Coach K coaches
36. Made tidy using a broom
38. Mt. St. Helens and the like
43. Apple’s tablet
45. “Bedtime for Bonzo” star
46. Photo, for short
48. Pretense
50. Crossword god ___ Reagle, whose Wikipedia page I created in 2007
51. Appears
53. Film-rating grp.
55. “Present!”
56. Award-winning movie about Iraq war
62. Two-dimensional measure



63. Cross off the list
64. Before now
65. Heavy drinkers: Var.
66. “I didn’t know I had it ___!”
67. Chili con ___
68. Early TV Tarzan Ron
69. Pitch
70. Chile’s mountain range

DOWN

1. Indian boats
2. “The ___ Ranger”
3. “Commedia dell’___”
4. “Just doing my best”
5. London Breed, for one
6. ___ rest (settles, as an issue)
7. Bad way for a ship to run
8. Advertising award
9. Endorse

10. Boorish fellows
11. Avoid sin, in a way
12. Salad dressing bottle
16. Big do
21. Depletes, as a supply
24. “Hello” singer, 2015
25. Class ___: Voice feature
26. Down in the dumps
27. “Sra.” across the Pyrenees
28. Tiny drink
30. Chevy Tahoe, e.g.
33. Study of consciousness and its changes
35. Like former local restaurant Hahn’s Hibachi
37. Golf target
39. What can follow web or sky
40. Ripen
41. ___ for music

- (tone deafness)
42. NBC show since 1975
44. Hollow-point bullets
46. Santa Claus, in France
47. “Whatever you want”
49. Treats vengefully
51. “Major Barbara” author
52. Freakish
54. Pet lovers’ org.
56. 1944 Sartre drama
57. Emphatic refusal
58. “Argo” setting
59. “___ up thy loins” (Job 40:7)
60. Sharpen, as a knife
61. “___ bien”

Solution on Page 22
Find more Crosswords at noevalleyvoice.com



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Lit Fest Attracts Celebrity Authors

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Word Week 2021, running March 8 through 14.

“I was surprised we could get so many big-name authors, like Naomi Wolf and Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. And the panel of Black authors is amazing,” said May. “Because we’re on Zoom, we have authors from all over, like Colm Toibin. And we’re also doing the pandemic poems.”

The event will feature eight author panels over seven days, all held via Zoom. While free for the public to participate, each session will be capped at 100 people.

The series will kick off at 7 p.m. on International Women’s Day, Monday, March 8, with a conversation between KQED-TV journalist Maxine Einhorn and social critic, author, and feminist Naomi Wolf. Wolf is a firebrand whose most recent work, *Outrages: Sex, Censorship, and the Criminalization of Love*, created a stir even before publication.

The next night, Tuesday, March 9, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, who wrote the blockbuster *Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*, will be in conversation with journalist/author Mary Jo McConahay for one of Dunbar-Ortiz’s first public discussions about her upcoming book *Not “A Nation of Immigrants”: Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy, and a History of Erasure and Exclusion*.

Variety of Black Voices

Three contemporary voices in Black literature—Julie Lythcott-Haims, Dr. Ayodele Nzinga, and Maurice Ruffin—will take part in a conversation and reading moderated by novelist Gar McVey-Russell on Wednesday, March 10, 7 p.m.

May and McVey-Russell, whose debut novel *Sin Against the Race* came out in 2017, brainstormed on the authors to invite.

“I want to expose as many voices from the Black African American community as possible. Different perspectives, different angles, and different discussion topics,” said McVey-Russell. “There are a lot of relevant things going on in the Black community these days.”

Lythcott-Haims, known for her Ted Talks and her popular guide *How to Raise an Adult*, “is an excellent orator,” said McVey-Russell. As for Nzinga, the founding producing director of Oakland’s Lower Bottom Playaz theater company is an “excellent reader,” he said.

Nzinga’s book of poems *The Horse Eaters*, about being from the South and embodying the feeling of Black migration to the region, “is really quite powerful,” said McVey-Russell.

Ruffin, a New Orleans native, is the 2020-21 John and Renee Grisham Writer-in-Residence at the University of Mississippi. His book *We Cast a Shadow* is a satirical look at racism that has readers both laughing and feeling a bit uncomfortable.

This will be the first time McVey-Russell has participated in a literary event with the three panelists, all of whom “are quite fabulous,” he said. “People should be prepared to be challenged but also informed.”

On Media, Mysteries, and Irish Lit

Another panel from last year, featuring former *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Leah Garchik and film reviewer Ruthe Stein, will take place Friday, March 12, 7 p.m.

Einhorn will again serve as moderator for the event, which promises to give the inside scoop on Bay Area journalism.

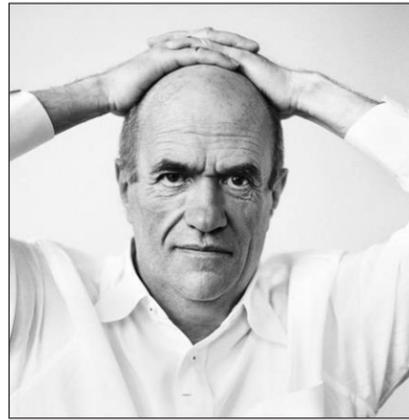


Jeffrey Thomas Leong

“Both reporters worked at the *Chron* for over 40 years and have stories to tell,” May said.

A Saturday morning discussion on March 13—at 11 a.m. Pacific time, 7 p.m. in Ireland—will focus on contemporary Irish literature with an international panel of authors. Colm Toibin, joining from Los Angeles, will preview his upcoming novel *The Magician*, based on the life of Thomas Mann. From Dublin, Michelle Gallen will read from *Big Girl, Small Town*, her debut novel set in Northern Ireland, and Paula Meehan will log in from Greece to share poetry from her just-published retrospective work *As If by Magic*.

That evening at 7 p.m., fans can hear tales of “Noir *Not at the Bar*” in the intoxicating digital atmosphere created by Noe Valley mystery writer Cara Black, whose most recent bestseller is *Three Hours in Paris*. Black, along with fellow



Colm Toibin

Photo Brigitte Lacombe

novelists Jasmine Aimaq (*The Opium Prince*), Rachel Howzell Hall (*And Now She’s Gone*), and Naomi Hirahara (*Hiroshima Boy* and dozens of other winners), will read excerpts from their latest books and share one of their favorite cocktails, which attendees can make at home. “That one is going to be fun,” says May. “Because each has given us a favorite drink we can drink with them.”

A Year of Pandemic Poems

This year’s finale event, “Noe Poets’ Pandemic Poems,” will take place Sunday, March 14, 7 p.m. Local luminaries Kim Shuck, Kristin Belshaw, Susan Dambroff, J Hahn Doleman, Eveline Kanes, Hal Savage, and Marylee McNeal will read their poems about life in the pandemic.

Shuck, who grew up in Noe Valley, is creating a special poem to read that day and hopes also to read from her new collection of poetry, *Exile Heart*, if it is published in time. It was to come out in November but was delayed because of the pandemic.

“It has been really stressful,” said Shuck, who in January stepped down as San Francisco Poet Laureate after three-plus years in the position.

Since last April, she on average has participated in three Zoom events a week.

“I feel like the pandemic actually caused me to be more active in some ways,” said Shuck. “I had a day where I judged a poetry contest, hopped on to another Zoom to read some poems and answer some questions, then hopped on to a third Zoom and read an entire poetry set. After that I staggered into the bedroom and face-planted onto the bed,” she laughed.

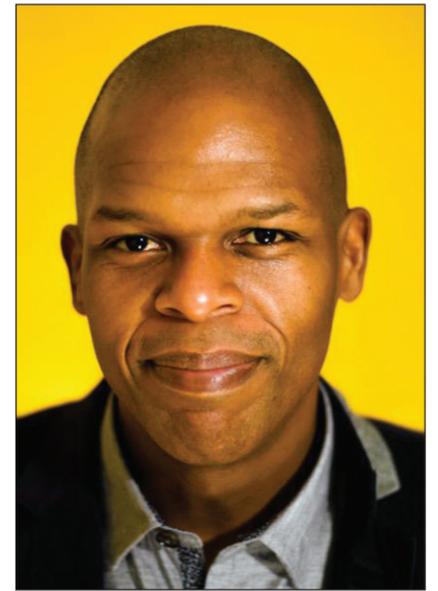
Still, being part of a Word Week panel is really important to her, as it’s the place where writers can interact with and inspire one another.

“The people on this Zoom I don’t see except during Word Week,” said Shuck.

One feature of Word Week that is not returning this year is the authors’ festival, where writers could set up booths to sell their books. Due to Covid-19, there wasn’t a venue available and it didn’t



Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz



Maurice Ruffin

seem to make sense to do it online, said McNeal, who has been both a participant and an event organizer since 2014.

Like Shuck, she is looking forward to the virtual reunion. Besides working on revising a novel, McNeal has been recording her thoughts on the pandemic this past year. She also has written 11 new poems, which she plans to read during the poetry panel.

At its core, Noe Valley Word Week is rooted in local authors and readers.

“It is a lot about community,” said McNeal. “This is an event that has pulled together writers and readers and listeners for so many years, I didn’t want to see it not happen.”

For those joining Leong to hear him discuss his translated poems, he has a suggestion, one that may not only bring people together but also help them walk in others’ shoes. That evening, brew a pot of oolong tea. “Oolong is a basic, popular Chinese tea,” he says. “I think that would be appropriate.”

For more information about the Word Week 2021 events and to sign up for the Zoom sessions, visit <https://www.facebook.com/wordweeknoevalley>.

Anyone interested in helping organize Word Week 2022 should email Rick May at wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com. ■

Word Week 2021 in a Snap

Noe Valley Word Week 2021 is set to zoom March 8–14. All eight events in the festival will be virtual and free. Each has space for 100 people. So sign up fast. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/wordweeknoevalley>. Here’s the lineup:

Monday, March 8, 7 p.m.:

International Women’s Day with Naomi Wolf, feminist author and critic. Reserve your spot at <https://bit.ly/3jA6xjx>

Tuesday, March 9, 7 p.m.: **Why We Are Not a ‘Nation of Immigrants’** with author/activists **Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz** and **Mary Jo McConahay**. Reserve at <https://bit.ly/3tLhnYl>

Wednesday, March 10, 7 p.m.: **Black Literature, Black Lives** with author/artists **Julie Lythcott-Haims**, **Ayodele Nzinga**, **Maurice Ruffin**, and **Gar McVey-Russell**. Reserve at <https://bit.ly/3jGdorl>

Thursday, March 11, 7 p.m.: **Angel Island Detainee Poetry** with author and poet **Jeffrey Thomas Leong**. Reserve at <http://bit.ly/2ZaCyoC>

Friday, March 12, 7 p.m.: **San Francisco Chronicle insiders Leah Garchik and Ruthe Stein**. Reserve at <http://bit.ly/3pe5OFB>

Saturday, March 13, 11 a.m. (7 p.m. Dublin time): **Contemporary Irish Literature** with authors **Colm Toibin**, **Paula Meehan**, and **Michelle Gallen**. Reserve at <http://bit.ly/3rIL8Ya>

Saturday, March 13, 7 p.m.: **Noir Not at the Bar: Crime Novels and Virtual Cocktails** with mystery writers **Cara Black**, **Jasmine Aimaq**, **Rachel Howzell Hall**, and **Naomi Hirahara**. Reserve at <https://bit.ly/3qf3UGa>

Sunday, March 14, 7 p.m.: **Six Noe Poets Read Pandemic Poems**, with **Kristin Belshaw**, **Susan Dambroff**, **Eveline Kanes**, **Marylee McNeal**, **Hal Savage**, **J Hahn Doleman**, and **Kim Shuck**. Reserve at <http://bit.ly/3rSZZ27>

Questions? Email Rick May at WordWeekNoeValley@gmail.com.



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Skies are Looking Up. There have been plenty of sights to cheer lately, but none so brilliant as the skies above Noe Valley when the sun descends after bringing mild temperatures to our neighborhood winter.
 Photo by Najib Joe Hakim

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District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman 415-554-6968
District 8 Community Liaison for Crime Prevention Dave.Burke@sfgov.org
Graffiti Removal, Tree Removal, Street Cleaning (DPW) 415-695-2017
Hazardous Waste Disposal / free pickup bulky items 415-330-1300
Homeless Services Street Outreach Services (SOS) 415-355-2250
Lost or Injured Animals Animal Care and Control 415-554-6364
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services sfmayor.org 415-554-7111
NERT (SFFD Neighborhood Emergency Response Teams) 415-970-2022
Parking Enforcement DPT Dispatch 415-553-1200
PG&E Gas or electrical issues 1-800-743-5000
Pothole Repairs potholes@sfdpw.org 415-554-5810
Recycling Recology San Francisco 415-330-1300
Rent Board 415-252-4600
Sewer Problems, Overflows 415-695-2096
Tree Planting urbanforestry@sfdpw.org 415-554-6700
24th Street Community Benefit District (CBD) 415-519-0093
Water Leaks, Water Pressure 415-554-3289

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 —Malala Yousafzai (1997-), Pakistani activist and co-winner of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize

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Maundy Thursday, April 1
 Liturgy at 7 pm

Good Friday, April 2
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 Good Friday Liturgy at 7 pm

Saturday, April 3
 Great Vigil of Easter at 7 pm

Easter Sunday, April 4
 Feast of the Resurrection at 8 am & 10 am

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 A Worship of Joyful Noise!

Maundy Thursday, April 1, 6:00 pm
 Light into Darkness: A Tenebrae Service

Easter Sunday, April 4, 10:30 a.m.
 A Celebration with Guest Musicians

Zoom links are on our website:
www.noevalleyministry.org

Blessings to all in this time of difficulty and loss.
 We stand together.

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What's in a Name? A Lot for James Lick and Alvarado

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

statue that was removed from San Francisco's Civic Center in response to public outcry for decades." (It now sits in storage.)

But the story of James Lick's life goes far beyond that one decision.

James Lick and His Legacy

According to Wikipedia, Lick was a rich man with vast real estate holdings, including all of Santa Catalina Island. Lick stipulated upon his death in 1876 that his fortune be used for the public good. In 1888, \$700,000 was used to construct the first permanently staffed mountaintop observatory atop Mt. Hamilton in Santa Clara County. At the time, it housed the world's largest refracting telescope. Lick would later be buried under the site of the telescope. There is also a Lick crater on the moon as well as the asteroid 1951 Lick.

His estate also endowed the California School of Mechanical Arts, which would later evolve into Lick-Wilmerding High School, a private school with a public service mission.

In the website foundsf.org, Lick is described as an eccentric millionaire giving away millions for schools, a home for the California Academy of Sciences, the SPCA, and even the public "Lick baths," where the poor could bathe free of charge, an idea that still would be popular today.

Students Like Santana, or Kamala

The Parent Teacher Student Association at James Lick Middle School was surprised Lick's name ended up on the list. Once the group was given the task to come up with naming alternatives, however, they created numerous avenues for input. With an April 30 deadline for the respective schools to present names to the school district's renaming panel, the Lick PTSA began holding student and parent Zoom outreach meetings to discuss the options.

Ruby Da Tie, in her second year as principal at the middle school, said her 460 students, 60 staff members, and many involved parents focused on equity and social justice as the criteria for selecting a new name. Various parent and student groupings within the school brainstormed possible new names and rationales. They worked on narrowing the list from 20 to eight names to be sent to the advisory committee after a full community online discussion.

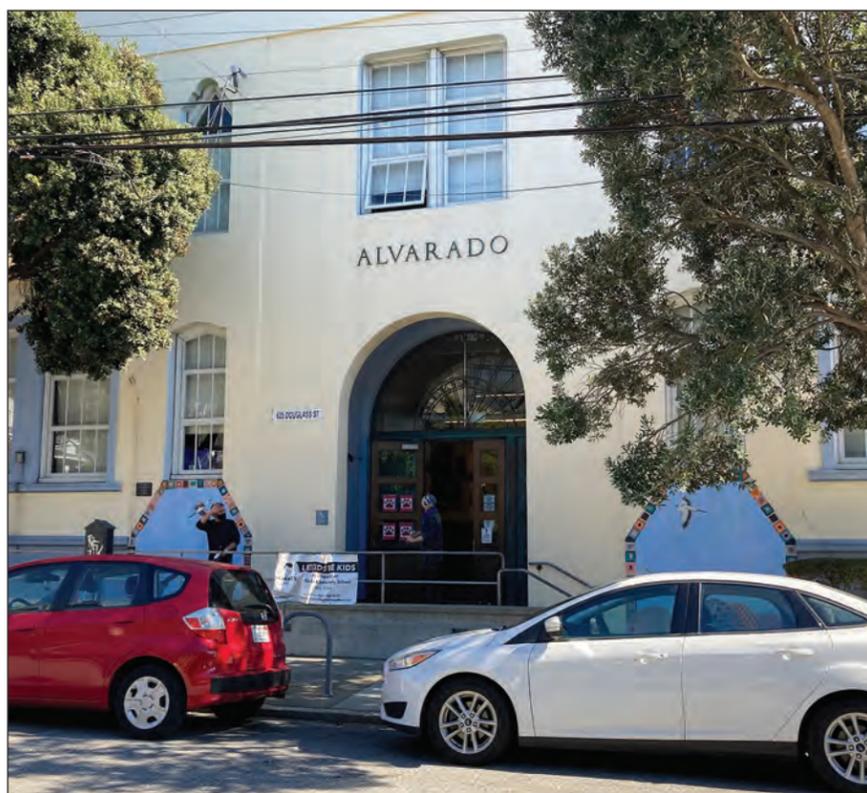
The process has stirred passions throughout their virtual campus.

"There are a lot of emotions around renaming the school, with mixed responses from the various school community groups," Da Tie said. "Some want to hold onto the past, while others are excited about the opportunity to create something new, but overall there has not been a lot of pushback."

Principal Da Tie said students had generated a number of candidate names, including Carlos Santana, a JLMS alumnus, and Vice President Kamala Harris. There also were descriptive monikers like the Happy Middle School or the Love Middle School. Noe Valleyans were invited to visit the JLMS website to weigh in on the proposals.

Dusting Off History

Ray Ponce, who taught PE and coached for over 35 years at JLMS, said he believes "the name should go back to the original name, James Lick Noe Valley School." In the alternative, he would



Unaware of the controversy surrounding its name, Alvarado Elementary School, at 625 Douglass St., has a strong kinship with neighbors on Alvarado Street. Photo by Jack Tipple

"leave it as a geographic name: Noe Valley Middle School."

Ponce, a graduate of Balboa High School, said the board should "look at a person's life through a 360-degree perspective including the times they lived in and whether they tried to make life better for other folks down the line."

He went on to say, after this examination "you may find a foundation of dirt which requires a complete change of name or you may find some dust on an overall worthwhile life that just needs a bit of cleaning up."

Twenty-fourth Street coffee shop owner Bernie Hanifin, who attended Alvarado and graduated from James Lick, said the school district "should be focusing on getting the schools back open first," before investing energy in renaming schools.

"We have other serious issues that need to be dealt with, including the rise of racism" stoked by the Trump administration, Hanifin said. While she preferred the two schools' names remain the same, she said if they had to be changed, "we should be like New York City, which uses numbers, PS-1, etc., for the schools."

A Colonizer of Alta California

Alvarado Elementary School, which serves 510 K-5 students, was named after Juan Bautista Alvarado, a Mexican colonial governor who also lived in the 1800s. Born in Monterey in 1809, he died at the age of 73 in the city of San Pablo and is buried at Saint Mary Cemetery in Oakland.

Columbia University's digital encyclopedia offers this description of Alvarado, who governed Alta California from 1836 to 1842: "Out of the chaotic times in the neglected Mexican province of Alta California, Alvarado emerged as a brilliant politician. After a small but successful revolt in 1836, he declared California an independent state with himself as governor. He pacified his opponents in San Diego and Los Angeles, but the southern faction continued to view the northern upstart with suspicion until he secured (1838) regular appointment as Mexican governor."

In justifying its decision to rename the school, the School Names Advisory Committee wrote Alvarado was a "Spanish colonizer [who] sought to steal land and resources from indigenous people." The committee went on to state Alvarado "was a member of a White elite that engaged in power struggles while oppressing a much larger population of indigenous people. Alvarado, who became

governor through a coup attempt, also referred to indigenous people as 'barbarians' whom he was afraid would take over from White People."

In the Name of Peace

The PTSA at Alvarado was not happy with the advisory committee's decision to rename the school, which has been in existence since 1926.

"We have made appeals to keep the name," PTSA co president Joshua Greenough told the *Voice* in an email statement. "But at this time it will be renamed as decided by the Board and the renaming committee."

Greenough said given the board's January decision, "We are engaging our community—teachers, staff, students, and parents—to propose new names to the committee in the spring per their process."

The PTSA has come up with a number of alternatives, but Greenough would not identify them until they were "voted on by stakeholder groups" and submitted to the school's principal. Alvarado Principal Sheera Sadja did not respond to several *Voice* requests for comment.

Greenough stressed the PTSA's "current priority remains supporting our students during distance learning and prepping our site and staff for when we are able to return to in-person learning."

Parents' Mixed Emotions

Chris Stover, a former board member with the Alvarado PTSA, said he had "mixed emotions" about the decision to include Alvarado on the list of name-

change schools.

"I kind of rolled my eyes and said 'whatever,'" said Stover, whose two children no longer attend Alvarado. "I feel like the school board has a lot bigger issues to spend their time on...like getting them [students] back into school."

Stover said he was not troubled the school was named after Alvarado. "I'm okay with Alvarado. I thought it was a great name," Stover said. "It just seemed like the name was appropriate and not offensive at all."

Todd David, a longtime public education and housing advocate whose three children attended Alvarado, said he had "so many different opinions about all of this. Renaming is a worthwhile conversation...a legitimate conversation," he said.

But like most Noe Valleyans interviewed for this story, Todd said he wanted the school district to focus on getting students back to school rather than spending time and energy on renaming.

David also was concerned that the renaming committee was "basing decisions on historical inaccuracies." He cited the fact that it was Lick's estate rather than Lick himself who financed the Early Days statue.

David suggested renaming Alvarado for hummingbirds or some animal, adding, "If you name it after a person, people are inherently flawed, people aren't perfect. Then 30 years down the road, we'll be looking at renaming the school again." ■

Postscript: On Feb. 21, San Francisco school board president Gabriela López announced the board had decided to postpone taking action on renaming schools. She also stated that the reopening of classrooms, closed since last spring due to Covid, would be "our only focus until our children and young people are back in schools."



A colorful mosaic and a small plaque with a dedication to musician Carlos Santana can be found near the Noe Street entrance to James Lick School. Photo by Corrie M. Anders



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Dorian Clair Working Round The Clock

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fourth month, they spend their Sundays doing maintenance on tower clocks around the Bay Area—at the Ferry Building, Ghirardelli Square, Stanford University, and the UCSF Parnassus campus, among other locations.

“Anything that looks like it’s going to be a problem, we fix it before it becomes a problem,” Clair said. “Since we keep [the clocks] serviced, we really don’t see any visible wear. They do very nicely.”

The Ferry Building clock, which Clair has worked on for over 20 years, is the largest under his care. The tower clock was electrified in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake, when the building wasn’t stable enough to support the movement of the 13-foot pendulum that kept the clock running. But its original parts remain, including the pendulum, and the building has been reinforced to help withstand a future quake.

“I’ve run it as a wind-up clock before,” Clair said, smiling. “They don’t know that.”

The Ferry Building’s original clock hands, which date back to 1898, now sit against the wall in Clair’s shop. Made of sugar pine, they were replaced in 2000 with the plywood hands in use today.

Clair’s favorite tower clock to work on is the one atop the San Jose Museum of Art, a 113-year-old “mechanical marvel,” he said. (The museum’s original clock was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake, according to the San Jose *Mercury News*.)

Clair has a strong preference for old clocks. They last longer, he says. When people bring in new clocks for repairs, “we generally just say no.”

“We like to be able to guarantee our work,” Nesbet said. “If it’s something that’s not going to be reliable or something that may only run for half a year, we’re not going to take it, because we know we can’t put a guarantee on it.”

“Makes people mad at us,” Clair added, “but we’ll always tell them the truth.”

Surprisingly, business at the clock shop



Dorian Clair in his antique clock repair shop on Sanchez Street. Clair, 75, has been collecting clocks for over six decades. Photo by Gabe Castro-Root

has increased during the pandemic. “I don’t know if that’s because people are home and decided to get their old clocks fixed or it’s because other businesses have gone out of business,” Clair said. “But it’s just fine. Business is good.”

But not every clock owner can keep time. Nesbet described a recent customer who brought in an old wall clock for a full overhaul. When the repairs were finished, after four months of work, “he decided he just wasn’t going to pay for it. And so he left and didn’t take the clock.”

“If we were to sell it,” Nesbet added, “we wouldn’t even be able to make a sixth of what the repair charges were.”

Though business is strong, the popularity of antique clocks has plummeted in the 21st century. Before the pandemic, Clair and Nesbet attended regular meetings of clock experts and enthusiasts in San Leandro, gatherings they estimated drew around 30 people. Clair said 40 years ago, when he was president of the group, each meeting would draw closer to 300 people.

“These old clocks are monetarily worth about 20 percent of what they were worth in 2008,” Clair said. “Few people want them anymore.”

And the population of antique clock lovers is aging, too. Aside from Nesbet, the only young person Clair knows who shares his passion is a 9-year-old named Owen, who Clair described as “intensely interested in clocks.”

As for the clock collectors Clair has known over the years: “Ninety-nine percent of the people have died.”

Clair hopes to downsize the shop over the next few years—a significant challenge given the vast amount of stuff he stores there.

“It’s all worth something to somebody,” he said. But finding that somebody could take ages.

One option would be to sell clocks. But Clair is hesitant to go down that path. “I’ve sold maybe half a dozen in the last 30-plus years,” he said. “Without being a salesman, I can be honest. I’m not going to lie to people.” ■

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St. Patrick's Day Parade on Market Street 2007.

Photos by Jack Tipple



Panel Goes Halfway on Lyon-Martin Home

Recommends the House But Not the Garden Area Be Landmarked

By Matthew S. Bajko

The city's preservation advisory body is recommending that only the Noe Valley residence where the late lesbian pioneering couple Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin lived be designated a city landmark and not the adjoining garden plot.

Historians are calling on City Hall to landmark the entire Duncan Street property, technically two parcels, because the couple's cremains were interred and scattered on the undeveloped green side, which has an address of 649 Duncan St.

The city's planning department has determined that the city landmark should cover both the garden area and the parcel with the couple's two-story cottage on it, with an address of 651 Duncan St.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is also arguing that the presence of the women's cremains means that not only should the entire property be landmarked but it also should be considered a memorial site.

"They made the conscious choice to scatter their cremains there," Christina Morris, the trust's senior field director in Los Angeles, told the Historic Preservation Commission at its Feb. 17 hearing.

The commissioners voted 6-1 to support solely landmarking the Lyon-Martin House. Commission President Aaron Hyland cast the sole no vote because he felt the entire property was worthy of being

deemed a city landmark.

But Commissioner Kate Black, who lived for nearly two decades in a "worker bee cottage" a few blocks away from the Lyon-Martin House, felt there was no need to include the undeveloped portion of the property in the landmark designation. Doing so, she feared, would limit the new property owners' ability to construct their own residence on the site.

"I see no relationship to this vacant lot to the importance of Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin and the work they did," said Black, noting she hoped a multi-unit building or a house with a secondary living unit would be built there. "Or whatever the family would like. We should make it as easy as possible for them to do so."

Paul McKeown and his wife, Meredith Jones-McKeown, bought the 5,700-square-foot parcel, situated atop a steep hill with dramatic views, for \$2.25 million last summer. They have said they want to build a residence for themselves and their two young daughters on the garden plot.

As for the Lyon-Martin House, the couple have said they are willing to preserve it and give it a remodel to bring it up to current building codes. As such, they are in favor of only landmarking that half of the property.

"We do not plan to demolish the house or impair their memory," said Jones-McKeown, a land use attorney, who added that she and her husband were not aware of the property's historical significance when they bought it.

Had they known of the existence of the women's cremains, Jones-McKeown said she and her husband would not have purchased the property, which was marketed as a prime location for development. And if the garden side were deemed historic,



The cottage that Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon shared sits at the back of a double lot at 649-51 Duncan St. Some or all of the property may win landmark status. Photo courtesy TheGoods-SF.com

she said, they would be concerned it might limit their ability to build a home for their family.

"We want to find a way to honor them," Jones-McKeown said of Lyon and Martin, with perhaps an art piece or bench at the site.

District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman is spearheading the effort to landmark the property. The Board of Supervisors will now take up the matter in April and can decide to ignore the commission's recommendation and landmark both the house and adjoining garden plot.

Lyon and Martin lived there for most of their 54 years together. They purchased the property in 1955 and tended the undeveloped area as a garden.

Journalists who first met in Seattle in 1952, the couple co-founded the influential Daughters of Bilitis, the first political and social organization for lesbians in the

United States. Their home was a gathering place within the city's lesbian community and the site of various meetings and events.

Lyon died last April at the age of 95. Martin died in 2008 at the age of 87, weeks after the women on June 16 became the first same-sex couple to legally marry in California.

A 2015 survey of San Francisco's LGBTQ cultural heritage called for the Lyon-Martin House to be landmarked. It would be the fifth city landmark specifically tied to LGBTQ history and the first focused solely on lesbian history. ■

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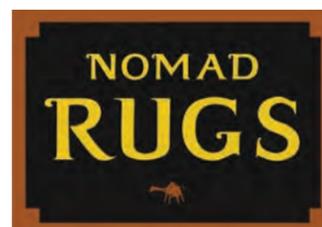
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The Cost of Living in Noe

\$6.2 Million Home Sale

By Corrie M. Anders

A Noe Valley house with a classic Queen Anne façade and an interior refreshed by a contemporary renovation sold in January for \$6,195,000.

Buyers purchased the home, located in the 300 block of Jersey Street between Noe and Castro streets, for 4.8



Behind the façade of this Queen Anne on Jersey Street, first built in 1889, is a modern renovation with four bedrooms and five bathrooms. The now-three-story dwelling sold in January for \$6,195,000.

percent less than the price the seller had asked (\$6,495,000).

Still, the dwelling was the most expensive sale among the eight single-family detached homes that closed escrow during the month, according to data supplied to the *Noe Valley Voice* by Corcoran Global Living San Francisco.

Once a relatively modest 1.5-story cottage dating to 1889, the home had been modernized and expanded to accommodate four bedrooms, five baths, and 3,875 square feet of living space.

Architects had used a European minimalist design featuring a kitchen with a 17-foot Pietra gray stone island, Gaggenau appliances, and a walk-in pantry; floor-to-ceiling glass walls on three levels; abundant skylights; and one-car parking with electric-vehicle capability.

The swank project helped keep the average value of a Noe Valley home sale in January at \$3,153,375, about the same as in December and in January of last year, when the eight homes sold averaged \$2,957,125.

The data showed buyers and sellers typically took 53 days this January to get a home into contract—twice as long as the same month last year.

However, Corcoran San Francisco President Randall Kostick had an explanation. He said the contract-period average was skewed this January because one of the eight homes sat on the market for five months before getting an offer.

In Condo World

Condominium sales in January also matched last year's. There were only six sales during the month. (That was quite a drop from December, when there were 21 condo sales.)

The average value went down as

well. In January 2020, condos sold on average for \$1.5 million. This January the average was \$1.1 million. But again, with so few sales, we shouldn't draw major inferences.

January's most expensive condominium was a three-bedroom, one-bath unit in a building at the corner of Diamond and Clipper streets. It sold for \$1.4 million, or 8.6 percent more than its list price (\$1,289,000).

Located on the top floor of a two-unit building erected in 1953, the home featured an open floor plan, a fireplace, patio, garage, and a deck offering "views of Twin Peaks, Sutro Tower, Salesforce Tower, and a slice of the Bay Bridge." ■



One of the main attractions of a \$1.4 million condominium in this building on Diamond Street is a view that circles from Twin Peaks to the downtown skyline.

Photos by Corrie M. Anders

Noe Valley Home Sales*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price as % of List Price
Single-family homes						
January 2021	8	\$1,905,000	\$6,195,000	\$3,153,375	53	100%
December 2020	10	\$1,700,000	\$4,450,000	\$3,151,500	55	100%
January 2020	8	\$1,350,000	\$6,995,000	\$2,957,125	27	106%
Condominiums/TICs						
January 2021	6	\$768,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,111,917	62	102%
December 2020	21	\$868,000	\$1,800,000	\$1,350,687	44	105%
January 2020	6	\$998,000	\$2,225,000	\$1,478,833	78	103%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
January 2021	1	\$7,250,000	\$7,250,000	\$7,250,000	0	100%
December 2020	4	\$1,125,000	\$2,940,000	\$1,785,000	73	95%
January 2020	2	\$2,150,000	\$2,203,000	\$2,176,500	24	104%
5+-unit buildings						
January 2021	0	—	—	—	—	—
December 2020	3	\$3,100,000	\$4,999,000	\$3,799,667	103	94%
January 2020	0	—	—	—	—	—

*This survey includes all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. Noe Valley for purposes of this survey is loosely defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Noe Valley Voice* thanks Corcoran Global Living San Francisco for providing sales data. NVV3/2021

Noe Valley Rents**

Unit	No. in Sample	Range February 2021	Average February 2021	Average January 2021	Average February 2020
Studio	14	\$1,330 - \$2,195	\$1,864 / mo.	\$1,986 / mo.	\$2,624 / mo.
1-bdrm	113	\$1,795 - \$4,495	\$2,610 / mo.	\$2,683 / mo.	\$3,273 / mo.
2-bdrm	71	\$2,300 - \$5,450	\$3,418 / mo.	\$3,179 / mo.	\$4,416 / mo.
3-bdrm	38	\$2,950 - \$7,900	\$5,066 / mo.	\$5,287 / mo.	\$5,978 / mo.
4+-bdrm	15	\$3,595 - \$22,500	\$8,877 / mo.	\$8,187 / mo.	\$9,482 / mo.

** This survey is based on a sample of 251 Noe Valley rental listings appearing on Craigslist.org from Feb. 2 to 9, 2021. In February 2020, there were 102 listings. NVV3/2021



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TEEN TALK

I Now Care a Lot

By Astrid Utting

In 2016, when I was in sixth grade, I watched my mom cast her ballot in the November election and thought, tomorrow I'll wake up to the news that the United States has elected its first female president.

Instead, I woke up to find my mom staring blankly at a skillet of eggs on the stove, while the drone of the radio cut through the silence. Because it was San Francisco, my school day consisted of community circles and free time while my teachers struggled to do their job and process the information.

In the days that followed, I knew only one thing: we had a terrible new president. But I had no idea how he or the government worked. No one had taught me this. Nor did I read the news. I was scared to bring up questions like, "What's gonna happen? So how does this affect me?"

Not only would I find the answers to these questions, but the next four years would give me the craziest civics lesson ever.

I became aware of the government's role in the issues around me. When I heard controversy over gun control, all I could think about were the lockdown drills in school, where my classmates and I sat silent, backs pressed against the wall. Smoke-filled San Francisco skies reminded me of Trump pulling out of the Paris climate accord, and I felt anxious and frustrated. I was still safe in

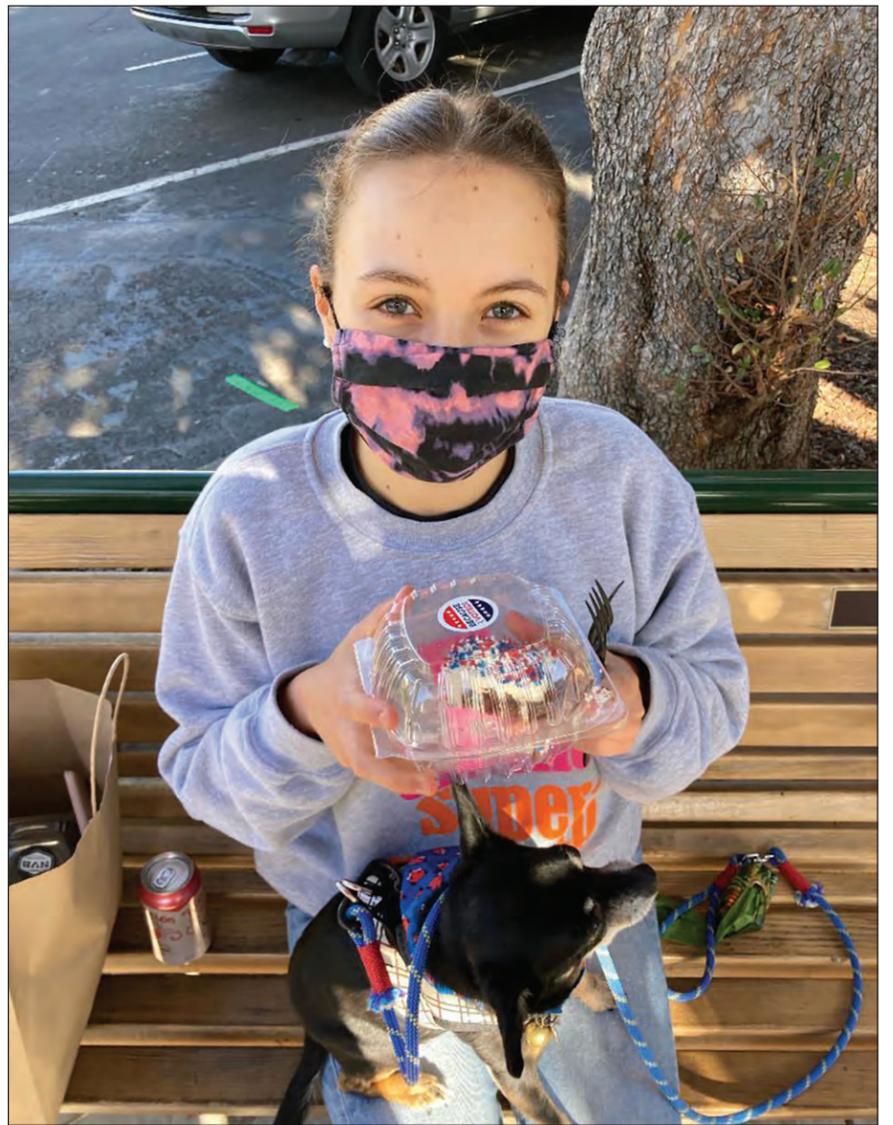
my bubble, but reading news of children in cages, travel bans, and blatant racism, I was horrified. I participated in the women's marches, climate strikes, and school walkouts. It was a start, but at the end of the day my mind bounced back to my science project, English essay, or math test.

It wasn't until the pandemic arrived that these issues hit closer to home. Or more like hit a bullseye. My life was directly impacted by delays and inconsistent decisions coming out of the White House.

I now spend hours each day staring at the names of my classmates on a computer screen because the president of the United States *didn't have a plan*. Maybe my friends and I would be eating lunch on the sunny steps of our school right now if Trump had put on a mask and continued to wear it. If there had been a national strategy for vaccine distribution, maybe my 80-year-old grandmother wouldn't have gotten Covid a few weeks before she was supposed to be vaccinated.

The pandemic highlighted the importance of a functioning government, especially because we lacked one. I watched as more youth channeled their frustration into positive change. Tiana Day and Mimi Zoila organized a peaceful Bay Area Black Lives Matter protest attended by thousands (wearing masks). Other youth took smaller actions, like phone banking and writing postcards reminding people to vote.

Being involved felt really good. The few times people didn't hang up on me when I was phone-banking, I got to support elderly people and newly registered voters by finding their voting location or answering questions about the voting process. I wasn't sure if I helped much, but when I saw how close the final vote



Astrid Utting and her dog Ronnie take advantage of the "Because I Voted" free cake at Noe Valley Bakery on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, 2021.

was between candidates John Ossoff and David Perdue in Georgia, I thought maybe my engagement did make a difference.

I'm relieved we have a new president in Joe Biden, but I'm not done. I don't want to jump into action just every four years. The truth is, it's hard to care and easy to forget about issues that don't impact our lives directly or on a daily basis. This is a lesson I learned from voting rights activist Stacey Abrams.

I understand now how my life is impacted by decisions at a local level. I know the local government was responsible for closing in-person schools when Covid hit, for setting up the slow streets I go running on, and for ordering a mask mandate—all things that made my life safer (and sometimes happier). When numbers would go down and I would feel a little less anxious, I knew it was because of laws and statements by politicians like London Breed.

Now that I've learned what a large role government plays, I'm not just more prepared but I'm eager to get involved. I'm a student at Lowell High School, and whether admissions are merit-based or not will be decided by

elected officials. Whether or not my school is even called Lowell will be decided by the local government. And because I want a say, I'm attending the school board meetings. In fact, an upside of the pandemic is that I can easily attend these meetings because they now are on Zoom.

The most valuable lesson from the past four years was not just learning the definition of impeachment (twice!). Instead, those years taught me that even—no, especially—as a young person, I cannot ignore the government. It is the job of all of us to hold our representatives accountable. As always, Dr. Seuss puts it best: "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." ■

Astrid Utting, 15, lives with her family near the corner of Duncan and Sanchez streets. As a regular contributor to the *Noe Valley Voice*, she reports on what local teens are thinking and talking about. If you have ideas for her, write editor@noevalleyvoice.com.

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A New Chapter For Folio Books

Shop Says Meet Us on the Web or at the Front Door

By Matthew S. Bajko

When Paula Foley opened her neighborhood bookstore more than seven years ago, she never envisioned having an online retail component. Rather, she was committed to providing a place where customers could browse the shelves and discover book titles on their own.

Her brick-and-mortar shop at 3957 24th St., whose name Folio Books was inspired by Shakespeare's 1623 compilation of plays *First Folio*, would also be a place where readers could meet authors in person at in-house events. And it would be a place where parents could instill a love of reading in their children.

Folio did have a web presence, but people couldn't order books for purchase via the store's website.

"Our website was never an e-commerce site," said Foley, who had worked at various bookstores throughout San Francisco for a decade before opening Folio Books in November 2013. "We had never tried to do e-commerce."

That is, until Covid-19 descended upon San Francisco. Foley and her husband, John Foley, a co-owner of the business, decided to close Folio's doors a few days before March 16, the day the city ordered all non-essential businesses to shutter to help slow the spread of the virus.

"I just felt like it wasn't safe for my employees. I was super nervous," Paula Foley recalled. "We were completely shut down for about two months. For the first month, nobody even went into the store really."

Jumping Into the Fray

As it happened, the site Bookshop.org had launched a few months earlier, to assist local bookstores. Small independent businesses could set up their own portals on the site and share in the sales of books with the organization.

"I literally the day they announced the shutdown said, 'OK, I have to figure out how to do this,'" Foley said of the simple web sales she created. "I directed people to that when we were closed. It really helped a lot. It paid the rent."

She and her staff also used the shutdown time to address some maintenance issues and catch up on behind-the-scenes inventory work. They reopened to customers May 18, when the city allowed certain businesses to provide curbside pickup service.

Instead of entering the store, patrons could approach Folio's Dutch front door to get orders they had placed online, to buy cards or puzzles, or to ask employees for recommendations of a book to purchase. Meanwhile, Foley decided to bulk up her e-commerce abilities.



During a year like no other, John and Paula Foley have been leaning on their Dutch door and re-tooling their website to keep their staff safe and customers happy. Photo by Pamela Gerard

"Then what happened was over the summer we were able to migrate to a kind of full-service e-commerce site," said Foley. "It took a lot longer to create. The Bookshop.org one I got going in two hours. It took several months to get the other one."

She had turned to the American Booksellers Association, which offered members a website template they could personalize with their own content. It came with a built-in search component so people could look up books via titles or authors or subject matter. It also alerted customers if Folio had the title in stock or if it could be ordered.

"It is really nice for people. I think when we go back to actual real life or whatever, it will still service us well," Foley said of the new site, at www.FolioSF.com.

'Outstanding' Support

By November the new site was completely functional, just in time for the holiday gift-giving season. Due to the health crisis, people started shopping earlier than normal, Foley said.

Asked if becoming an e-commerce retailer had helped save the business, Foley told the *Voice*, "Oh, yeah!"

"It is not the way we wanted to do things," she acknowledged. "It has kept us going."

She also noted, "Noe Valley is a great community of readers. Their support has been outstanding."

Puzzles and crossword books have been popular sellers, as was former President Obama's memoir and books with "absorbing narratives," said Foley. All summer, nonfiction books about anti-racism were in high demand due to the Black Lives Matter protests.

"I haven't really seen anything like that as a bookseller," said Foley. "The range of titles and interest in them was really something."

To celebrate Black History Month, the store showcased its curated lists of Black

lives and authors, from memoir to fiction to poetry, to books for children.

Last spring, the Foleys were able to secure a federal loan that helped them keep paying their staff of five. They now hope to receive a second one.

"We've been lucky to keep people employed," Paula Foley said. "What is really important to my husband and me is not just to keep the store viable but to keep our staff employed and safe."

Safety Still the Priority

Their business approach has also been upended by the pandemic. Whereas a year ago the literary and monetary needs of their customers and employees were in the forefront, for the last 12 months the Foleys have had to put safety first. They aren't sure when they will allow cus-

STORE TREK

tomers to browse again inside the store and will only do so when they know it will be safe for both patrons and staff.

"We have had permission to have browsing now for months, but we have not," said Foley. "We hope that will change soon, always hoping it changes. People and our loved ones are beginning to be vaccinated, which will make a difference."

The Foleys continue to work remotely from their home in Cole Valley, where they moved in the early 1990s after spending a decade in Noe Valley. With Paula Foley 63 and John Foley 65, they have avoided stepping into the bookstore themselves, instead relying on their employees to manage the onsite operations.

"I just don't think it is right for me. I am virtually there," said Paula Foley, as she can work remotely via computer and reach staff on the phone throughout the day. "I have always done a lot from home."

The shop is currently open Monday through Saturday from noon to 5 p.m.

Having survived the past year, Foley is encouraged that the business will remain a mainstay of the neighborhood for years to come. It was important to keep it viable, she said, so her staff wasn't out of work and the store continued to provide sales tax to the state to fund important services.

"It has worked pretty well. I am not going to say it is anybody's favorite thing," said Foley. "We have managed to muddle through." ■

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SHORT TAKES

Greater Security for 24th Street

Rachel Swann of Compass Real Estate, at 3961 24th St., has some good ideas. It was her very bright idea to string lights along the 24th Street business corridor. As a result, the street feels safer and looks more festive. Her latest idea is security cameras.

This comes from her own experience, she says. A vandal smashed the window of her previous office at 24th and Vicksburg, but she had a working security camera. She gave the video to the police, who found the perpetrator and arrested him. A judge sentenced him to pay \$5,000.

Now, in her role as president of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association, Swann is leading a broader initiative. “We’re trying to bring cameras to every storefront and office,” she says. She believes the cameras will benefit not only the stores and offices but everyone who shops, goes out to eat, or lives on 24th Street.

For those businesses that might need help to buy or install a camera, the association is setting up a GoFundMe page.

If you’d like to donate, contact Swann at rachel.swann@compass.com.



Katherine Seligman, author of *At the Edge of the Haight*, joins Hilary Zaid and Roselle Lim at Odd Mondays via Zoom on Monday, March 15, 7 p.m. Photo by Penni Gladstone

San Francisco Is the Place

Three authors with new novels set in San Francisco will read at the Odd Mondays series this month. You can meet them and find out why they chose the City by the Bay on Monday, March 15, at 7 p.m., via Zoom.

In Katherine Seligman’s case, the answer might be simple—she is a journalist who has lived on Clayton Street for 25 years. Her novel *At the Edge of the Haight*, which is about a young street person who comes upon a murder scene in Golden Gate Park, just won the 2021 TPEN/Bellwether Prize for Socially Engaged Fiction (awarded by Barbara Kingsolver).

Berkeley author Hilary Zaid is also a prizewinner. Her book *Paper Is White* was the gold medalist in LGBT+ Fiction in the 2019 Independent Publisher Book Awards. Set in 1990s dot-com San Francisco, the book revolves around a Queer love story, a Holocaust survivor, and the conflicts that can arise when the past overwhelms the present.

Roselle Lim, a writer who lives in Ontario, Canada, won a prize of sorts when Berkley Books bought her *Natalie Tan’s Book of Luck and Fortune* at auction in a two-book deal in 2019. The title character in the novel returns to San Francisco after her estranged mother’s death and finds



Amos Goldbaum is midway through painting an orange landscape on Sanchez Street between 24th and Elizabeth. The mural is a project of Friends of Slow Sanchez, which wants to keep the street pedestrian friendly.

she’s inherited the family’s restaurant in Chinatown.

To join the winners, request the Zoom link from Richard May at oddmondaysnoevalley@gmail.com or RSVP online at www.facebook.com/OddMondays.

Making Art Out of Asphalt

Amos Goldbaum of Alvarado Street is painting the town orange—Giants orange—or at least one block of it, on Sanchez Street between 24th and Elizabeth streets.

His work has appeared on buildings, T-shirts, and art prints but never before on a street, he says. However, Friends of Slow Sanchez, which advocates keeping the street slow permanently, saw his mural on a wall at Church and Day Street and commissioned him to paint a new one on Sanchez’s pedestrian-friendly pavement.

The group, launched last summer and claiming more than 500 supporters, asked its website visitors to choose between two Goldbaum designs of San Francisco, “Bushy” or “Palm Tree.” The palm tree won out, but both the artist and the organization say the design is evolving.

Says Rafael Burde of Friends, “Major landmarks like Sutro Tower were enlarged and some details simplified to help visitors recognize the scene and setting. We also wanted to make sure there was plenty of blank space for kids to add their own chalk infill designs.”

Artist Goldbaum says he and the group picked the 1000 block of Sanchez because it has high visibility, uniform asphalt, and “some incline, so you can see more of the mural from further down the street.” Burde adds, “We wanted to make sure folks on 24th Street could see and enjoy the mural, too.”

Friends of Slow Sanchez is raising money to pay for the mural, and says that more than \$10,000 has already been donated. According to Burde, the funds will also go toward “beautification, activation, and safety projects for Sanchez,” such as better signs at intersections.

If you would like to donate to the cause, go to www.slowsanchez.com. To find out more about artist Goldbaum, go to www.amosgoldbaum.com.

Hot Off the Presses

Three new books written or edited by Noe Valley residents have been published recently and one is a bestseller already.

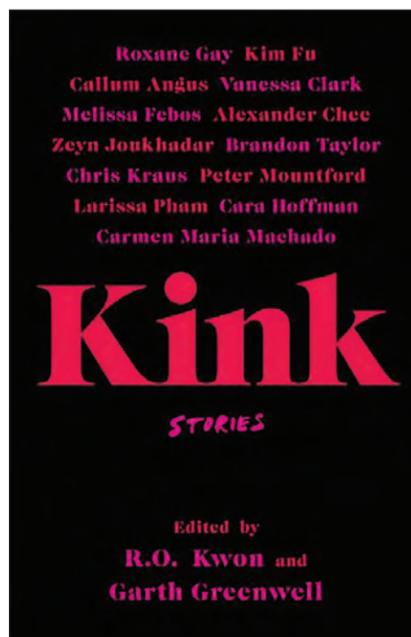
The bestseller is *Kink* (Simon and Schuster, February 2021, \$17), an anthology in paperback of “literary short fiction exploring love and desire” in bondage, discipline, and sadomasochism. The book is co-edited by local resident R.O. Kwon, and contributors include many in the

Queer literati: Alexander Chee, Roxanne Gay, Carmen Maria Machado, and Brandon Taylor.

BDSM not for you? Luckily, local poet Eveline Landau Kanes also has a new collection, *Traveling Through* (Finishing Line Press, September 2020, \$19.99). This paperback retraces Kanes’ eventful life from a childhood in pre-World War II Germany to England, France, and contemporary California. The poems are “a string of lovely verbal charms on a bracelet of fond memories,” according to one reviewer.

Another poetry collection by a local author about to hit the bookshelves is *A Chair Keeps the Floor Down* (Finishing Line Press, March 2021, \$14.99) by recently retired teacher Susan Dambroff. Fellow poet MaryLee McNeal describes the new paperback as a “love song to her students, to nature, and to the art of teaching.”

Buy all three new books from our 24th Street bookstore, Folio Books, at



Selling fast is *Kink*, a new anthology of “dispatches from across the sexual spectrum,” co-edited by Noe Valley’s R.O. Kwon and poet/critic Garth Greenwell.

www.foliosf.com/shop-us.

It’s Not the Law After All

Daylight Savings Time starts Sunday, March 14, at 2 a.m. Wait a minute, you say. Isn’t Day Savings Time, like, so 2018? Didn’t we vote not to spring forward and fall back?

We did. Sixty-two percent of California voters said yes to Proposition 7 in 2018. However, as it turns out, we only gave the state legislators the *right* to end the semiannual switcheroo. The State Assembly voted unanimously to do that (yay!), but the change never even made it out of committee in the State Senate (boo!).

Ways to Enjoy Living Longer

On Lok, the nonprofit that runs the 30th Street Senior Center and numerous other support services around the city, is offering a 10-week course for seniors 55 and up, on “aging intentionally,” staying active and engaged as long as possible.

“This class is a core curriculum that helps older people get prepared for and hopefully improve the longevity that we’ve all been told we’re going to have,” says Valorie Vilella, who will be facilitating the course.

Vilella says participants attend a two-hour workshop each week, where they pick up new skills and hear speakers on a range of topics, from fitness and medical advances to financial planning, computer shortcuts, and healthy relationships. “The speakers are top experts in San Francisco, like Dr. Sergio Lanata from UCSF’s Memory and Aging Center, an expert on sleep and the brain.”

Two sessions, each with space for 20 people, will begin in March: one on Tuesdays (starting March 23) and the other on Wednesdays (March 24). All classes are via Zoom and run 3 to 5 p.m.

People are asked to pay a one-time \$60 fee for materials. But Vilella says no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

The course is based on the Aging Mastery Program developed in 2013 by the National Council on Aging. “It’s really a good program,” says Vilella. “It’s been used in 700 locations around the country, but surprisingly never before in San Francisco.”

On Lok will be holding at least six 10-week sessions during the year. To sign up, email Vilella at valorie@onlok.org. She’ll invite you to an information class via Zoom.

So, for now, remember to set your clocks forward an hour before bedtime Saturday, March 13, or when you wake up on Sunday, March 14.

Short Takes were compiled and written by Richard May and Sally Smith



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Calendar March 2021

March 1-25: The 30th Street Senior Center offers classes in FALL PREVENTION on Mondays and Thursdays, 1:30 to 2:30 pm. 225 30th. Sign up with Luz Villanueva, 550-2265.

March 1-30: The San Francisco Public Library streams "Sweet Stories for BABIES," Mondays, 10 to 10:15 am, and "Sweet Stories for FAMILIES," Tuesdays, 11 to 11:15 am. 557-4400; sfpl.org.

March 1-31: Noe Valley TOWN Square is active. Mon., 9:30 am, Active Aging Pilates. Wed. and Fri., 8 am, Pilates Bootcamp. Thurs., 9:30 am, Active Aging. 24th and Vicksburg. NoeValleyTownSquare.com.

March 1-31: Noe Valley OVEREATERS Anonymous at St. Aidan's meets via Zoom, Mon.-Sat., 7 to 8 am. 314-0720 or 779-6273; oasf.org.

March 1-31: 30th Street SENIOR CENTER offers takeout lunches for people over 60, weekdays and Saturdays. 9:30 am-1:30 pm. 225 30th. 550-2226.

March 4-25: Noe Valley Town Square features the band HIPSTERIA and "Tender" Tim playing jazz, swing, and blues Thursdays, noon to 5:30 pm. 24th at Vicksburg. 264-9380; hipsteriac.com.

March 5-26: Bird & Beckett bookstore live-streams JAZZ Friday nights. 7:30-9 pm. 586-3733; birdbeckett.com.

March 5-26: Holy Innocents Episcopal Church holds GAME NIGHT Fridays on Zoom. 7 pm. holyinsf.org.

March 6 & 20: CHAMBER MUSIC San Francisco offers online concerts by violinist Mayuko Kamio March 6 and Amsterdam reed quintet Calefax March 20. 7 pm. chambermusicf.org.

March 6-27: The Noe Valley FARMERS MARKET is open 8 am to 1 pm (8 to 9 am for seniors); masks required. 3861 24th. 248-1332; noevalleyfarmermarket.com.

March 7: Political group ACTION SF hosts virtual meetings from 11 am to 12:30 pm. Email actionsf-solidarity@gmail.com for Zoom link.

March 8: CREATIVITY EXPLORED hosts a virtual panel discussion, "Get WOC: Celebrating, Collecting, and Curating Art by Women of Color." 6 pm. 863-2108; creativityexplored.org.

March 8-14: WORD WEEK Noe Valley 2021 starts with feminist icon Naomi Wolf and ends with Pandemic Poetry. All events 7 pm except Irish Lit. event (see March 13). For entire schedule, see page 7, this issue, or www.Facebook.com/wordweeknoevalley/ or email wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com.

March 10: Gar McVey-Russell hosts "Black Literature, Black Lives" at WORD WEEK, with Julie Lythcott-Haims, Ayodele Nzinga, and Maurice Ruffin. 7

pm. wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com

March 13: The LADYBUG GARDENERS work outdoors to tidy up the grounds of the Upper Noe Rec Center. 9 am-noon. 295 Day. Contact Joan at info@noevalleyrecenter.com.

March 13: The Asian Art Museum offers free online MEDITATION with a teacher from the SF Zen Center on the second Saturday of the month. 10:30-11:30 am. asianart.org.

March 13: IRISH authors Colm Toibin, Michelle Gallen, and Paula Meehan appear at Word Week, virtually from L.A., Dublin, and Greece. 11 a.m. wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com.

March 13: The SF MIME TROUPE hosts a virtual fundraiser, "The Red Star at the End of the Tunnel." Noon-1 pm. sfmt.org/2021-fundraiser.

March 13: CARA BLACK joins mystery writers Jasmine Aimaq, Rachel Howzell Hall, and Naomi Hirahara at Word Week's "Noir Not at the Bar." wordweeknoevalley@gmail.com.

March 14: WORD WEEK wraps up with "Noe Pests Pandemic Poems," featuring Kristin Belshaw, Susan Dambroff, J Hahn Doleman, Eveline Kanes, Marylee McNeal, Hal Savage, and Kim Shuck. 7 pm.

March 15: ODD MONDAYS features "Set in San Francisco," readings by Roselle Lim, Katherine Seligman, and Hilary Zaid. 7-8 pm. For link, see the Odd Mondays Facebook page, or email oddmondaysnoevalley@gmail.com.

March 17: UPPER NOE Neighbors community Zoom meeting will cover safety and improvement issues. 7 pm. Confirm at uppernoeneighbors.com.

March 19: Bonda Lewis performs in "Centennial of the SUFFRAGIST Portrait Monument in the U.S. Capitol," celebrating passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. Noon-1:30 pm. 557-4400; sfpl.org.

March 20: Community Music Center hosts its virtual SPRING GALA, featuring a performance by the Alexander String Quartet. 6 pm. 647-6015; sfcmc.org.

March 29: In honor of International TRANSGENDER DAY of Visibility, a panel of storytellers discuss their experiences. 7-8 pm. San Francisco Public Library, 557-4400; sfpl.org.

Virtually Spring: The next Noe Valley Voice will be the April 2021 issue, distributed the first week of April. The deadline for items is **March 20**. Email calendar@noevalleyvoice.com or write Calendar, Noe Valley Voice, P.O. Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146. Thank you.

and now for the RUMORS behind the news

Are We Normal Yet?

By Mazook

IT HAS BEEN an epochal year for Noe Valley and the world outside our quaint urban village. It has been just over a hundred years since San Francisco and the world were consumed by a virus that was spread by soldiers returning home from World War I.

In that battle, things didn't get back to normal for about a year. Masks were mandatory, with scofflaws facing a \$100 fine, which was a lot of money in those days. Warren G. Harding's presidential campaign slogan in 1920 was "Return to Normalcy," to the carefree way of life before the Great War and the "Spanish flu" pandemic.



THE LOCAL FOLK US: Noe Valley's return to normalcy seems to be on the horizon. The many parklets for eating and drinking—which some people now call "streateries"—are once again open after January's Covid surge and repeat of the shutdown. As of press time, San Francisco had gone from the purple tier to the red and begun allowing restricted-capacity indoor dining and in-store shopping.

It seems that many of our stores and salons in Downtown Noe Valley have survived, and the vacancies of the departed are either re-occupied or soon to be filled with new occupants.

The big issue for many of us is how soon our local public schools can reopen for in-class learning. The public schools hope to join our three local schools that have been open since October: Adda Cleverger, St. Philip's, and St. Paul's.

A sign of the not-normal times in our village is the sudden sighting of "For Rent" on the window of a Victorian.

Another sign is the sighting of people getting their daily exercise by running or walking our village streets. For many of our working denizens, life will never be the same. They will continue to work from home sweet home, allowing them more time to roam the neighborhood. Merchants have told me they now see more street and pedestrian traffic in the mid-afternoon. Look at the lines at Noe Valley Bakery.



A SIGN OF GOOD TIMES should be going up in the middle of next month. It will herald the latest embodiment of 1099 Church St. (corner of 24th), last occupied by Noe's Cantina. That restaurant closed pre-pandemic in January 2020.

The new restaurant and bar will have the moniker Mr. Digby's Bar and Restaurant. "Digby was my childhood dog," says co-owner Mike McCaffery, "when I lived down on the Peninsula [Burlingame]. He became a favorite in our neighborhood, making his rounds to the houses of people on the block, so they named him Mr. Digby."

McCaffery and his wife, Kristen (Gianaras) McCaffery, say "the time is right" to open their kitchen. Currently, they are building a six-table parklet along the 24th Street side of their bar and restaurant to augment the sidewalk dining space. They hope to inaugurate their kitchen sometime in mid-April.

"We are starting by serving only dinner, and are working on our menu now with an emphasis on the cocktail menu and bar-compatible food like baked potatoes, bread bowls filled with spinach dip, chicken wings with a French onion dip, and jumbo prawn cocktails," says Kristen. "We will serve meals, salads, seasonal vegetables,

local fresh produce, fresh fish, a chicken pot pie, and daily specials like pork chops, and meatballs with mashed potatoes." (My mouth is watering.)

Perhaps you know Kristen from Novy Restaurant at 24th and Noe, which she operates with her sister Kathryn Gianaras and where her dad and mom owned and operated Panos' in the 1970s and '80s.

Another eatery, Village Rotisserie, is being created in the spot once occupied by Le Zinc (and later Chez Marius) French restaurant, next to the Harry Aleo public parking lot (4063 24th St.).

It will open its doors sometime in mid-May, says Noe Valleon Tom Glenwright, who is the owner with his sister and chef Priscilla Dosiou.

At first, "we will be more of a deli with prepared food to go, but we will also have table service as soon as it is permissible," says Glenwright, who operates a bar in the Financial District (653 Commercial) called Hotel San Francisco.

The menu at Village Rotisserie will feature fresh rotisserie chicken and lamb shank, which they will slice and serve, as well as salads and sandwiches, and beverages from display cases.

Glenwright says, "We are very excited to work in our neighborhood and looking forward to serving our community." He and his sister came to Noe Valley from Sydney, Australia, three and 10 years ago, respectively, "and we love it here."



FACING THE MUSIC: It has been 40 years since jazz flutist Larry Kassin started the fantastic Noe Valley Music Series back on Feb. 8, 1981, at the Noe Valley Ministry at 1021 Sanchez St. A performance by then-Noe Valleon Bobby McFerrin blew my mind that night and the world of music soon thereafter.

"He walked to the Ministry from his home nearby for the show, as did I, and it was a night I'll never forget," says Kassin, who lived in Noe Valley from 1975 to 1988. "Even though Bobby could play larger venues, he kept coming back until he moved to Minneapolis. One night he'd be at the Ministry and the next night on *The Tonight Show*." In 1994, McFerrin moved to St. Paul to serve as the "creative chair" of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

The Noe Valley Music Series had a great run until Kassin was given notice in 2011 that the Ministry was going to remodel, "and I had no option but to move." He relocated to St. Cyprian's Church at 2097 Turk St., near Masonic, and eventually changed the series name to SF Live Arts. "We are closed up now since last March, and patiently waiting to reopen," he says.

"For over 40 years, we've had an eclectic, wonderful range of artists, from Joan Baez, Bobby McFerrin, Gil Scott-Heron, Jeff Buckley, Jesse Winchester, Terry Riley, Bill Frisell, T-Bone Burnett, Steve Lacy, John Sebastian, John Fahey, and so many more. Our artists collectively have assembled a MEGOT (MacArthur Genius, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony) of awards, performing in our intimate, acoustically ideal venue(s)."

Kassin says he is hopeful that by the end of 2021 he can present some music in the concert hall at the Ministry again. "I have an idea to bring [the roots and blues of] David Jacobs-Strain and Bob Beach for a show in Noe Valley."



MASK UP: Local legend Ruth Asawa is being celebrated down on the farm. The artist's wall of 233 ceramic masks has been purchased by Stanford's Cantor Arts Center as part of a new Asian-American art initiative, reports Sam Whiting in a Jan. 28 piece in the *Chronicle's* Datebook section.

"The masks, which Asawa worked on for 45 years—hanging them one by one on the shingled exterior walls of her Noe Valley home—form a single untitled work known as 'Wall of Masks' (1966-2000). It has never before been exhibited in a mu-

seum context," writes Whiting.

Asawa, who was a beacon of the arts from Noe Valley to the world, used to ask friends and fellow artists to come over to her house so she could do a mold of their faces. So you might be on the Wall.

Asawa died in 2013. Many family members still live in the neighborhood.



SHORT SHRIFTS: Local florist French Tulip is using the space next door (which is vacant and used to be Astrid's Rabat Shoes) as a storage space, which could signal a move to larger quarters for the long-time Noe Valley flower shop... According to city records, a new day spa called Cocoon is what will open at 3910 24th (where See Jane Run was) and 3912 24th, which has been under construction for more than a year... The new store that opened in January at 3977 24th St., called noo24SF, is now taking in goods for sale on consignment, including vintage clothing and Levi's jeans... Umpqua Bank will close its Noe Valley branch at 3938 24th St. in April...

Another automotive sideshow happened on Jan. 24, 2:45 a.m., at Dolores and Valley streets. SFPD officers cited 10 participants and towed 11 vehicles. The first sideshow stunt was Feb. 23 of last year at Dolores and 23rd... There was a demonstration with a score or more locals in front of Whole Foods on the morning of Feb. 20 in solidarity with Amazon warehouse workers in Bessemer, Ala., who are trying to form a union and raise their minimum wages, something zillionaire owner Jeff Bezos doesn't want them to do... By the way, the San Francisco minimum wage is currently \$16.07 and going up a quarter of a dollar on July 1.



Lovable Street: A giant heart on Sanchez Street was the setting for numerous photos of slow-walking couples and families on Valentine's Day. Photo by Sally Smith



KEEP SLOW SANCHEZ is rapidly becoming a formidable local movement. Updating last month's Rumors, their street mural is almost finished on Sanchez between 24th and Elizabeth, and the group created a big Feb. 14 event called "Noe Valleyntines Day."

Organized through the efforts of Friends of Slow Sanchez volunteers Andrew Casteel and Kit Cameron, over 30 families brought their kids to the 24th and Sanchez corner and had physically distanced work tables where they wrote and decorated valentines with the following phrase on top: "I love _____ on Slow Sanchez."

Casteel, who has a background in community organizing—he worked on Bike to Work Day several years ago (this year it's May 13)—was very happy with the response. "The kids had great fun with this," says Casteel, "and some of my favorites were: 'seeing my neighbors,' 'riding my bike,' and 'getting chocolate donuts' at Noe Café."

The group has posted a video showing the valentines drawn by the kids that day. They are fantastic. Go to facebook.com/slowsanchezsf. My favorite was "dancing," which is what the neighborhood seems to be doing.

"We are working on an Easter egg hunt

**NOE VALLEY
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Sat. 6/9 SUKAY Music of the Andes	\$6
Sat. 6/23 BOBBY McFERRIN Solo vocal and special album release party for Bobby's new record <i>The Voice</i> .	\$7
Sat. 6/30 MICHAEL HEDGES Solo guitar and special album release party for Michael's Windham Hill record <i>Aerial Boundaries</i> .	\$5

Doors open at 7pm No advance ticket sales.
All concerts begin at 8:15pm

Those Were the Days. Larry Kassin, founder of the Noe Valley Music Series (now SF Live Arts), shared this flyer from 1984, when local singer Bobby McFerrin was often in the lineup. Four years later, it was "Don't Worry, Be Happy."

for Saturday, April 3, and Sunday, April 4," says longtime Noe Valleon Kit Cameron, "and will have tables on the corners of 24th and at 29th and Sanchez, where kids can pick up a map and clues for locating various decorated eggs down Sanchez, putting the location on their map, and then going to one of the tables to collect their prize.

"We are also planning to have spontaneous chalk drawings on the street and an Easter Bunny saying hello," says Cameron.



CLASS ACTION: A #ZoomInSF event in the Noe Valley Town Square will have happened by the time you read this. A group called Decreasing the Distance: A San Francisco Parent Collective has been conducting distance-learning classes outside in city neighborhoods, and will have had a Zoom-In in the square on March 2, from 9:30 to 11 a.m. The group says on Facebook and Instagram, "DTD's mission is to advocate for equitable education solutions on behalf of SFUSD parents."

According to voluntary group leader Meredith Willa Dodson, who is also a Noe Valleon, "We want to give visibility to the public of how our students have been attending classes, so they can see firsthand how they are learning during this pandemic." She says the students are from Alvarado Elementary and will have their desks set up to accommodate social-distancing and other SF health requirements.

To quote a poster at the Dolores Park Zoom-In on Feb. 22, "Schools Not Screens."

At print time, the SF Unified School District was still trying to figure out the Covid rules for the schools. And updating the updates, the Board of Education has tabled their plans to rename 44 of our public schools, including James Lick Middle and Alvarado. (See our front-page *Voice* story, this month.) There is also a petition circulating in the city to recall three of the board members.



SINCE DAYS OF YORE: March marks the 40th year I have been writing this column. It is as much fun now as it was back in March 1981. In that column I reported that "Link Lovers Lamenting Local Link Loss," in other words, people were protesting Noe Valley Deli owner Karim Balat's removal of the hot links from his menu. My other news was that the suggestion box at Herb's Fine Foods (where Toast used to be on 24th) included a bunch of new requests, including "Raisin toast, please," "Don't wash the walls," "We want Dali art," "More jus on the Roast Beef au Jus," and the classic "Get a larger suggestion box."

I am looking forward to the next 40 years. That's 30. ■

Action SF, the National Movement in Your Neighborhood

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<http://www.action-sf.com/>,
<http://resistrypac.org>
 Email: ActionSFSolidarity@gmail.com or ActionSFTeam@gmail.com
 Meetings (virtual): First Sundays, 11-12:30 p.m. All welcome.

Al-Anon Noe Valley

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

Castro Community on Patrol

Website: castropatrol.org
 Email: info@castropatrol.org

Castro Merchants

Contacts: Masood Samereie, President;
 Dave Karraker, 415-710-0245
 Email: Dave@mx3fitness.com
 Address: 584 Castro St. #333, SF, CA 94114
 Meetings: Email info@CastroMerchants.com

Diamond Heights Community Association

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

Dolores Heights Improvement Club

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

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

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

Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association

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

MORE GROUPS TO JOIN**Fair Oaks Neighbors**

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

Friends of Billy Goat Hill

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

Friends of Dolores Park Playground

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

Friends of Glen Canyon Park

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

Friends of Noe Courts Playground

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

Friends of Noe Valley (FNV)

Contact: Todd David, 401-0625
 Email: info@friendsofnoevalley.com
 Website: friendsofnoevalley.com
 Meetings: Two or three annually.

Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

Contact: Chris Faust
 Email: info@uppernoerecreationcenter.com
 Website: uppernoerecreationcenter.com
 Meetings: Email or check website.

Friends of Upper Noe Dog Owners Group (FUND OG)

Contacts: Chris Faust, David Emanuel
 Email: info@fundogsf.org
 Website: www.fundogsf.org

Glen Park Association

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

Juri Commoners

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

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

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

Noe Neighborhood Council

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

Noe Valley Association—24th Street Community Benefit District

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

Noe Valley Farmers Market

Open Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., and
 Tuesdays, 3 to 7 p.m.; 3861 24th St. between
 Vicksburg and Sanchez.
 Contact: Leslie Crawford, 248-1332
 Email: info@noevalleyfarmersmarket.com

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association (NVMPA)

Contact: Rachel Swann, 225-7743
 Meetings: Last Thursdays, Old Republic,
 4045A 24th St., 9 a.m. Call to confirm.
 Website: www.NoeValleyMerchants.com

Noe Valley Parent Network

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

Noe Valley Parents, San Francisco

Listserv contact: noevalleyparent-owner@yahoogroups.com. Subscribe:
 noevalleyparentssubscribe@yahoogroups.com

Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrod, 641-1500
 Address: 294 29th St., SF, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

Progress Noe Valley

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

Resilient Noe Valley

Contact: Antoinette
 Email: resilientnoevalley@gmail.com
 Newsletter signup:
<http://eepurl.com/gYuCD5>
 Website: www.resilientnoevalley.com

San Francisco NERT (Neighborhood Emergency Response Team)

Contact: Noe Valley NERT Neighborhood Team co-coordinators Maxine Fasulis, mfasulis@yahoo.com; Carole Roberts, carole_roberts@faludi.com
 Website: <https://SF-fire.org>
 New training classes to be scheduled soon. Please check the NERT website for details.

San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets

Contact: Don Oshiro, 285-8188
 Email: contact@sanjoseguerrero.com
 Website: sanjoseguerrero.com
 Meetings: See website.

Friends of Slow Sanchez

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

Upper Noe Neighbors

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

THE NOE VALLEY VOICE
editor@noevalleyvoice.com

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

Your Support is Vital**Become a Friend of the Noe Valley Voice**

Help the *Voice* Continue to Serve our Community



“... the *Voice* is the best neighborhood newspaper in the city, if not the state, if not the country.”

Kristin Anundsen, Noe Valley Resident

For over 40 years, the *Noe Valley Voice* has told the stories of many of the people, merchants, and animals who make this neighborhood one of the most sought after places in San Francisco to live, work, and shop. During that time, the *Voice* has become known as the best community resource of its kind.

Local businesses, institutions, and individuals who have purchased advertising space help us pay production costs and most of our contributing writers, artists, and photographers. We offer our heartfelt thanks to them.

But the past decade has seen a steady decline in our revenue, mostly due to competition from internet advertising options. And now the effects of Covid19 have added to our burden. It's becoming more difficult to produce the paper.

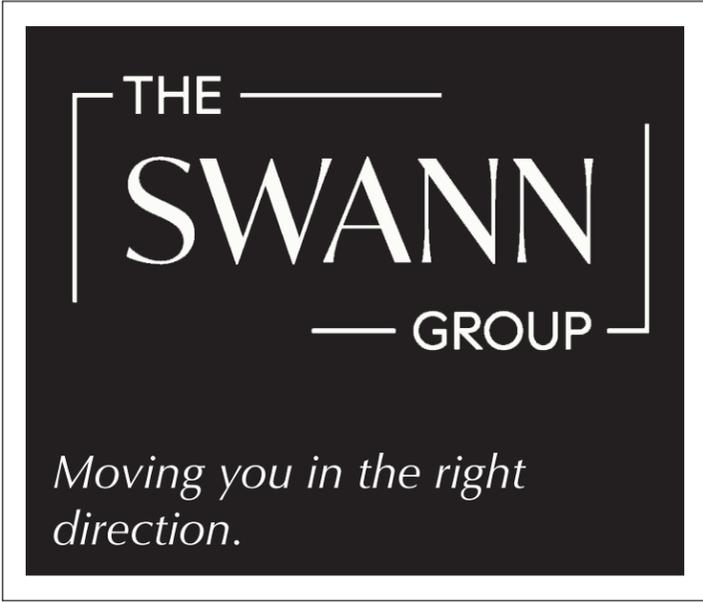
If you appreciate what we do and are able to help financially, please send a contribution check or money order (payable to the Noe Valley Voice) to:

Friends of the Noe Valley Voice, PO Box 460249, San Francisco, CA 94146

Questions? Email editor@noevalleyvoice.com

Thank you! Jack Tipple and Sally Smith, Editors and Co-Publishers

We're Forever Grateful



1298 Treat Avenue

3 BED | 2 BATH | \$1,249,000

Enjoy life in SF's Mission District on Treat Ave, this is a fully remodeled flat that's modern meets vintage and designer all the way.



533-537 Oak Street

10 BED | 3 BATH | \$2,995,000

Nestled in between Hayes Valley and Lower Haight, this stunning property features three tenant-occupied residences with great upside!

1270 York Street

2 BED | 2 BATH | \$1,250,000

Newly converted condo in the heart of the vibrant Mission District. The unit has a private deck off the back that leads down to the large yard which is shared with the lower unit.



COMPASS

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