

NOPNA News

A Publication of the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

2018 : issue 4

OUT & ABOUT

STANDING
THE TEST OF
TIME:
NOPA'S LEGACY
BUSINESSES



PHOTOS: Joseph Wittinski

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOPNA HOLIDAY PARTY!

Stay tuned for details!
Jannah - 1775 Fulton
Saturday, December 8th

NOPNA GENERAL MEETING

Oasis Cafe • 901 Divisadero
Thursday, Nov 15th, 2018 - 7pm
Thursday, Jan 17th, 2019 - 7pm
Thursday, Mar 21st, 2019 - 7pm

SFPD PARK STATION COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Park Station Community Room
Second Tuesday each month, 6pm

DIVISADERO FARMERS MARKET

Grove@Divisadero, Sundays, 10am-2pm

PANHANDLE PARK STEWARDS

Second Saturday each month, 9am-12pm
Bulletin Board near Panhandle Playground
panhandlepark.blogspot.com



Contact us:

board@nopna.org or www.nopna.org

When people tell me they've lived in the neighborhood a long time I like to challenge them with a bit of trivia. Can you name the three previous BBQ joints that were at the corner of Divisadero and Grove? Only about half can name one. For those counting, the answers are Brother in Law's, Lilly's, and Da Pitt.

I consider anything that's been in the neighborhood longer than me (20+ years) to be "old school." But there are fewer venerable businesses that meet that description than you might think. Rather than jazz up the new, this article is a look at a few longstanding Divisadero favorites that have stood the test of time.

I started my quest the other morning at **Eddie's**, the battered and beloved

diner on the corner of Fulton and Divisadero with the easy and greasy menu and mismatched mugs, which has been in the same location for well over 30 years. **Helen Hwang** took over the establishment in 1988 and has run it ever since with a solid ethos: keep the menu simple and the prices low so that everyone — not just fancy newcomers — can enjoy a great breakfast. Closing each day at 3:30, Eddie's has served every mayor of San Francisco and countless regulars and tourists alike. Says Helen, "We do our best."

In 1992, long before Bi-Rite and the new Falletti Foods, **Hani Shehadeh** longed for a place to get high quality organic produce. Having immigrated to

(continued on page 3)

FROM THE BOARD

Charles Dupigny - NOPNA President

As we progress towards the end of the year, there is much to reflect on, and in the midst of it all, much to be thankful for.

In 2018, I am thankful for the efforts of the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association (NOPNA) board members, for their constant participation, time, and contribution. In addition, I am also thankful to our volunteers, Divisadero merchants, and other neighborhood organizations, for our ongoing partnership in sustaining an eclectic neighborhood.

This year, NOPNA focused on top five priorities (outlined in Issue 1 of the NOPNA News): Community Events, Financial Stability, Communication/Promotion, Pedestrian Safety, and Growing the Board. In doing so, we hosted our annual community events, focused on obtaining community feedback from neighbors, spoke in favor of "daylighting" for a safer Fell street, and participated in input sessions for a renewed Panhandle Playground. In addition, we continue to partner with San Francisco's city departments to promote neighborhood upkeep and safety, as well as future NOPNA initiatives.

However, these efforts could not be accomplished without the support and guidance of neighbors who have participated in the community since NOPNA's early beginnings. In recognition of these long-contributing community members, NOPNA partnered with Supervisor Vallie Brown's office to honor the following individuals and organizations with the San Francisco Certificate of Honor. So as we reflect on the year, let's honor our neighbors, and let's encourage the small contributions that can lead to a lasting impact on the community.



Clockwise from top left, **Jim & Suzanne Cowen** have been advocates both inside and outside of the community, and helped in the early days to organize the board and newsletter. **Will Valentine** coordinates the delivery of 4,000 copies of NOPNA News, four times each year. **The Oasis Cafe** has always welcomed our neighbors, but has also hosted our neighborhood meetings for many years. **The Divisadero Farmers Market**, formed by NOPNA and Alamo Square Neighborhood Association, started as a creative idea to bring people together; it has been doing so for more than a decade, and brings healthy foods into our community. Photos by Joseph Wilinski, www.joewilinski.com



The **NOPNA News** is published by the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association for the residents, businesses, and friends of our neighborhood, which is bounded by Masonic Avenue and Turk, Divisadero and Fell Streets.

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NOPNA's mission: The purpose of this association shall be to establish neighborhood unity, maintain multi-ethnic and multi-cultural diversity, foster a sense of neighborhood pride, promote a safe and clean community, and improve the quality of life for all residents of the neighborhood.

Your financial support allows NOPNA to cover the costs of our newsletters, community building events like our block party and holiday party, public art projects in the neighborhood, and other activities that enrich our dynamic neighborhood. It also supports this site.

Make a difference on our streets and become a member today!

Contact NOPNA

board@nopna.org

www.nopna.org

OUT AND ABOUT (continued)



PHOTOS: NOPA's Legacy Businesses.

Photo Credit: Joseph Wilinski. www.joewilinski.com

the US as a cheese wholesaler in 1977, he'd been bothered by the low quality fruits and vegetables he encountered in most groceries. So Hani left the cheese business and started **Green Earth Natural Foods** on

the corner of McAllister and Divisadero. The business has done well and expanded three times over the years. Asked what the key to longevity has been, Hani replied simply, "Great support from neighbors."

Then of course, there's the Club. **Club Waziema** that is. Known as Club Morocco in the 1950s, the Club was a happening music venue for decades before falling on hard times for 20 years. It was taken over by **Giday Beshue** and **Nebiat Tesfazgi** in 1999, who kept many of the original furnishings and the splendid velvet wallpaper in place and began serving Ethiopian cuisine. The only thing more fun than eating Ethiopian food in a dive bar is listening the stories that go along with it. Just ask Giday.

Finally, one of Divisadero's most revered institutions — and still home of the neighborhood's cheapest beer — is **Bean Bag Cafe**. Founded in 1993, Bean Bag serves tasty and affordable breakfast and surprisingly delicious dinners, always with a smile. I once spent over an hour on Google Earth attempting to find the street in Paris that's depicted on the wall inside Bean Bag. I still haven't found it, as it turns out to be fictional. What remains real, however, is no-nonsense hospitality owner **Mike Zagah** has always extended to everyone who walks in the door.

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Nick Aster is a 20 year San Francisco resident and media architect with a strong interest in sustainability and city life.



Photo Credit: Joseph Wilinski. www.josephwilinski.com

THE DIVISADERO MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION GETS FESTIVE

The Divisadero Merchants Association is proudly sponsoring holiday lights on Divisadero Street this holiday season. The Divisadero Street median from Haight Street to Golden Gate Avenue will be lit up with festive lights. We have been working behind the scenes for a few months to get this up and running this season. "There are lots of new businesses, increased foot traffic, and just more happening in the neighborhood than ever before. We would love to celebrate

our vibrant community by lighting up Divisadero Street for the holiday season. We feel that this will not only highlight what a great community we have, but also bring us all together as a neighborhood to celebrate the season of giving," says Allyson Jossel, co-owner of Nopa and the Holiday Lights Committee leader.

We reached out to our member merchants for contributions and have been delighted by their enthusiasm

and generosity in contributing funds to make this a reality for 2018. A few generous donors outside of the Merchants Association have also contributed funds for this project. It's been a pleasure to see our community come together through the holiday lights.

You can reach the Divisadero Merchants Association at divisaderomercantsdma@gmail.com.

Giselle Gyalzen - is the owner of Rare Device and is President of the Divisadero Merchants Association for 2018. She is passionate about volunteering and contributing to communities.

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ART IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Many NOPA residents walk down Divisadero Street and take in the sounds of patrons clinking beer glasses at Bean Bag Cafe or the scent of fried chicken wafting over from Popeye's. When you raise your eyes above street level, however, you may notice a 3D mural of a wolf's face, peering down at passersby at the Hayes Street intersection, in realistic hues of brown and beige mixing with shocking blues and reds.

Our neighborhood can thank Portuguese artist and activist, Bordalo II, for this larger-than-life and futuristic piece. Bordalo II, also known as Artur Bordalo, exhibited his signature trash animals at the Heron Arts Gallery this past February and installed the wolf on Divisadero a few weeks earlier.

Bordalo II is an artistic pseudonym that pays homage to Artur's grandfather, artist Real Bordalo. Artur was born in Lisbon in 1987 and his early experiences in the city's underground graffiti culture is evident in the wolf installation on Divisadero. He continued his formal artistic education at the Fine Arts Faculty in Lisbon, where he blended graffiti with sculptural installations and other artistic media.

Bordalo II uses his art to express his frustration with his generation, one that he describes as consumeristic, and to bring awareness to climate change, which is a result of that wasteful attitude. "With the production of things at its highest, the production of 'waste' and unused objects is also at its highest. . . . I create, recreate, assemble, and develop ideas with end-of-life material to try and relate it to sustainability, ecological, and social awareness." Bordalo II uses items that are traditionally discarded or even harmful to the environment — such as damaged bumpers, burnt garbage cans, or appliances — and reforms them into the animals they so often harm: wolves, tigers, birds, and chimpanzees.

You can follow Bordalo II's work by visiting <http://www.bordaloi.com/> or on Instagram @b0rdalo_ii

Angeli Agrawal - is a Bay Area native who found out about NOPNA News by reading it in Matching Half Cafe.



Photo Credit: Joseph Wilinski www.josewilinski.com

PHOTO: Bordalo II's work above Divisadero Street.



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SUPERVISOR BROWN ON HOUSING, HOMELESS, AND CLEAN STREETS



Photo Credit: Joseph Wilinski. www.joewilinski.com

Vallie Brown is no stranger to NOPA. Prior to being appointed by Mayor London Breed as the new District 5 supervisor, she was a neighbor, community organizer, and legislative aide to both Breed and Ross Mirkarimi. She draws on these experiences when speaking of her vision for NOPA, which centers on three topics: housing, homelessness, and clean streets.

“We’re in a housing crisis and we need all types of housing to ensure we have choices,” she urged in a recent conversation. “We need to ensure all new developments feature as much affordable housing as possible without crushing the project.” By leveraging density bonuses, she pushed two high-profile NOPA developments, at 400 and 650 Divisadero, to raise their inclusionary housing levels to 20% and hopes future developments will achieve 23% inclusionary. At the same time, she aims to ensure inclusionary units for those at various levels of the average median income (AMI), primarily 55%, the lowest range. Finally, she plans to use other tools, such as neighborhood preference, condo fees, and the city’s small site program, to protect renters from displacement and increase the city’s affordable housing funds.

“I can’t go to a community meeting without hearing about the homeless issue,” Brown mentioned, turning her attention to the area’s homelessness. “Anyone who has lived here a while would agree.” Brown supports the recent conservatorship legislation passed at the state level and adds, “we’re seeing what the opioid crisis is doing to people.” She sees Prop C as a critical step to increasing shelter capacity and housing options along with on-site, wrap-around services, a model which has worked in cities such as New York. Lastly, she adds that this is a regional issue: “We need San Jose, Oakland, other cities in the Bay area to come together and solve this homeless problem through money and services.”

Clean streets, her third priority, is intertwined with the first two. She sees programs such as once- or twice-monthly dump days, additional public trash cans, and public education as critical to fighting the neighborhood’s trash problem. She also raised the idea of neighbors “adopting a block” to increase accountability. For those who say these are city issues, she says, “We need to have the shared responsibility for making our city better — if we can get people to understand that, then things will get better.”

Julian Mackie has lived in the neighborhood for two years. When he isn’t working, he’s focused on housing and pedestrian safety.



With every neighborhood comes a community of unique and diverse people, restaurants and locales. Moving to a new neighborhood and becoming part of a new community is one of the many joys of building a new life in a new area. Choose NOPA for your next move and establish roots in the distinct community that comes with it. Take it from Bonnie, who has lived in NOPA for over 25 years.



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NOPA'S PARKING PROBLEM

Without too much effort you can probably hear a few of the 500,000 cars that cover San Francisco on any given day. Combined with the city's growing density (100,000 new households and 190,000 new jobs in the next 20 years), parking availability is a critical as ever. In NOPA, safety improvements such as daylighting, infrastructure projects like Masonic beautification and the traffic circle on Lyon and McAllister, and programs such as Ford Go Bikes frequently involve the removal of parking spaces, usually in NOPA's busiest corridors. Additionally, several new planned housing developments will contribute more new residents than parking spaces. So what does the future of parking look like and what is MTA doing about it?

To better understand these changing dynamics, the San Francisco Municipal Transit Authority (SFMTA) evaluated its Residential Parking Program (RPP), including Area Q which encompasses NOPA and Alamo Square. This evaluation process included data analysis of parking availability and existing trends, a review of city-wide best practices, and public outreach (including a survey). The result are a number of recommendations approved by the SFMTA Board of Directors on June 5th. Among the new policies was a limit on the number of permits (one per individual or two per household), driven by data showing that Area Q included 20% more parking permits than parking spaces. Additional changes included the elimination of the petition process for families to obtain a parking permit for an in-home care provider and a new "paid/permit" tool, where "visitors parking in RPP areas would be required to pay, rather than adhere to posted time limits."

Outside of the RPP, the program has recently embraced a number of other parking tools, including demand-responsive pricing, which adjust street-parking rates based on demand, and pick-up and drop-off zones for ride sharing services such as Uber and Lyft. The SFMTA views each of these policies as part of its toolkit aimed at optimizing parking occupancy rates, creating equitable distribution of available spots, and limiting the number of cars circling the block looking for an open spot.

Further research is needed in NOPA to better understand additional changes which can be made to increase both on- and off-street parking and to ensure existing parking spots are available to residents. These changes will be monitored closely by NOPNA and will be reported as they are made public.

Julian Mackie has lived in the neighborhood for two years. When he isn't working, he's focused on housing and pedestrian safety.



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DOUG DIBOLL: COMMUNITY LEADER AND UNOFFICIAL LOCAL HISTORIAN

Doug Diboll embodies what it means to be a good neighbor. You can find him serving as the parking coordinator for Pacific Primary (a position he's held for 11 years) or volunteering at community events such as the NOPA Halloween party. Doug's the type of guy who doesn't just sweep the leaves in front of his house, but in front of all the houses nearby. He also was the motivating force behind the recent History Corner at the Spring Block Party.

Why did you move to San Francisco?

I'm from St. Louis and I'm gay — and being gay there was not such a good thing thirty years ago. The weather is also much better here!

How did you become the parking coordinator at Pacific Primary?

There were more safety concerns in the neighborhood and there was a need for a presence on the street. There was actually a gang in the neighborhood at that time called the Central Divisadero Playas — they owned what is now 4505 BBQ and used it as a money laundering scheme.

What's been one of the most noticeable changes to the neighborhood since you've lived here?

Many of the three-plexes in this neighborhood used to be rented out to students at USF or UCSF. There would be 4–5 people per flat with just the kitchen as common space,



Doug Diboll brings a vigilant passion as a traffic monitor, and tireless passion in sustaining a safe neighborhood.

so you'd go to a coffee shop to get out or a laundromat to wash your clothes. Now, there are fewer coffee shops and laundromats because those units are more commonly owned by families. So the density and demographics of the neighborhood changed quite a bit. If I saw someone with a stroller thirty years ago, I'd wonder, "which way to 24th street?" but now you see tons of kids in the neighborhood.

Has this area always been known as NOPA?

No. In fact, when I moved here, the realtors called it called Hayes Valley. We were in "the flatlands" — no views of the ocean, so not many people wanted to live here. But now with our walk scores and bike scores, it's the primo place to be. I think NOPA became the official name around 1991.

There are many newcomers to the neighborhood. Is there a specific community issue you'd like them to be more aware of?

Litter. One thing many tenants don't realize is that each household is eligible for one bulky item collection (of up to 10 items) per year. The tendency is to put things on the curb with a "FREE" label, but those items often end up in the landfill anyway.

If you're curious to learn more about San Francisco history, Doug recommends the website www.foundsf.org.

Molly Tobin has lived in NOPA for two years and loves Yoga Garden, Alamo Square Park, and carnitas burritos from El Rancho Grande.

MICRO HISTORY

HOME OF THE DEAD



PHOTO: Calvary Cemetery circa 1865; Pt. Lobos Road (now Geary St) near Presidio Avenue; tollhouse; graves in background. (Photographer Unknown.) (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection / Courtesy of a Private Collector)

In 1860, NOPA was bordered by two of San Francisco's "Big Four" cemeteries: Masonic Cemetery to the west, along what is now Masonic Avenue, and the enormous Calvary Cemetery to the north, between what are now Masonic, Geary, Ellis, and Turk streets. These sprawling necropolises were part of a mid-19th century garden cemetery movement. It was a romantic vision that deemed cultivated "rural" settings, based on English landscape gardening, more suitable for burials than urban churchyards.

As San Francisco grew and expanded westward, a conflict arose over the desire of the living to occupy large plots of land inhabited by the dead. It was a fight between respect for the dead and the need to repurpose their real estate. Ultimately, the living won the argument. But, this being San Francisco, evicting (most of) the deceased and relocating them to Colma took 40 years.

It began in 1901, when the city banned further burials within its limits for sanitation reasons. The first bodies left the Masonic and Odd Fellows cemeteries in the 1930s (the Odd Fellows Columbarium survives on Lorraine Court). Laurel Hill was next. Calvary, the Catholic cemetery, was the last to go. The Archdiocese reluctantly conceded in 1937 and over the next few years Calvary's dead were reinterred at Holy Cross Cemetery in Colma. What was gained by exiling Calvary's population to Colma? The Anza Vista neighborhood, the shopping center where Target now sits at Geary and Masonic, and Kaiser Hospital.

Linda Ackerman leads free City Guides tours of NOPA. For the next tour see http://sfcityguides.org/current_schedule.html.

FORD GOBIKE

CONTINUES EXPANSION

As we follow up on the bike share conversation, the online community forums are abuzz with very small but very vocal groups of supporters and opponents. Jennifer Brandl shared survey data from 262 respondents in our previous issue to help shed some light on this heated debate. We found that 48% favored continued expansion, 31% favored a moratorium for the remainder of 2018, and 15% chose "other", with frequent commentary about the amount of space taken up by the docks. Rather than leap into the fray regarding community sentiment, we wanted to share some new facts and updates.

GoBikes in our neighborhood are regularly used — comparable to stations in Union Square and Main Library — with an average 124 rides starting and ending at the three stations each day. This usage may be partially attributed to the fact that NOPA has been the westernmost outpost of GoBikes so far.

Further NOPA GoBike expansion in 2018 has been limited to an existing red space at Central and Fell (permitted by the SFMTA without further hearing as does not impact parking). Additionally, permits were granted for West NOPA at Grove (west of Masonic) and Fell at Stanyan, with installation planned for early November.

GoBike will be returning to our community in an upcoming NOPNA general meeting to share 2019 NOPA expansion plans, and we look forward to hearing them share usage data and their final locations after the West NOPA expansion occurs.

Please continue to provide your input regarding GoBike expansion to board@nopna.org.

Tim Hickey is a NOPNA Board member, father, and advocate for improved infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit.

GROVE STREET HALLOWEEN PARTY: ANOTHER “THRILLING” YEAR IN THE BOOKS

It was not your average Wednesday.

On Halloween night, Grove Street transformed from a quiet residential street into a boisterous scene, filled with ghouls and goblins, ghosts and princesses, clowns and pirates. Families near and far gathered to trick-or-treat in spooky garages and graveyard gardens. Once again, Grove Street residents pulled out all the stops to welcome and entertain visitors for NOPA's annual Halloween party. The variety of creative costumes presented no easy task for the costume contest judges — District 5 Supervisor Vallie Brown, SFPD Captain Una Bailey, and NOPNA Board President Charles Dupigny — who awarded Certificates of Honor to the winners.

The NOPNA board extends a huge “thank you” to everyone who helped make the party a success. First and foremost, we couldn't have done it without the generous neighbors of Grove Street, who hosted this wonderful tradition. We would also like to thank the many volunteers who helped monitor the barricades, run candy to houses running low, and help set up and breakdown the whole event. Thanks also to our VIP judges and the University of San Francisco Dons, who kept the event fun and lively. Finally, NOPNA thanks neighborhood realtor Jennifer Rosdail for her many years of support.

Only with everyone's help is this neighborhood tradition possible! Here's to the kick off of a delightful holiday season.

Meg Rahner is a Pennsylvania native who has lived in NOPA since she moved to San Francisco in 2010. She works for a public relations agency downtown and recently joined the NOPNA board.



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650 Clayton Street

2 BED | 2 BATH | \$1,375,000

This elegant and expansive, 1600+ sq. ft., top floor, Edwardian condominium residence features period details and thoughtful modern updates throughout. Flexible 2-3 bed, 2 bath floor plan includes a spacious double parlor living room with gas fireplace and pocket doors, as well as, a sleek, updated chef's kitchen.



Coming Soon

1953 Grove Street

3 BED | 2 BATH | PRICE UPON REQUEST

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