

NOPNA News

A Publication of the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

2018 : issue 1



Photo: Joseph Wilinski / Erika Alexander

BARVALE AND EMPORIUM OPEN DOORS TO VERY DIFFERENT CROWDS

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOPNA ANNUAL BLOCK PARTY

TARGET DATE: Early May
Stay Tuned for Details

NOPNA GENERAL MEETING

Oasis Cafe • 901 Divisadero
Thursday, March 15th, 2018 - 7pm
Thursday, May 17th, 2018 - 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



North
Of
Panhandle
Neighborhood
Association

Contact us:

board@nopna.org or www.nopna.org

On a recent Thursday evening the crowd at Barvale, Adriano Paganini's hip new tapas bar in the former LaUrbana space at Grove and Divisadero was decidedly young — underage in fact.

Around 5 p.m. I counted no fewer than six strollers inside the new restaurant. The occupants' parents sipped happily on the restaurant's creative gin & tonics. My personal favorite is the #4, a twelve-dollar cocktail fashioned with saffron and cardamom. My six-month-old son had no opinion but was entranced by the polka dots adorning the walls.

As the night wore on, the crowd evolved from parents looking for a quick drink before bedtime, to the post-work happy hour crowd, to couples on dates

and friends sharing platters of hot and cold tapas, including Basque piquillo peppers, boquerones with cured white anchovies, croquetas de jamon, salt cod bonuelos and a near-perfect pulpo (octopus).

The tables tend to turn over quickly, but that was always Paganini's intention. He has said from the very beginning of his new venture that he intended Barvale to be a communal stop for groups of friends, rather than a traditional sit-down restaurant.

The restaurant's website has described its tapas as "inexpensive," an adjective subjective to the eye of the beholder in our rapidly changing neighborhood.

(continued on page 3)

FROM THE BOARD

In December, the NOPNA Board got together for a few hours to reflect on 2017 and to decide where to direct our focus for the coming year. Should we focus on connecting with more people through general meetings? Or in ensuring that next year's Halloween party is even better? Business outreach or community events? We'd love to do everything, but also know that when everything is a priority, nothing is a priority.

So, after much discussion and debate, we decided on the following priorities for 2018, which we'd like to share with the community.

- 1. Community Events:** One of the core missions of NOPNA is to establish neighborhood unity and foster a sense of neighborhood pride. Nowhere do you see this more clearly than in the Halloween Party, the Block Party, Sunday Streets, and the Christmas party. Neighbors enjoying time with neighbors is what it's all about — and what we're all about. These events require many hours of planning, coordination, and day-of work, but we all agree the payoff is worth it.
- 2. Financial Stability:** Events cost money, plain and simple. We're able to offset the costs somewhat with NOPNA News advertising, but the past few years have been tight. One of our core goals this year is to be financially stable while continuing to fund the events we all love. If you own a business and want to engage more closely on events, let us know!
- 3. Communication and Promotions:** Find out about a meeting, decision, or other NOPNA event too late? We know. We're sorry — we need to get better at communicating across all channels (NOPNA News, www.nopna.org, Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). It's too easy to miss out on fun stuff and we're committed to improving that.
- 4. Pedestrian Safety and Transportation:** Nothing impacts daily quality of life as much as a safe environment and good transportation. This remains a key priority for our board.
- 5. Growing the Board:** We need more sharp minds, helping hands, and clear voices on the board. If you think the above first four priorities are exactly right — great! We need your help to make them happen. Think we got it wrong? — even better! We need diverse perspectives like yours. It's your neighborhood; make it what you want it to be.

Even if you don't want to join the board, we'd love to hear from you. Send us an email at board@nopna.org, come to a general meeting at Oasis on the third Thursday of odd months, go on our Facebook page, or come chat with us at the NOPNA tent at the next block party (we're a little awkward but we're nice).

Looking forward to seeing you around the neighborhood this year!

Jason Cauthen is a Board member and editor of NOPNA News.



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.

Contact NOPNA

board@nopna.org

www.nopna.org.

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BARVALE and EMPORIUM OPEN DOORS *(continued)*

For some diners the \$18 paella of shrimp, mussels, and clams is indeed an excellent deal. For others, the small dishes of hot tapas ranging in price from \$8 to \$18 will make for an expensive night out.

Across Divisadero even more change is afoot, finally.

Anyone who's been in the neighborhood for more than a decade has wondered about the long vacant Harding Theater on Divisadero and Hayes. The classic movie palace served as a church for more than 30 years but has sat vacant since 2004 while various controversial redevelopment plans were proposed.

Longtime residents have often made a game of guessing what it could become — a brew pub, fancy condos, a haven for the performing arts?

The wait finally ended last month when Emporium opened its doors — a bar-slash-arcade aimed at folks pining for 1980s nostalgia even if most of the patrons seemed younger than the games themselves. From permitting through construction, it was a two-and-a-half year journey for co-owner and operator Danny Marks.

"So far most people I talk to and my staff talk to have been super positive," Marks said. "They love seeing the Harding Theater coming alive and becoming a place of entertainment once again. You can never please everyone

but we draw an extremely diverse crowd and have felt very warmly welcomed. I have tried to be very accessible throughout the process and give anyone who asks a tour of the space, even during construction."

I recently enjoyed an evening of vintage memories while getting familiar with Emporium's above-average beer selection and a competent cocktail bar, pumping tokens into some long-forgotten titles like Joust and Burger Time. Gazing at the well-restored 1920s ceiling while trying to remember the difference between Centipede and Millipede made for a thoroughly enjoyable night.

The theater itself remains more or less intact, with a stage and a large movie screen playing obscure arcade-themed titles (the bartender couldn't identify the one on screen while we were there) and semi-permanent raised flooring over where the seats used to be. For those feeling less nostalgic, pool tables, air hockey, and skeeball offer a screen-free evening.

We can also expect more community activities in the coming year.

"It's good for the neighborhood and good for business so it's really a win-win," Marks says.

Jo Piazza is an award winning journalist and best selling author. She lives with her husband Nick, son Charlie and giant dog Lady Piazza on Turk Street.

UPDATE: SAFETY BY THE NUMBERS

The San Francisco Chronicle recently declared 2017 the safest year for traffic fatalities in the city's history¹. The proclamation was a step towards the city's goal of cutting traffic fatalities to zero by 2024, but just how safe are NOPA's streets and what work is there still to do? NOPNA recently completed an updated analysis of traffic collision data made available through the Vision Zero initiative. This data, which spans 2005–2017, provides specific information about traffic incidents including location, street conditions, time of day, and cyclist or pedestrian involvement.

The data points to a decrease in traffic collisions overall, particularly those involving pedestrians and cyclists. When collisions have occurred (such as the fatal collision in October of 2017), they have largely taken place in areas where high volume auto traffic intersects with pedestrian and cyclist paths in our neighborhood (i.e., Divisadero, Masonic, and Fell/Baker and Fell/Masonic intersections).

VISION ZERO

The intersection of Fell and Masonic has been historically dangerous for cyclists (25% of all cyclist-involved collisions), although the last five years have shown a clear improvement. The busy commercial Divisadero intersections at Fell and at Hayes remain dangerous to pedestrians (likely due to a failure of drivers to yield right of way). Meanwhile, incidents on residential streets have remained minimal despite concerns over a growing traffic presence caused by ride sharing services, navigation apps, among other factors.

These data point to an overall increase in safety corresponding with safety measures put in place over the last five years (e.g., protected bike lanes, bulb-outs, pedestrian refuges). Continued engineering and education, paired with increased enforcement, will support NOPNA's priority of making NOPA a safe and welcome destination for all residents and visitors.

Julian Mackie is a resident of NOPA focused on using data to improve our neighborhood's safety and walkability.

¹<http://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/SF-traffic-fatalities-in-2017-lowest-in-city-s-12472028.php>



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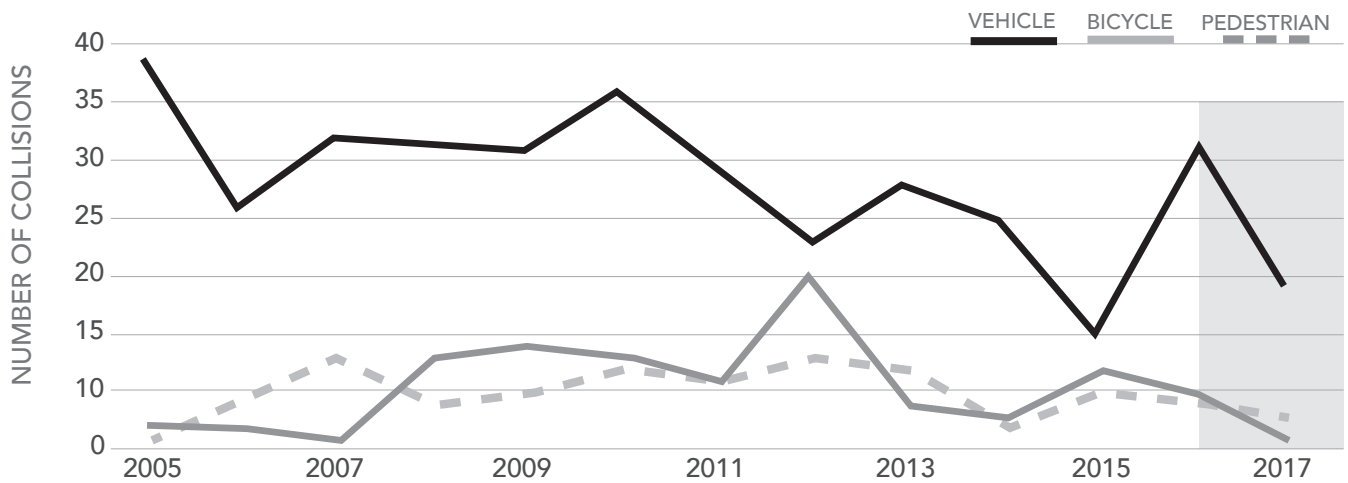
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SAFETY BY THE NUMBERS

(continued)

VISION ZERO

COLLISIONS IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD OVER THE YEARS.
(Area bounded by Divisadero, Masonic, Fell, and Turk)



Shaded area: includes SFPD reported data through Oct. 2017

Source: SF Department of Public Health

TOTAL COLLISIONS FROM 2005-2017

PRIMARY STREET	BICYCLE	PEDESTRIAN	GRAND TOTAL
MASONIC AVENUE	16 (0)	17 (1)	33 (1)
FELL STREET	26 (5)	7 (1)	33 (6)
DIVISADERO STREET	13 (2)	19 (2)	32 (4)
FULTON STREET	12 (1)	8 (1)	20 (2)
TURK STREET	5 (0)	6 (0)	11 (0)
OTHER	12 (0)	21 (4)	33 (4)
TOTAL	84 (8)	78 (9)	162 (17)

() Represent collisions from 2016-2017

Source: SF Department of Public Health

MEET THE BOARD



Jason Cauthen is a San Francisco native who loves Bay to Breakers. He moved to this neighborhood in 2011 with his wife and kids. When not working, commuting, editing the NOPNA News or spending time with his family, Reach out to him at jason@nopna.org.



Jeff Dewey and his wife, Megan, have lived in the neighborhood since 2010. Their six-year-old daughter is proud to be a NOPA native. Jeff has been updating the NOPNA website and welcomes any feedback through webstuff@nopna.org.



Charles Dupigny President of the NOPNA Board. He has lived in the neighborhood since 2010, and has actively been a board member for 5 years. Charles is interested in being a community advocate, sustaining an eclectic, diverse, and connected community.



Leela Gill, a 20+ year resident, enjoys the neighborhood with her two boys and husband. She is active in NOPNA community safety and event planning.



Tim Hickey and his wife, Leah, have lived in the neighborhood since 2010 and can be seen with their son, Liam, biking, and walking through the area.



Mike Leeder is the Treasurer of the NOPNA Board. He has lived in the neighborhood since 2004 and has two young boys. In addition, Mike is a Co-Founder of Bytes for Bits, an after school organization teaching grade school kids to code software.



Dera-Jill Pozner and her husband have lived around the Panhandle since 1999, including 11 years in the North Panhandle, where she also operates her architecture and design firm.



JJ Strahle a past NOPNA Board President, he and his wife met while walking their dogs in the Panhandle. They are now raising their two children and sending them to local public schools. JJ is focused on government-community relations, safety, and promoting local businesses.



Noreen Vokić is interested in neighborhood safety and creating a community via social gatherings. She has lived in NOPA since 2013 with her husband Dom (NOPA resident since 2007). Noreen is a Nurse Practitioner at Stanford Hospital.

Brenda's

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REAL ESTATE

MOJO BICYCLE CAFE GOES OUT ON A GOOD NOTE

I sat down with Remy Nelson on the eve of his cafe's closure. Mojo Bicycle Cafe, which has been a popular meeting place on Divisadero for the past 10+ years, closed its doors just before Christmas 2017. While we talked, many neighbors and old friends came through to have their last cup of coffee there.

Remy, a San Francisco native and bike enthusiast, explained that Mojo came about as a way to marry a bicycle shop with a cafe/bar. But first, he had to find the right location. "It was before anyone came on Divis and a great property came up. I redid the foundation. I did everything and I learned so many ways not to do things, but we hung in there."

Mojo wasn't just a coffee and bagel spot, it was a space for local musicians, cyclists, and artists to play and meet. And notably, as a way to encourage conversation, Mojo offered no WiFi or power outlets. The cafe also pioneered the "supper club" turned "pop-up" and boasted San Francisco's first parklet. Up until Mojo's final Thursday, the popular Rice, Paper, Scissors restaurant pop-up was in full swing.

While he is excited for Divisadero's new businesses and neighbors, Remy acknowledges that the change hasn't

all been positive. "I think the last year has been the most striking," explained Remy. "In 2007, the idea of more than \$1.50 for a coffee was a lot. But the last two years, the level of wealth and disposable income has blown all of that out of the water."



PHOTO: Co-owner of Mojo Bicycle Cafe, Remy Nelson, pouring a farewell brew.

Remy has advanced positive change. He treated his employees well, offering severance pay before closing and he was an active participant in both iterations of the Divisadero Merchant Association. "I have pretty strong ties with a lot of the local businesses, Bar Crudo, Madrone, Black Nose."

And Remy didn't do it all on his own. As well as working with the

neighborhood, he wanted to be sure to credit Mojo's co-owner, Jane, for bringing a new spirit into Mojo. "It's not just me, it's me and Jane." Among many things, she revamped the food and beer menu to include more local and innovative options.

However, all good things must come to an end. "I get to go out on a good note, I didn't have to lay anyone off, no bad feelings, the timing was more based on my employee's needs . . . but, you get tired, I want to get back to wanting to do it again."

The neighborhood will certainly miss Mojo. As for Remy and Jane, they are looking forward to rest and "nothing, so much nothing," as well as some time outside of their usual block on Divisadero.

When asked what he would like to see in the space, he said, "I see this as a tap room . . . I like the feel in here — the woodwork. I made a lot of this stuff myself [but] we'll see." Let's hope Remy and Jane will bring another business-with-heart back to San Francisco one day. For now, we'll have to look elsewhere for good coffee and good conversation. And Remy wishes us well, saying, "This really feels like a neighborhood that cares."

Erika Alexander is an elementary school teacher and has lived in NOPA since 2010.

PHOTO CREDIT: Erika Alexander /Joseph Wilinski

ST. JOHN COLTRANE: A NATIVE SAN FRANCISCO CHURCH CELEBRATES “A LOVE SUPREME”

St. John Coltrane Church's history with our neighborhood dates back to the 70s, but it only moved into its current space (on Turk and Lyon) a year ago. It attracts visitors from around the world and is just settling into its new home.



Pastor Wanika Stephens spent time to sit down with me and help me understand the history of the church.

How did the church get started?

In the mid 1960s, Franzo and Marina King attended two John Coltrane performances in North Beach, which they referred to as their “sound baptisms.” This inspired them to begin listening sessions of Coltrane’s music in their Bayview living room. After John Coltrane’s passing, they incorporated the church in 1969 — initially as the Yard Bird Temple, and later as the One Mind Temple Evolutionary Transitional Body of Christ. In 1982, the church became

part of the African Orthodox Church. The church moved from Bayview to NOPA, on Divisadero where it remained for 31 years. While on Divisadero, two important events occurred. First, the African Orthodox church canonized John Coltrane in 1982, becoming St. John Coltrane; and second, Franzo and Marina King became Archbishop King and Most Reverend Supreme Mother. The church moved to Gough and later to Fillmore, then in 2016 moved to its current site on Turk and Lyon (a space it shares with St Cyprian’s and several other congregations).

How would you describe a St. John Coltrane service to visitors?

We have a very diverse congregation, which makes us somewhat unique among African Orthodox churches. You’ll find that service bears similarity to Catholic, Lutheran, or other services, but the liturgy is combined with music of John Coltrane. Some of the prayers are sung by the choir. On the first Sunday of each month, there is a meditation called First Meditation Communion Sunday, which is a guided meditation while listening to what we call the “First Voice” (John Coltrane’s “A Love Supreme”). Everyone is invited to come out — communion is open to everyone. We have also been surprised to find that our church has become a destination for both domestic and international travellers, so we often welcome

visitors from Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Germany, Brazil, France, and even Australia.

How can people learn more about you?

In addition to coming to one of our Sunday services, we have a weekly radio program from 12–4 p.m. on Tuesdays on 89.5 FM (KPOO), KPOO.com, and tuneIn where we feature the music and wisdom of St. John Coltrane and other inspired artists.

What other kind of work does the church do?

We have focused on social justice. We’ve been involved with environmental justice (in the Bayview shipyard area), the foreclosure movement, working with Mothers’ March Against Police Violence, and we march in front of the Hall of Justice every Friday 12–2 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Anything you’d want to say to or ask of the neighborhood?

I’d like people to know that this church is lifting up the message of “A Love Supreme,” which we see as another word for God. We encourage people to tap into that energy in any way they know how. Our focus is on love. To try to unite and be one. We have dedicated ourselves to that mission and they are welcome to join us.

Jason Cauthen is a San Francisco native who lives in the neighborhood with his wife and two boys. PHOTO CREDIT: Jason Cauthen

NEW LIGHTS! NEW RECEPTACLES!



PHOTO CREDIT: Charles Dupigny

Safer streets, reduced litter, improves everybody's quality of life. In early 2017, NOPNA adopted two initiatives to work with the city to upgrade trash receptacles, and improve lighting in the neighborhood. Since then, the Department of Public Works has upgraded ten out of the sixteen older trash receptacles around the neighborhood. The new receptacles not only look better, but also offer accommodations for recycling. NOPNA expects the remaining six receptacles to be replaced by the end of 2018. NOPNA also knows that keeping areas well-lit can be an effective crime deterrent. NOPA residents may have

noticed the new LED lights, the city has been installing throughout the neighborhood. Even though the new lights may make our night-time streets safer, or brighter, it will still leave areas that are not well-lit. In March, NOPNA plans to survey those areas with a city engineer, so we can ensure our neighborhood is well-lit in all areas. These types of initiatives may seem small, but NOPNA believes they can add up to a safer, and more pleasant environment for everyone.

Charles Dupigny is the president of the NOPNA board and focuses on quality of life issues in our neighborhood.



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NAME THAT STREET!

Want to have a San Francisco street named after you? It helps to be a politician or a general, although NOPA's east-west streets offer a few exceptions.

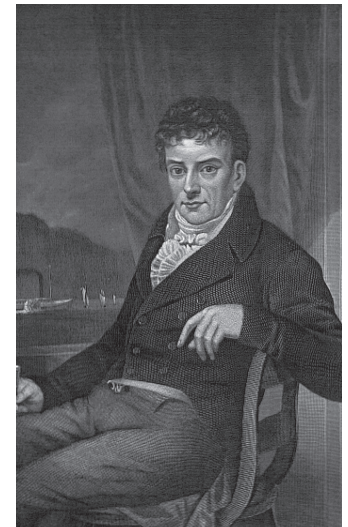
William **Fell** was a Dane who arrived in 1849 and became a merchant, accountant, and member of the California Society of Pioneers.

Thomas (not Rutherford) **Hayes** was a county clerk from 1853 to 1856; fortunately for him, his brother was on the committee that named new streets in the Western Addition in 1855. Robert **Fulton** is credited with inventing the steamboat. He died in 1815, before there was a San Francisco.

Matthew Hall **McAllister** was a Southerner and a lawyer in San Francisco during

the Gold Rush. In 1855 Franklin **Pierce** appointed him to be a US. Circuit Court judge in California. There's a statue of him on McAllister near Polk Street, next to City Hall. Did you know that the Golden Gate Strait (after which the bridge and avenue were named) was itself named by John C. Fremont in 1846 after the Golden Gate entrance to Constantinople through its fifth-century wall? Frank **Turk** is credited with bringing baseball to California. He also was the Vice Alcade of San Francisco in 1849 under John **Geary**, the first Alcade. A lawyer and major land holder, he once owned most of Nob Hill and a chunk of San Mateo County.

MICRO HISTORY



Robert Fulton by Duyckinck, Evert A. Portrait Gallery of Eminent Men and Women in Europe and America. New York: Johnson, Wilson & Company, 1873. CC Public Domain.

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



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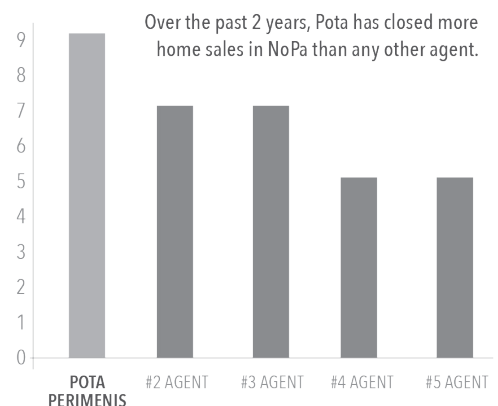
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Coming Soon

1052 Haight Street

3 BED | 2.5 BATH | PRICE UPON REQUEST

Built in 2007, this 3 bed / 2.5 bath Condo has two levels of living space, with a wide open floor plan. Complete with a Chef's kitchen and private, upper balcony off the kitchen. Side by side parking with 11-foot-high ceilings. 1654 sq ft per tax records.



Coming Soon

2077 Golden Gate Ave

3 BED | 2 BATH | PRICE UPON REQUEST

This upper Level NOPA Condo is complete with 3 Bedrooms / 2 Full Bathrooms. Deeded Deck with Stellar Views and an open floor plan living & dining. Remodeled Kitchen & Baths with 1 car independent parking and additional family room off kitchen. 1727 sq ft per tax records.