



In the February issue

Film critic Michael Synder on doing the Academy Awards the right way. p. 13

Susan Dyer Reynolds says goodbye to her dear friend and Blue's human, Steve. p. 16



Your to-do list

February is the month of love, Chinese New Year, celebrating Black history, and of course San Francisco Beer Week. You won't want to miss this action-packed month. p. 14

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Detail of Claude Monet's *Wisteria*, 1916–19; oil on canvas. IMAGE COURTESY OF THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO

'Monet: The Late Years' opens at the de Young

BY SHARON ANDERSON

DURING THE YEARS 1913 until his death in 1926, Claude Monet explored an increasingly vibrant abstract painting style originating from the gardens he cultivated around his home in Giverny. Known as the greatest landscape painter of the Impressionist

group, this exhibition will be the first in more than 20 years to focus on the final phase of Monet's career. Sixty paintings, including more than 20 examples of Monet's water lily paintings, along with some less familiar rarely seen works, tell the story of the artist's later years. Several paintings will be seen for the first time in the United States.

INTROSPECTIVE IMAGERY

Broader applications of paint and the resulting increased abstraction of his canvases were in some ways a circumstance of Monet's deteriorating eyesight. Enconced in his Giverny gardens, personal loss and the threat of surrounding war led to this reinvention and a trend toward more

ART WORLD, continued on 12

POLITICS AS USUAL

How more money will make us poorer

Some humble suggestions for how the city can spend its windfall

BY JOHN ZIPPERER

THE *FINANCIAL TIMES*, THE BUSINESS NEWSPAPER, publishes a lavishly illustrated oversized magazine insert with the least understated name on the planet: *How to Spend It*. Inside, readers find all kinds of ways to waste their excessive incomes on fancy cars, outrageous dresses, and islands. But if you've got the money, why not spend it, right?

Well, we're in the money, honey. More than \$400 million of it, in fact.

Thanks to our rip-roaringly insane real estate market, real estate taxes have overflowed their coffers to the tune of \$415 million. And faster than you can say, "Why hasn't anyone fixed that broken bus stop window near me for six months?" the city leaders are planning to spend that windfall money.

They don't get to spend all of it, kinda not really sorta. That is because the law mandates more than half of the surplus goes into budget reserves and certain city agencies. So, for example, \$38 million will go to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency; \$29 mil-

POLITICS AS USUAL, continued on 4

MARINATION

Room to grow: how to plant new businesses

There are many hurdles for successful small businesses in San Francisco. What do they need to flourish?

BY KEVIN FRAZIER

Part 1 of a series.

YOU MAY HAVE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO IT. AFTER all, you walk down Chestnut and Union at least once a week, if not more. So when you stroll passed an empty storefront you might not even notice it anymore. But an empty storefront is a squandered opportunity — a missed chance to make our community more vibrant, diverse, and prosperous.

Many San Franciscans have turned to elected officials for solutions to our struggling streets. Too few, though, have consulted the folks who know what it takes to maintain a business in a difficult time and setting.

MARINATION, continued on 5

BACK STORY :: A lovely holiday



Valentine's Day is one of the sweetest holidays. PHOTO: RECCHIUTI CONFECTIONS

Valentine's Day and chocolate: A curious coupling

BY JULIE MITCHELL

WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO get from your sweetie on Valentine's Day: roses, jewelry, or dinner at a romantic restaurant? Certainly, chocolate. In the weeks leading up to Valentine's

Day, Americans will spend more than \$1.5 billion on approximately 58 billion pounds of chocolate. Many of us have our hearts set on a big, heart-shaped box of chocolates. And there are plenty of high-quality, local chocolatiers from which to select the perfect Valentine assortment. But

really: Why chocolate? And who the heck was St. Valentine anyway?

AN ANCIENT APHRODISIAC?

While we associate chocolate with nuggets, truffles, and bars, chocolate originated in Mesoamerica (Central and South America) as a bitter beverage made from the pods of the cacao tree. Archaeologists found trace amounts of cacao powder in ancient Olmec bowls and jars in tombs near Guatemala as early as 1400 BC. Pueblo people imported cacao to the Mayans in the late 1900s. Historians believe that Mayans used chocolate drinks in religious ceremonies as well as feasts and festivals. Cacao beans were used as currency, and they were also used in marriage ceremonies; cacao was thought to be an aphrodisiac.

CHOCOLATE GOES ABROAD

According to legend, either the Spanish conquistador Hernan Cortes bought cacao beans with him back to Spain in the 1400s, or Christopher Columbus brought the beans back in the 1500s. Originally used as a medicinal drink in Spain, other countries such as Italy and

DINING OUT, continued on 11

TOP 10 STEAKS IN AMERICA

Osso Steakhouse - San Francisco, CA
 Bobo's - San Francisco, CA
 Peter Luger Steakhouse - Brooklyn, NY
 Bern's Steakhouse - Tampa, FL
 CUT - Beverly Hills, CA
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CONTENTS

IN THIS ISSUE



13



11



18

News

City updates

Our news roundup reports on a proposal to fine landlords who don't rent out their commercial space, a small grocer with a big name is coming to the former Real Foods location, the city hopes to build housing above Fire Station 13, a crime report, and a collection of facts and figures. **3**

Northside

Housing and energy

District 2 Supervisor Catherine Stefani explains her plans for tackling San Francisco's homeless crisis and says the city needs to move on several fronts to put an end to a humanitarian disaster, and District 3 Supervisor Aaron Peskin says it's time to take on PG&E not just with regulation but with public competition. **5**

Food & Wine

Something to look forward to

The Tablehopper has the inside scoop on Verjus opening in Jackson Square, Abrazo now open in Russian Hill, El Lopo coming to Polk Street, and Seven Hills making a move. **10**

Arts & Entertainment

Visit, read, watch

Film critic Michael Snyder is not a fan of industry self-congratulations, but he nevertheless girds his loins for the inevitable Academy Awards show and hopes they do it right if they're going to do it anyway; see what books are hot in the Marina; and Snyder highlights the Mostly British Film Festival as an opportunity to see a lot of great films in one place. **12**

Calendar

February events

This is the shortest month of the year, but it's packed with more than its share of things to do. Celebrate Beer Week and Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year, honor Black History Month, view films at IndieFest, have a taste of the Chronicle Wine Competition, go to art shows, and much more in a month that could easily have been a week longer. **14**

Pets

The Adventures of Skylar Grey

Susan Dyer Reynolds remembers the last days of her good friend and Blue's human, Steve. **16**

Family

MomSense

Liz Farrell says getting a cell phone is a right of passage for children, and she offers guidance to ensure that it doesn't create more problems than it solves. **17**

Real Estate

Marketplace

John Zipperer reports on a new effort to pump hundreds of millions of dollars into the Bay Area's affordable housing market — it's a good start, but it's not enough. **18**

ONLINE SPECIALS

The Coastal Commuter offers advice for Valentine's Day, the Weekend Traveler heads to Healdsburg, local chocolatiers, and more.

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NEWS BRIEFS :: Northside roundup

Mini Mina grocery

MINA MINI-GROCERY FOR FILLMORE

The former Real Foods location at 3060 Fillmore has already landed a Shake Shack fast food restaurant and a Rumble fitness center. Now celebrated local chef Michael Mina has teamed with CenterCal to open Indie Superette on the site. The mini-grocery will feature fresh produce, nuts and grains, nut milk, eggs, dairy, and other grocery staples, along with grab-and-go items such as salads, smoothies, and items from the nearby Mina Test Kitchen.

The developer, CenterCal Properties, reports that it had tried to get a major national grocer or a boutique local outlet for the space, but its odd shape and narrow footprint along with little parking meant larger grocery chains were uninterested. The company says it reached out to at least 17 grocers — everyone from Amazon to Mollie Stone's to Trader Joes — with no luck.



Would you buy groceries from this man? You will be able to at 3060 Fillmore. PHOTO: DREW ALTIZER / FINANCIAL TIMES

\$250 A DAY

City voters might be voting in November on a plan by District 3 Supervisor Aaron Peskin to punish landlords who don't rent out their retail spaces. The fines would apply to landlords in commercial districts with commercial properties that are vacant for more than six months; they would be charged \$250 a day. Peskin also reportedly wants to extend that to residential landlords.

Expect the proposal to be massaged repeatedly before it is voted on by the Board of Supervisors, as opponents and proponents alike seek to alter it to reflect the realities of a difficult local small business climate and the leasing industry.

FIREFIGHTERS PLUS HOUSING

The city of San Francisco is looking for a developer to build market-rate housing above the newly seismically upgraded Fire Station 13 (530 Sansome Street) in Jackson Square. Affordable housing fees from the market-rate development are expected to fund more than 50 units of affordable housing in Chinatown.

Mayor London Breed said, "Our lack of housing is hurting our residents and our city, and we need to build new homes wherever we can, including on public land."

Supervisor Aaron Peskin said he proposed housing on this fire station site a decade and a half ago as a way to "maximize the public benefits of our public parcels." Now he adds, "When I came back into office, we were not only facing a housing crisis but a loss of our iconic legacy businesses, and I realized that we needed creative solutions. We've finally landed on a proposal that brings housing to the transit-rich downtown job center, rebuilds one of the busiest fire stations in the city, and funds an affordable housing and legacy business rehab in the heart of Chinatown. I'm really quite thrilled to see this finally move forward after so many years."

The mini-grocery will feature fresh produce, dairy, grains, eggs, nuts, and other staples.

CRIME UPDATE

The decline in auto burglaries is continuing into the new year. For the week of Jan. 14–20, Northern Station reports that there were 91 auto burglaries, and a total of 252 in the year to date; that's down from 380 in the same period in 2018.

The 15 nonauto burglaries of Jan. 14–20 brought the year-to-date total to 37, down from 45 in 2018. And the seven robberies for that week made the year-to-date total 21, down from 23 the year before.

Meanwhile, local businesses report increasing attacks. The window of Hint (2112 Union Street) was recently smashed by a masked man, and other businesses in the area report similar threats to their business. District 2 Supervisor Catherine Stefani is holding a security meeting on Feb. 5 at 6:30 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul (2320 Green Street.)

FACTS AND FIGURES

2043: Year by which it is estimated that San Francisco has a 72 percent chance of having an earthquake of at least 6.7 magnitude . . . **43rd:** Ranking of California out of 50 states in terms of per-pupil education spending . . . **300 to 400 percent:** How much more the cost of operating a tech startup in Silicon Valley is than doing it in the emerging second-tier tech hotspots of Austin, Pittsburgh, and elsewhere. . . **Jan. 25:**

Day Mayor London Breed and Treasurer José Cisneros announced a plan to assist federal employees who were furloughed or working without pay during the government shutdown . . . **Jan. 25:** Day the shutdown ended . . . **18 percent:** decline in homicides in San Francisco from 2017 to 2019 . . . **90:** number of new Department of Emergency Management dispatcher recruits funded by \$8 million . . . **239:** number of permanently affordable apartments in lower Pacific Heights renovated under the city's Rental Assistance Demonstration program.

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FRANCHISES AVAILABLE

Politics as Usual

continued from cover

lion to public schools, youth services, and childcare; \$9 million to libraries, and so on. A total of \$156 million will go to the budget reserves, where it will save us from out-of-control spending.

AS IF

After divvying up the money into those legally mandated agencies and reserves, roughly \$185 million will be left to be spent or returned to the taxpayer. No! I'm only joking; none of it will be returned to the taxpayer. In fact, apparently a leading proposal for spending the estimated \$185 million would cost \$196 million.

But wait, you say. You're not a mathematician, but you're pretty sure \$196 is bigger than \$185. How can this be? Because the supervisors who came up with the \$196 million plan to get around the fact they don't have enough money to fund all that by raiding the budget reserves for \$11 million.

Yes, the money that was set aside so it wasn't spent right away will get spent right away. So why bother putting it into the budget reserves in the first place?

Mayor London Breed has an alternative plan: spend the entire \$185 million on homelessness. At press time, city leaders were still trying to come up with a solution that didn't make economists' heads explode.

THE WINNING NUMBERS ARE . . .

Perhaps you have heard about the bad luck many lottery winners have. CNBC reports lottery winners are more likely to declare bankruptcy within three to five years than the average American. People who come into these huge sums of money end up spending even more than they had, and they end up worse than they were.

There is some research to the contrary. A study of Swedes who won the lottery did not find them more likely to end up in penury. But that's Sweden, the land that created the sober and safe Volvo. This is America, the land that created the SUV as a single-occupancy vehicle.

Nationally, the Left is eager to get budget control so they can undo some of the austerity of the Obama years, the different priorities of the Bush years, or the debt-reduction mindset of the Clinton years and invest considerable sums into health care and infrastructure. Here in San Francisco, where Democrats have been in total control since before time began, they still have no shortage of additional spending plans. The windfall could be \$3 billion, and our city government would put together a plan to spend all \$4 billion of it.

HOW TO SPEND IT

I will admit some of the planned spending by the supervisors is worthy. Teacher salaries — by all means. But not all of



San Francisco isn't the most expensive city in the world, but it's not for lack of trying. PHOTO: WERNER22BRIGITTE

their plans are so grounded in fundamental common sense, so let me suggest some other ways to spend our windfall.

Street cleaning. Everyone agrees some of our streets are filthy, right? So let's put the money on the road and get them sparkling clean! But then I found this from the *Chronicle's* Phil Matier: "The 47-square-mile city spends more than four times as much as Chicago does to keep streets clean, [and] Chicago, at 227 square miles, is almost five times larger than San Francisco." On second thought, don't throw more money into that black hole.

Reduce fees on small businesses. Retail businesses are being decimated across the country, and here at home — the real estate craziness — remember that? The thing that spewed out an extra \$415 million in taxes to the city — has spurred many landlords to hike rents to unsustainable levels. That,

plus red tape and the increasing attractiveness of buying online while sitting at home in your underwear, means businesses could use a break here and there and not have to pay a fee every time they make a little change to their business. Perhaps a little committee could come up with a list of ways to streamline and decrease costs in the various agencies and offices of the government that interact with small businesses.

Reduce fines. If you jaywalk in San Francisco, you can face a fine of up to \$250. Now, I'm as concerned about jaywalking as everyone else is — which is to say not at all. I once spoke with a police officer who was ticketing people for jaywalking, and he marveled about how people would jaywalk right in front of him "as if there was nothing wrong!" Well, there isn't anything wrong with it unless you're walking in front of a vehicle, and

Darwin had something to say about that. It's not evil, it's just illegal. But hitting someone up for \$250 for breaking a ridiculous law smacks more of revenue enhancement than law enforcement. For a tech CEO, that \$250 is just one fewer guest to invite to his dinner at the French Laundry. For normal people, that is a serious hit.

Reduce parking fines. Speaking of fines — according to Spotangels, the city issues about \$124 million a year in parking tickets, including more than \$5 million in the Marina and \$4.6 million in North Beach. Considering that you can easily pay \$100 for an infraction, the city is raking in a lot of lucre. But considering that I have never lived in a city in which so many people double park (often, I don't know why, literally next to an open parking spot), it would seem that drivers are not taking lessons from the fee structure.

BOO HOO

No other city in the world is watching San Francisco struggle to spend hundreds of millions of dollars and is shedding a tear for us. This is a problem we have to solve by ourselves. By which I mean it will be settled behind closed doors in the cloakrooms of City Hall. Nice, shiny, expensive City Hall.

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Marination continued from cover

That's why I talked with current and former business owners up and down the Marina's commercial corridors. These savvy individuals presently run or previously operated businesses in every sector — from restaurants to retail — in nearly every San Franciscan neighborhood as well as in nearby counties.

Turns out cultivating a street is like cultivating a garden: Each flower needs a space to grow, nutrients to develop, and soil to establish roots. For a business to blossom, it needs reasonable rent and leasing terms, substantial foot traffic, and freedom from red tape that prevents them from ever getting ahead.

It's hard to imagine a gardener planting a seed in the crack of a sidewalk. They'd know it would have no chance to survive. Entrepreneurs similarly avoid renting spaces with suffocating rents and leases. Yet landlords, responding to market forces, have increasingly presented would-be and current Marina merchants with untenable terms.

That was the case for one entrepreneur on Fillmore Street — Jason Yip, the owner and founder of State Apparel. Yip had developed a great product and was ready to move to a brick-and-mortar location, yet rent and lease terms in the Marina pushed him to begin looking to other neighbor-

hoods. Eventually, one landlord decided to give him a break — a trial period of sorts — and it was the adjustability he needed to test his idea.

Fortunately for all parties (including our community), Yip's seed has grown into an impressive flower that's made its mark on the local economy. A key ingredient to cultivating our garden, then, is opening up more welcoming spaces. Policy-makers ought to consider what they can do to help landlords offer flexible rental agreements that let entrepreneurs test the viability of their idea.

Even with space to grow, a plant will wilt absent regular watering (cacti excluded). Similarly, Marina businesses crave regular visitors — they need foot traffic that brings customers in on a frequent basis. Presently, a lack of convenient public transit options, workforce housing, and events limits the number of potential customers coming to the area's businesses.

Politicians regularly discuss plans to expand BART/Muni options as well as the need for affordable housing, but according to Benson Wang, owner of The Palm House on Union Street and Dorian on Chestnut Street, they should consider paying more attention to events. For instance, Wang lists the Union Street Festival as a key driver of new business. "The festival helps build awareness [of local businesses]," in Wang's



Small shops and businesses are a vital part of a thriving city, but storefronts like this are an increasing presence in San Francisco. PHOTO: NAOMI ROSE

opinion, "and it contributes to the holistic growth of our community." Turns out festivals may be among the best fertilizers for struggling flowers.

Some Marina businesses have landed in a plot with fair rent and good foot traffic, but they struggle due to city regulations. One retail store owner provided an unexpected example: dynamic parking prices. In the mind of this owner, the city offers too few parking permits to business owners. Accordingly, many employees and owners find themselves constantly running to the meter. What's more, many of these meters are dynamically priced, meaning that at peak

hours employees and owners may be paying more for parking than the clothes they're selling.

No one likes a garden full of weeds. The Marina needs the touch of a green thumb to revitalize its streets. Recently, though, city construction efforts have bulldozed rather than gently tilled the soil for small business development. Temporary projects, such as redevelopment of Van Ness Avenue, can permanently impact small businesses. The construction work on key transit corridors will eventually bring more shoppers to storefronts. But, in the short run, the massive (and commonly delayed) construction projects

have starved many restaurants from their share of sunlight. Business owners are eager to work with planners and politicians to develop new ways to build roads without blocking revenue.

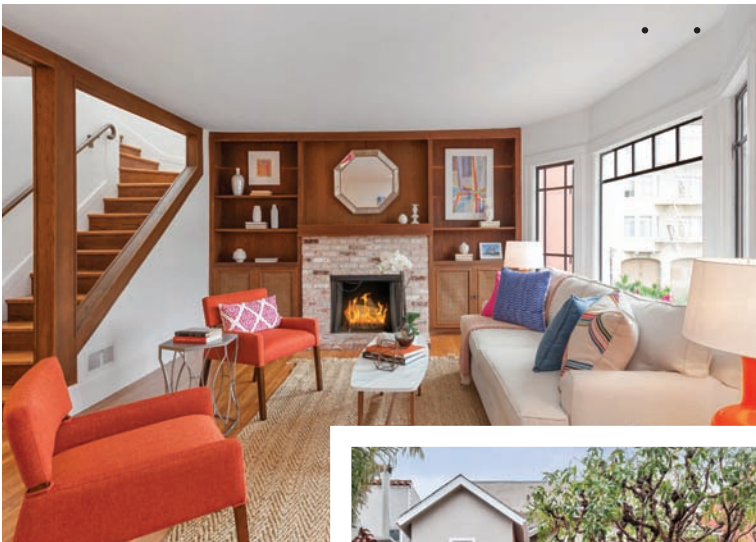
Rain or shine, business owners have solutions they know will make their companies more likely to thrive. Look forward for future pieces on specific strategies to improve conditions for business growth throughout Cow Hollow, the Marina, North Beach, and the entire Northside.

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From the District 2 Supervisor ∴ Numbers

Bold action on homelessness

A multifaceted approach to dealing with over 7,000 homeless in the city

BY CATHERINE STEFANI

ON THE EVENING OF THURSDAY, Jan. 24, I joined dozens of volunteers traveling the streets of San Francisco conducting the biennial homeless count. The purpose of the count is simple but imperative: determine the number of homeless people living in San Francisco. I walked the streets of the Marina to help figure out how many people live in shelters, in their cars, and on our streets. The findings of the count will take months to finalize, but I do not need the data to know the number of people living on our streets — some barely surviving — is inexcusable.

Homelessness has been a problem in San Francisco for decades, with thousands living on our streets. In the most recent count from 2017, 7,499 people were homeless in San Francisco, only slightly higher than the number in 2005. However, only looking at a single night's count severely understates the severity of the problem. In reality, over 20,000 people may experience homelessness in San Francisco each year.

Regardless of the numbers, homelessness in San Francisco is a crisis. Too many people have said it is the worst it has ever been, and based on what I see, I agree.

We've had some small wins in the fight to help people living on the streets. While other West Coast cities such as Seattle and Los Angeles have seen homeless populations rise exponentially over the last several years, San Francisco has been able to keep the total population relatively stable.

The Online Navigation and Entry System (ONE) — a new tracking program implemented in the fall — registered 3,452 adults, nearly doubling its goal ahead of schedule. These are small wins though, and the severity of this problem requires drastic change.

TAKING ACTION

Homelessness in San Francisco is a humanitarian crisis. There is no silver bullet solution for that, but there are steps that are needed for progress.

1,000 beds by 2020. San Francisco actually has similar rates of homelessness to other major cities such as New York, Boston, and Washington, D.C. The major difference is more than half of the homeless people in San Francisco are unsheltered, living on the streets and in cars. The waitlist for emergency shelter has more than 1,000 people, and people can wait more than a month for a bed. San Francisco needs more short-term

emergency shelter and Navigation Center beds to ensure people are sheltered.

In response, Mayor Breed has called for 1,000 additional beds by 2020, nearly doubling the current number of emergency shelter beds, and I am doing everything I can at the Board of Supervisors to make this a reality.

Mayor Breed has called for nearly doubling the number of emergency shelter beds.

I recently cosponsored legislation declaring a shelter crisis and streamlining the construction of new shelter beds and expansion of services. We need bold and swift action to respond to this crisis, and more shelter is a key component.

Conservatorship. One of the reasons I believe the homeless crisis has become so severe is more people are living on the street with mental health and substance abuse issues. These people need more than just shelter and case management; they need comprehensive services and long-term treatment. Conservatorship, recently authorized by SB1045 by the state, expands the city's ability to mandate these services when a person is unable to care for himself or herself. In this time when more people living on the streets than ever need serious help, the number of people in the city's conservatorship programs has actually decreased. I have co-sponsored legislation to implement expanded conservatorship in San Francisco and look forward to passing it early this year.

My staff and I have worked extensively with SFPD, Public Health, and the Department of Homelessness on plans for a few high-needs individuals living on the streets in District 2. For these people, conservatorship is a vital tool to ensure they get help. Conservatorship will not help every person living on our streets and in our shelters, but it will get help to those who are repeatedly in and out of the hospital, a danger to themselves or others, and in the

San Francisco has similar rates of homelessness to other major cities.

most critical need of help. **Pushing for accountability and effectiveness.** In the coming weeks, I am holding a hearing on the coordination of services for homeless individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues. Too often, I have heard of or personally witnessed a person with an acute need — dangerous drug use or psychiatric episode — enter services through a 5150 hold only to end up back on the street days later.

This hearing will focus on how these departments work together to provide a holistic solution for all of a homeless individual's needs. The departments involved in supporting this person are numerous: SFPD picks them up, Public Health treats and stabilizes them, Home-

DISTRICT 2 SUPERVISOR, continued on 8

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From the District 3 Supervisor ∴ Power players

Next steps for clean, safe, and affordable energy independence

BY AARON PESKIN

LAST MONTH, I INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION urging the state not to succumb to yet another corporate bailout, after the legislature approved a partial bailout plan last year that will likely force ratepayers to absorb at least some of the 2017 fire costs, to say nothing of the potential costs to 2018 fire victims. As the federal government continues to bail out corporations while shutting down the means of survival for millions of public sector workers, California must stand with its residents — and finally stand up to big utilities.

I also introduced a supplemental appropriation last month that would dedicate \$50 million in surplus property tax to beginning the process of energy and infrastructure independence from PG&E here locally. Last June, the voters of San Francisco

libraries, while offering reliable clean energy to new mixed affordable housing projects. It is the first step in fulfilling the will of the voters, but also in building out new affordable neighborhoods that would otherwise be held hostage by PG&E delays. As we recently learned in hearings at the Board of Supervisors, PG&E's costly demands and refusal to work with the city are currently holding up more than 1,000 units of affordable housing, with more delays projected in the pipeline. Meanwhile, PG&E rates continue to go up while service declines. We must begin the process of constructing our own transmission and delivery infrastructure to protect safe, affordable, and reliable energy delivery to thousands

of San Franciscans and public agencies.

Finally, I am working with the SFPUC to initiate a city acquisition of PG&E infrastructure, much of which will have to be assessed for

We must begin the process of constructing our own transmission and delivery system.

overwhelmingly passed my Proposition A: Clean, Safe, and Affordable Energy measure, which gave the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) the ability to finance the build-out of clean power facilities — just like they've been doing reliably with our aging water and sewer system for almost a hundred years. (In fact, they recently finished their massive \$4.5 billion Water and Sewer Improvement Project on-time and on-budget — no small feat.)

This \$50 million allocation would help build a San Francisco owned-and-operated substation in the southeast of the city, which would power public infrastructure like SFMTA, schools, and

safety and reliability. (Who remembers the PG&E substation fire in 2016 that revealed serious deficiencies in the corporation's safety protocols and communication with the city?) The SFPUC not only has a more cost-effective clean power program, they have a solid safety track record and have taken preventative steps, from cutting back trees upcountry to creating redundancy systemwide.

The Trump administration and climate change deniers are the same people pushing for local rate payers to foot the bill for corporate greed and malfeasance. It's time for San Francisco to lead the state and the nation in energy independence and put rate payers first.

District 2 Supervisor continued from 6

lessness oversees potential housing, and Adult and Aging Services coordinates benefits for food and health care. Each department must be accountable for their responsibilities or the entire system fails, and people return to homelessness rather than getting help.

Prioritizing resources. Last, I am going to examine the city's supportive housing network to ensure resources are effectively used and prioritized for those who need them the most.

The chronically homeless, those who have been homeless for a year or more and suffer from substance abuse and mental health issues, will not get back on a healthful path with just a few nights in a shelter bed. These people need stable housing, case management, treatment, and a path to opportunities. Supportive housing, housing coupled with case managements and services, is one of the most proven tools for getting these people off the streets and back on track.

San Francisco has the most supportive housing per capita of any city in the United States but still not nearly enough to house every person living

on our streets. We must prioritize these resources for the people who truly need them using the ONE system and its data. Additionally, we must ensure the different groups managing supportive housing are providing high quality services and helping people onto a better path. The city needs to replicate the best models and buildings and fix the ones that are not working.

A long-term, regional solution. Homelessness has been a problem in San Francisco, and our country, for decades. Cities and towns all across the Bay Area have had too many people living on our streets. San Francisco cannot fix this on its own. The policies I am fighting for will push us in the right direction, shelter more people, and hopefully lower the homeless population when the next homeless count occurs. Ultimately though, the solution to homelessness will require a large-scale, regional effort. California and the federal government both need to act to address the factors causing homelessness, and throughout my term as supervisor I will strongly advocate for programs at this level. Homelessness is not San Francisco's problem alone, and San Francisco alone cannot provide a solution.



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The Tablehopper :: New hot spots



Scallop and Bordier butter at Verjus. PHOTO: TOLLESON

Verjus opens from the founders of Quince; Spanish cuisine on Russian Hill

BY MARCIA GAGLIARDI

Here are the latest restaurant happenings in the Northside:

JACKSON SQUARE

Now open in Jackson Square is **Verjus** (528 Washington Street) from Michael and Lindsay Tusk of Quince and Cotogna, and new managing partner Matt Cirne. It's a French-inspired cave à manger (which means "eat in a cellar"), and includes a wine bar, wine shop, and conserva bar, with a retail shop offering vintage housewares and kitchen items.

It's the most casual of their ventures to date: no reservations, and you even order at a counter; similar to a pintxos bar of San Sebastián, or a cicchetteria in Venice, where you can drop in for a bite and glass or two, and grab a bottle to bring home. The wine selection will highlight small-scale, independent, organic wines, natural wines, and wines with a strong sense of terroir, Champagne, wines from overlooked terroirs, and more.

The all-day (and daily changing) menu from chef Michael Tusk and chef de cuisine David Meyer (The French Laundry, The Progress, and In Situ) will lean on French charcuterie such as pâtés en croûte, rillettes, and terrines, along with boudin blanc or noir, duck confit, Dungeness crab tartine, and a daily omelette with seasonal produce from Fresh Run Farm in Bolinas. The selection of tinned fish and shellfish in the conserva bar will be available to eat with bread, lemon, olive oil, salsa verde, and pimentón.

The historic space dates to the 1850s, when it was the Eclipse Champagne Building, and Verjus occupies two formerly separate and now connected spaces at 528 and 550 Washington Street, flanking Hotaling Place Alley. The stylish design is inspired by France in the 1950s–60s, with mid-century modern Luigi Caccia Dominioni and Gino Sarfatti light fixtures, and Pierre Chapo vintage tables and chairs, all under a lacquered burgundy ceiling. The music is a soundtrack of yé-yé pop, jazz, and more.

Monday–Thursday 4:30–10 p.m., Friday–Saturday 4:30 p.m.–midnight (bar à vin); Monday–Thursday 11:30 a.m.–7:30 p.m., Friday–Saturday 11 a.m.–7:30 p.m. (la cave); lunch coming soon.

RUSSIAN HILL

Last year, I broke the news that Zarzuela was closing after 24 years, and that **Abrazo** (2000 Hyde Street, 415-872-9239) was opening in its place. Chef-owner Michael Pawlik (Frascati) and his girlfriend and

co-owner Amanda Banks Barker (Mamanoko) opened it over the holidays. The updated menu has primarily Spanish dishes (you'll still find octopus, but there's also a scallop tartare), and you'll enjoy a refreshed restaurant inside. Monday–Saturday 5:30–10 p.m., Sunday 5:30–9 p.m.

Coming to Polk Street in the former location of recently closed The Pour House is **El Lopo** (1327 Polk Street), a Spanish-inspired, food-forward wine bar (through a California lens). Owner Daniel Azarkman's concept is inspired by imagining if California remained a Spanish colony — what would our food look like? So the wines will be focused on Spanish varieties grown in California, along with some Spanish vermouth (on tap), sherries, and wines, plus beers.

The snacks will have some Spanish ingredients and inspiration — past dishes from his summer pop-ups included a Galician-inspired empanada of pork picadillo, yellow peaches, and sweet peppers, topped with romesco; fig and ham toast with mission figs, jamón serrano, and queso fresco on Jane fig and walnut bread; and roasted Mary's chicken wings in a sauce of almond butter, saffron, and oloroso sherry. Azarkman is working with the Butcher's Local Union 510 on making custom Spanish charcuterie, starting with a hard chorizo. There will also be canned seafood (like mussels and sardines) that will be served lightly embellished (think soft-boiled egg, greens, and bread).

Azarkman was most recently working with Off the Grid for six years, helping entrepreneurs launch their own food businesses the past three years, and was inspired to give it a go himself — he was also an intern for Tablehopper some years ago, so it's fun to see this happening.

An opening is planned around Feb. 1 as a bar with a limited menu (room temperature items like canned seafood, salads, and charcuterie), and once some permits come through, the full food menu will start. The rustic space will have 48 seats, with a long bar. 4 p.m.–midnight (limited menu), 5–11 p.m. (full menu, coming soon).

A switcheroo: **Seven Hills** will be moving from its cozy digs with a tiny kitchen into the Stones Throw space (1896 Hyde Street) after the seismic retrofit is finished this year. Look for an expanded menu and more.

Marcia Gagliardi writes a popular insider weekly e-column, *Tablehopper*, about the San Francisco dining and imbibing scene; get all the latest news at tablehopper.com. Follow @tablehopper on Twitter and Instagram for more culinary finds.

Back Story

continued from 1

France began to sweeten cacao beverages with honey or sugar, and suddenly hot chocolate was all the rage across Europe.

In the 1800s, Dutch chemist Coenraad Johannes added alkaline salts to chocolate and then created a press that removed half the natural fat from roasted cacao beans to make cacao powder known as Dutch chocolate. Englishman Joseph Fry made solid chocolate by mixing a paste of sugar, chocolate liquor, and cacao butter. Other chocolate makers including Lindt, Nestle, and Cadbury continued to refine chocolate, and in 1893, Milton S. Hershey began to produce chocolate-covered caramels and later, its famous chocolate kisses in America.

HEART-SHAPED HISTORY

The history of Valentine's Day is a bit murky. The name is attributed to a Roman temple priest named Valentine, who was beheaded on Feb. 14 for helping Roman soldiers wed during a time when Emperor Claudius II had forbidden Christian marriages. One legend contends before his death, while imprisoned, he fell in love with the jailor's daughter, and sent her a letter signed, "From your Valentine." By the middle ages, Valentine's Day was celebrated in February to commemorate his death and perhaps to Chris-

tianize a pagan ceremony called Lupercalia. Mid-February was also linked to the beginning of birds' mating season and thus its link to love and romance.

U.K.-based Cadbury is credited with designing the first heart-shaped candy box during the Victorian era so when all the chocolates were eaten, the boxes could then be used to save handwritten love notes associated with Valentine's Day. The candy boxes became more and more elaborate, featuring lace, flowers, satin, and bows. By the late 1800s, American chocolate companies began packaging their sweets in heart-shaped boxes for Valentine's Day. Some say chocolate, once again, is an aphrodisiac, hence its popularity on this day.

CHOICE CHOCOLATES

San Francisco is a city of chocolate lovers, and if you're searching for a special Valentine's Day gift, you don't have to go very far. Located in Cow Hollow, **Ginger Elizabeth Chocolates** is a female-run company that crafts fanciful, luxurious bonbons, macarons, chocolate bars, and hot chocolate. Bonbon flavors range from butter-milk-lime and bergamot-pale ale to peanut butter-graham cracker, and chocolate bars are studded with dried fruit, nuts, toffee, or cookie crumbles. All of its ingredients are sourced from fair-trade producers and are mostly organic. For Valentine's



Valentine's "Entremet" cake by Ginger Elizabeth Chocolates.

PHOTO: COURTESY GINGER ELIZABETH CHOCOLATES.

Day, Ginger Elizabeth offers a 12-piece heart-shaped chocolate box filled with a variety of bonbons for \$30 and an "Entremet" red velvet cake with chocolate crèmeux, cream cheese frosting, and crème fraîche stracciatella mousse for \$45 (3108 Fillmore Street, 415-671-7113, gingerelizabeth.com).

The Ferry Building boasts two of the city's favorite chocolate purveyors: **Recchiuti Confections** and Dandelion Chocolate. Recchiuti specializes in deli-

cately decorated and elaborately flavored single-origin chocolates, often infused with herbs like lavender and lemon verbena. Handmade truffle boxes are available for Valentine's Day, as well as boxes that include collections of chocolate bars meant to enjoy with red wine or whiskey. A "love letters" truffle box with nine burnt-caramel truffles with semisweet chocolate, decorated with a love theme is \$28 (One Ferry Building, Shop #30, 415-834-9494, recchiuti.com).

Dandelion Chocolates, founded in the Mission, has become one of the Bay Area's best-known makers of craft chocolate. With a second location in the Ferry Building, Dandelion uses only cocoa beans and organic cane sugar to make its chocolate bars. While known for its variety of bars crafted from beans from around the world, Dandelion also makes treats like chocolate-covered almonds, black sesame toffee brittle, and hot chocolate mix. A wrapped gift set of three Dandelion chocolate bars is \$30 (One Ferry Building, 415-349-0942, dandelionchocolate.com).

Former Fringale chef Jean-Marc Gorce founded **Xox Truffles** in North Beach so he could share his passion for chocolate. His store on Columbus Avenue offers truffles in 15 flavors, including crowd pleasers such as espresso, coconut, Kahlua, and Earl Grey. Xox even makes vegan chocolates. The small, colorful shop also serves coffee and espresso drinks. A 12-piece gift box of truffles is \$13 (754 Columbus Avenue, 415-421-4814; xoxtruffles.com).

Heart-shaped or not, a delectable box of chocolates for your Valentine is easy to find. And for those who love convenience, gifts are all available online, but a visit to a store is much more fun.

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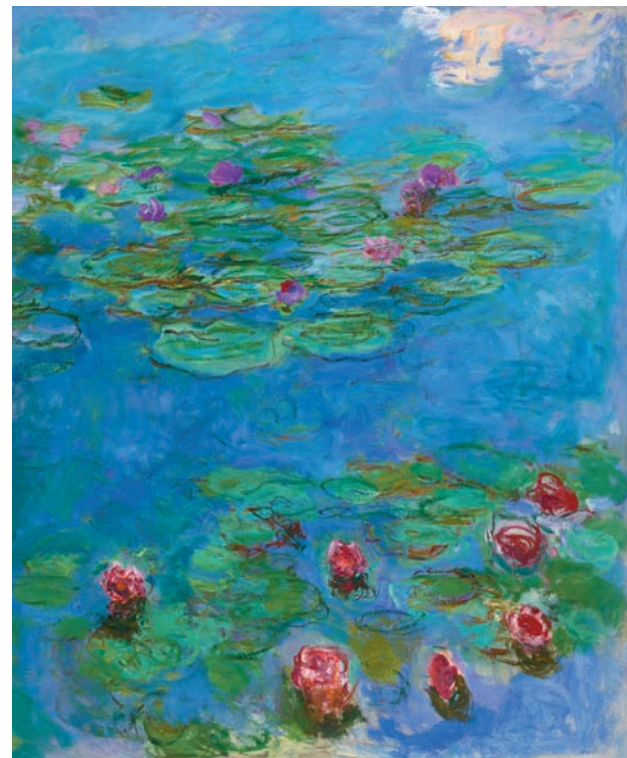
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Left: Detail of Anonymous *Monet in His Garden at Giverny*, 1921, Autochrome; Right: Claude Monet's *Water Lilies*, ca. 1914-17; oil on canvas. IMAGES COURTESY OF THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO

Art World

continued from cover

introspective imagery. Limitations create alternate possibilities, and the adversity of Monet's cataracts created a new way of seeing in works like *Path under the Rose Arches*. In this painting, the canvas explodes in swirling pigment as dappled light penetrates the arch of blossoms overhead. These paintings seem to be ancestors to modern abstract paintings reminiscent of early Jackson Pollock. This approach continues in *Wisteria* and *The Artist's House Seen from the Rose Garden*, in which the subject matter dissolved into heavy, wide, brightly colored brushstrokes.

LARGE-SCALE FLORALS AND MURALS

The exhibition is arranged thematically, opening with paintings from the late 1890s and early 1900s, and includes those of the Japanese footbridge installed over Monet's

newly created lily pond and house, the future sources of his inspiration. The next period, between 1914 and 1919, takes the museumgoer to Monet's return to painting after a hiatus following the death of his wife, Alice, and his son Jean. Water lily paintings from this period, juxtaposed with large-scale floral studies from the evolution of his garden, illustrate his ongoing studies of the natural world. Works such as *Day Lilies*, *Agapanthus*, and *Yellow Iris* in addition to *Water Lilies* are among the 20 paintings on loan from the Musée Marmottan Monet in Paris.

Next, the exhibition explores Monet's ambitions as a muralist. After 1916, the artist began to work in a vast studio building constructed to house his ambitious, large-scale work. Some of these canvases, measuring between 14 and 20 feet wide, formed a series of mural-style paintings now known as the *Grandes Decorations*. *Agapanthus*, on loan from the St. Louis Art Museum, measures more than 6 by

14 feet — the expanse of which creates an immersive viewing experience.

SMALLER-SCALE LATE GARDEN SERIES

The exhibition concludes with paintings from Monet's late garden series, several on view in the United States for the first time. Here, we find Monet returning to smaller panels on the scale of his famous series paintings from the 1890s and early 1900s. He returned to the familiar motifs on his property, including the Japanese bridge and the rose-covered trellises. The most distinctive aspect of "Monet: The Late Years" is this showcasing of late period works in greater numbers than ever before attempted. These include seven studies of the Japanese bridge at Giverny, and six portrayals of a tree with a twisted trunk and gnarled branches. Also included is *Weeping Willow*, a painting from 1918-19 that mournfully represents the fallen French soldiers of World War I.

After his death in December 1926, Claude Monet's house and garden were eventually renovated and opened for tourists and remain a major international travel attraction in Giverny. The constraints of old age, sickness, and grief can impose the sense that possibilities for personal achievement are narrowing. Monet's late paintings exist as a kind of rebellion against personal challenges that could have easily turned into self-pity and resignation. Like Beethoven composing music after his hearing had failed, great artists help us understand that creativity transcends the limits of the human condition and proves that we are not defined by our circumstances.

"Monet-The Late Years": Tue.-Sun., 9:30 a.m.-5:15 p.m. Feb. 16-May 27, \$35, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Dr., 415-750-3600, famsf.org

Sharon Anderson is an artist and writer in Southern California. She can be reached at mindtheimage.com.

The Best of Books :: What's flying off the shelves

The Marina Books Inc. best-seller list

COMPILED BY BRIAN PETTUS

1. **Becoming**, by Michelle Obama (hardcover)
2. **Educated: A Memoir**, by Tara Westover (hardcover)
3. **Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in Silicon Valley**, by John Carreyrou (hardcover)
4. **Asymmetry: A Novel**, by Lisa Halliday (paperback)
5. **Clean Plate**, by Gwyneth Paltrow (hardcover)
6. **Less**, by Andrew Sean Greer (paperback)
7. **The Place You're Supposed to Laugh**, by Jenn Stroud Rossmann (paperback)
8. **Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine: A Novel**, by Gail Honeyman (paperback)
9. **One Day in December: A Novel**, by Josie Silver (paperback)
10. **My Own Words**, by Ruth Bader Ginsburg (paperback)

FEBRUARY 2019 RELEASES

On the Come Up, by Angie Thomas (Feb. 5)

This is the highly anticipated second novel by Angie Thomas,

the author of the No. 1 *New York Times* best-selling, award-winning *The Hate U Give*. Sixteen-year-old Bri wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time. Or at least win her first battle. As the daughter of an underground hip-hop legend who died right before he hit big, Bri has massive shoes to fill. She soon finds herself at the center of a controversy, portrayed by the media as more menace than M.C. But with an eviction notice staring down her family, Bri doesn't just want to make it — she has to — even if it means becoming the very thing the public has made her out to be.

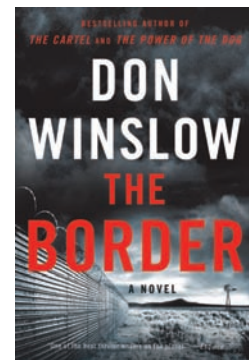
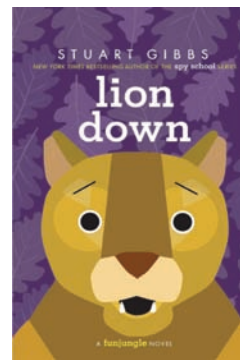
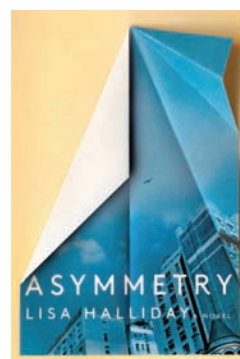
Black Leopard, Red Wolf, by Marlon James (Feb. 5)

In the stunning first novel in Marlon James's Dark Star trilogy, myth, fantasy, and history come together to explore what happens when a mercenary is hired to find a missing child. Drawing from African history and mythology and his own rich imagination, James has written a novel unlike anything that's come before it: a

saga of breathtaking adventure that's also an ambitious, involving read. Defying categorization and full of unforgettable characters, *Black Leopard, Red Wolf* is both surprising and profound as it explores the fundamentals of truth, the limits of power, and our need to understand them both.

Lion Down, by Stuart Gibbs (Feb. 25):

For once, operations at the enormous zoo/theme park appear to be running smoothly (except for the occasional herring-related mishap in the penguin exhibit), and Teddy Fitzroy is finally able to give detective work a rest. But then a local lion is accused of killing a famous dog, and the dog's owner, an inflammatory radio host, goes on a crusade to have the cat declared a nuisance so it can be hunted. But it looks like the lion might have been framed, and a renegade animal activist wants Teddy to help prove it. Soon, he finds himself wrapped up in the middle of his most bizarre, hilarious, and dangerous case yet.



Border, by Don Winslow (Feb. 26)

In a story that moves from deserts south of the border to Wall Street, from the slums of Guatemala to the marbled corridors of Washington, D.C., Winslow follows a new generation of narcos, the cops who fight them, the street traffickers, the addicts, the politicians, money launderers, real estate moguls, and mere children fleeing the violence for the chance of a life in a new country. A shattering tale of vengeance,

violence, corruption and justice, this last novel in Winslow's magnificent, award-winning, internationally best-selling trilogy is packed with unforgettable, drawn-from-the-headlines scenes. Shocking in its brutality, raw in its humanity, *The Border* is an unflinching portrait of modern America, a story of — and for — our time.

Brian Pettus is the manager of Books Inc. in the Marina (2251 Chestnut Street, 415-931-3633, booksinc.net/sfmarina).

The inevitability of the Oscars

BY MICHAEL SNYDER

IF IT'S MIDWINTER, WE SHOULD GEAR up for our annual visit from Oscar, 91 years old this year. In other words, the 91st annual presentation of the Academy Awards is scheduled to make Hollywood — specifically, the Dolby Theater on Hollywood Boulevard — the center of the known universe on the night of Sunday, Feb. 24. A lot of gold statuettes have been handed out to industry-approved recipients over the course of 90 years. And this month, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (the AMPAS, to its friends) will hand out a bunch more.

This year's nominees have been announced, and the usual suspects are represented. They encompass many of the movies, actors, and behind-the-camera folks already

recognized in critics' polls and early annual prizes such as the Screen Actors Guild Awards and even that booze-fueled circus presented by the ever-questionable Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the Golden Globes.

Although I repeatedly bleat my disdain for all the self-congratulatory extravaganzas that pit artist against artist in competition for baubles, the Oscars are as inescapable and inevitable as a traffic jam on the Los Angeles freeways — and usually as mind-numbingly tedious. And for anyone who covers the movie industry in a professional capacity, this

particular pageant of glitter, glamour, and gladhanding must be endured, addressed, and discussed. It's my beat, and like it or not, I will be sitting there in front of a TV screen or laptop, along with millions of other viewers across the globe.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON ... AND ON AND ON

I do have certain caveats. I have little interest in and no intention of watching the preshow with vapid mannequins asking more talented mannequins the deathless question, "Who are you wearing?" I've always hoped someone would show up with a baby carrier slung over a tux or gown and answer, "My newborn child." One of these days, we might see a nominee on the red carpet with a ferret draped around his or her shoulders.

I'm not counting on it when, in recent years, the countdown to the actual event has become primarily about high-fashion designers using nominees as walking billboards. Celebrity-hungry gossip-consuming types and fashion magazine pundits will tune in and gobble it up. I'll pass.

The show finally starts with the requisite monologue. That's when I normally begin to take interest, especially if the M.C. is someone with serious comedy chops — which is not the case this time in any way, shape, or form. Proposed host Kevin Hart bowed out due to some politically incorrect remarks that required the

One of these days, we might see a nominee on the red carpet with a ferret draped around his or her shoulders.



Viggo Mortensen and Mahershala Ali in *Green Book*. PHOTO: COURTESY UNIVERSAL PICTURES

notoriously unfunny actor-comedian to apologize to the movie industry and the public at large. The academy responded by deciding to go the no-host route, instead planning to just have the standard parade of stars emerge onto the stage, per usual, to read the nominations and call the winners — only without any kibitzing by an M.C. Regardless of how it goes, you can still expect the broadcast to run overtime, even without the monologue and generally awful interstitial comedy bits that the master or mistress of ceremonies normally undertakes.

GRUDGING ACCEPTANCE

In previous years, I have been asked to handicap the event beforehand or appraise it in the aftermath, or both — and if asked again, I will agree to do either or both, despite any misgivings. To be fair, the Academy Awards do celebrate the art of film in a grander and more high-profile manner than any other single event throughout the year. If you love cinema (and I believe that most if not all movie reviewers do), you'd best pay attention to what happens on Oscar night. For better or worse, the nominations and wins have a major impact on

movie industry careers (actors, directors, screenwriters, and others), and box office performance.

The ultimate irony is that all of my protestations invariably amount to nothing as the trophy presentations begin. That's when the knee-jerk satisfaction kicks in if one of my favorites wins and the contempt bubbles up at the sight of an unworthy victor. I may blanch at the idea of the Oscars as a contest, but if it's going to happen, I'd prefer to see genuine talent triumph. So I will be rooting for, among others, the glistening memory play *Roma*; the warm-hearted antisegregation period dramedy *Green Book*; and the unconventional tale of found family and urban survival in harsh economic times, *Shoplifters* — however they are nominated. The klieg lights will cut the night sky over Hollywood, and the Academy Awards will be given out. They might as well get it right.

Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture on Michael Snyder's Culture Blast, via GABnet.net, Roku, Spotify, and YouTube. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster

The Mostly British Film Festival comes into vogue

BY MICHAEL SNYDER

DESPITE THE GLUT OF film festivals in what seems like every town across the globe, a few stand out as industry-monitored launchpads for worthy movies that might otherwise fall through the cracks. Then, there are those that primarily exist to give cinephiles in a specific geographical area a chance to see a wide variety of quality films in one location over a concentrated length of time. The Mostly British Film Festival — in its 11th year — is the latter, unspooling for a week at the Vogue Theater (3290 Sacramento Street), and that's a great thing for those in and around San Francisco and more specifically, the Northside.

By name alone, the MBFF suggests a schedule with a relatively tight focus, but it offers a wide and impressive range of 26 new and classic feature films and documentaries from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, India, and South Africa, all up on the Vogue's screen from Feb. 14–21. The Northern California premiere of *The White Crow* — a bio-pic about the Russian ballet idol Rudolf Nureyev,



Action scene from *Swimming with Men*.

directed by actor Ralph Fiennes who also appears in the movie as the renowned dance instructor Pushkin — opens the festival on Feb. 14. *Peterloo*, acclaimed British director Mike Leigh's historical drama depicting a horrific 1819 massacre in England, closes the festival on Feb. 21. In between those provocative movies, the roster includes comedies, thrillers, and more dramas.

The diversity is evident with Irish filmmaker Lance Daly's *Black '47*, a brutal revenge tale set during the Great Famine,

alongside the jovial *Swimming with Men* about a crew of male synchronized swimmers, and the documentary *My Generation* with the legendary, genial, and witty actor Michael Caine reflecting on the swinging 1960s.

Among the special guests, Australian actress Radha Mitchell will be present in conjunction with her performances in two movies: *Celeste*, wherein she stars as an opera singer on the comeback trail, and *Flammable Children*, a 1970s-era coming-of-age film featuring Guy Pearce

and Kylie Minogue and written and directed by Stephan Elliot, creator of *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. Maxine Peake from the cast of *Peterloo* is slated as another guest of honor, and also happens to be the lead in *Funny Cow*, an inside look at the stand-up comedy scene.

Treasured revivals on the bill include a 25th-anniversary celebration screening of the comedy *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and a series of movies about British royalty, led by a digital restoration of the vintage *Rich-*

ard III, showcasing the great Shakespearean leading man Laurence Olivier.

Mostly British Film Festival: daily, Feb. 14–21; \$12.50–\$15/ticket, \$200–\$250/festival pass; Vogue Theatre, 3290 Sacramento St., mostlybritish.org

Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture on Michael Snyder's Culture Blast, via GABnet.net, Roku, Spotify, and YouTube. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster

FEBRUARY EVENTS

NOT TO MISS THIS MONTH

MAJOR EVENTS



S.F. Beer Week

Daily, Feb. 1–10
Various Bay Area venues
Brewski lovers unite: This event kicks off at Pier 35 with a gala of over 120 breweries pouring over 300 brews and features subsequent events/tastings from Windsor to Cupertino and points between. Additional events throughout the Bay Area; visit website for details/schedule. Bottoms up! sfbeerweek.org

PHOTO: FACEBOOK.COM/SFBEERWEEK

Chinese New Year Festival

Various days, Feb. 2–March 3
Various S.F. venues
Gung Hay Fat Choy! Celebrate the Year of the Pig with a street fair, flower fair, and more, including the colorful Chinese New Year Parade Feb. 23. Visit website for details/schedule, 415-982-3000, chineseparade.com

33rd Annual Tribal & Textile Arts Show

Thu.–Sun., Feb. 7–10, 11 a.m.
Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center
More than 70 international dealers and galleries will showcase rare historical and contemporary art by tribal cultures and indigenous peoples from the Americas, Africa, Asia, Oceania, Polynesia, Australia, and the Middle East. Proceeds benefit the de Young Museum. \$15 & \$25, sanfranciscotribalandtextileartshow.com

Tulipmania Festival

Daily, Feb. 9–18
Pier 39
Stroll down the pier and enjoy a spectacular and colorful display featuring over 39,000 tulips and seasonal garden favorites. Take a guided tour and learn helpful gardening tips. Visit website for self-guided tour information and additional details. Free, 415-705-5500, pier39.com

S.F. Chronicle Wine Competition Public Tasting

Saturday, Feb. 16, 1–4 p.m.
Festival Pavilion, Fort Mason Center
As the largest competition of U.S. wines in the world, this always-sold-out public tasting is a not-to-miss wine and food experience. \$70 & \$90, 650-548-6700, winejudging.com

AFFAIRS OF THE HEART

Victorian Valentine Cards Exhibition

Daily, Feb. 1–28
Main Branch, SFPL Library (100 Larkin Street)
Celebrate Valentine's Day all month with our display of Victorian Valentine cards, from Duane Weston Collection, Book Arts & Special Collections in the Grove Street entrance exhibit cases. Free, 415-557-4300, sfpl.org

BATS Improv: Crazy in Love

Saturday, Feb. 2, 9, 16, & 23, 8 p.m.
Bldg. B, Fort Mason Center
Enjoy a madcap romantic comedy inspired by the classic films of yesteryear as the players channel Hepburn, Tracy, and other classic couples from the golden age of movies while giving the action a contemporary spin. \$15–\$17, 415-474-8935, improv.org

36th Annual Dinner à la Heart

Tuesday, Feb. 5
Various S.F. restaurants
Enjoy a pre-fixe dinner (including wine and coffee/tea) at your choice of participating restaurants and help the Institute on Aging help low-income Bay Area seniors live independently. \$85–\$250, 415-750-3443, ioaging.org/event/dinner-a-la-heart/e200697

8th Annual Valentine Broadside Printing Event

Saturday, Feb. 9, 2–4 p.m.
S.F. History Center, S.F. Main Library
Come experience letterpress printing on the library's 1909 Albion hand press and take home a unique keepsake for your Valentine. All are welcome, but keepsakes are limited to first 100 participants. Free, 415-557-4560, sfpl.org

Valentine's Day Sock Hop

Saturday, Feb. 9, 7–10 p.m.
Presidio Officers' Club (50 Moraga Ave.)
Hop back to the 1950s and be there or be square for dancing with live music from The Ely Brothers & The Doubletake Band. Retro cocktails available for purchase from Arguello restaurant. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Free (with registration), 415-561-5300, eventbrite.com

Victorian Valentine Ball

Saturday, Feb. 9, 8–11 p.m.
Haas-Lilienthal House (2007 Franklin St.)
Step back in time and learn the Viennese Waltz, enjoy a buffet and candy bar, and play Victorian trivia games for prizes. Learn about love and courtship, and fall in love with suitable partners from the Victorian perspective. Costumes encouraged. Proceeds benefit maintenance/restoration of the house. \$35–\$145, eventbrite.com

Love Bites

Sat.–Sun., Feb. 9–10, 7 p.m.
Martuni's (4 Valencia St.)
Presented by the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of S.F., this year's hilarious anti-Valentine's Day cabaret will be full of laughs and amazing performances. \$20–\$25, 415-779-5428, lgcsf.org

Hearts in S.F.

Wednesday, Feb. 13, 6:30 p.m.
Pier 38
This cocktail reception/community dinner/dessert event supports mental health programming at Zuckerberg S.F. General Hospital and Trauma Center. Speakers include Representative Patrick J. Kennedy and Mayor London Breed. \$400, 415-206-5959, sfghf.org



Valentine's Day Crab Bender

Thursday, Feb. 14, 6:30–9:30 p.m.
Tacolicious (1548 Stockton St.)
Roll up your sleeves for a menu of Josey Baker bread, followed by Mexican-style clam chowder, winter chopped salad, roasted Dungeness crab, and horchata pot de crème paired with brews from Alameda's Faction Brewing. \$120, 415-649-6077, tacolicious.com

Lilan Kane: Classic Love Songs

Thursday, Feb. 14, 7 & 8:30 p.m.
Joe Henderson Lab, SFJazz (201 Franklin St.)
The Oakland soul singer and graduate of Boston's Berklee School of Music returns with an evening of classic love songs for Valentine's Day. \$35, 866-920-5299, sfjazz.org

Anti-Valentine's Day Power Ballad Sing-a-Long

Thursday, Feb. 14, 9:15 p.m.
Roxie Theatre (3117 16th St.)
For those who can't stand Valentine's Day, this is for you. Come sing the power ballads of Journey, Guns 'n Roses, Bon Jovi, Heart, and many more while holding lighters in the air, swaying, and pounding your fist at the sky in defiance of those who would dare not love you. \$13, 415-863-1087, roxie.com

ARTS & CULTURE

Black History Month Daily through February

S.F. Public Library, all branches
"More than a Month" celebrates Black history, culture, and heritage with special music, dance, crafts, and storytelling events, including film screenings and literary events for adults; interactive events for teens; hands-on activities for kids; and exhibits, music, and craft classes for the whole family. Visit website for schedule. Free, sfpl.org/?pg=2001053001

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

Vija Celmins

Wed.–Mon. through March 31, 10 a.m.
SFMOMA (151 Third St.)
For more than five decades Celmins has been creating subtle, exquisitely detailed renderings of natural imagery — including oceans, desert floors, galaxies, and night skies—and surveying how we perceive these vast visual expanses. This exhibition features nearly 150 works, including paintings, drawings, and sculptures. \$25, 415-357-4000, sfmoma.org

Joan Jonas: They Come to Us Without a Word

Wed.–Sun. through March 10
The Interval, Fort Mason Center
This installation incorporates Jonas's iconic blend of performance, video art, drawing and sculpture to create an immersive, multipart journey that addresses the fragility of the natural world. Free (reservations recommended) 415-345-7500, fortmason.org

Kimono Refashioned

Tue.–Sun., Feb. 8–May 5, 10 a.m.
Asian Art Museum (200 Larkin St.)
Kimono materials, forms, techniques, and decorative motifs have inspired designers for more than 150 years. Featuring over 35 garments from the Kyoto Costume Institute, this exhibition demonstrates that kimonos continue to be a source of ideas for contemporary designers across the globe. \$25, 415-581-3500, asianart.org

THEATER

S.F. Playhouse: A White Girl's Guide to International Terrorism

Thu.–Sat. through March 2
Children's Creativity Museum Theater (221 Fourth St.)
Blaze's YouTube channel attracts a mysterious commenter whose words point to a brighter alternative, a dangerous Google search away from unfathomable consequences in this fictionalized epic of a hidden reality in post 9/11 America, where poverty is the battle and misinformation is the weapon. \$30, 415-677-9596, sfplayhouse.org

ACT: Her Portmanteau

Saturday, Feb. 15–March 30, 3–10 p.m.
Strand Theater (1127 Market St.)
Traveling from Lagos to visit her mother and American-born sister for the first time, Inibasi arrives to some chilling truths. As Nigerian traditions clash with American realities, the family is forced to confront its literal and emotional baggage and its painful legacies across language, continents, and cultures. \$25–\$85, 415-749-2228, act-sf.org

SHN: Hello Dolly

Tue.–Sun., Feb. 19–March 17
SHN Golden Gate Theatre (1 Taylor St.)
Fans won't want to miss this multiple Tony Award-winning classic with Broadway legend Betty Buckley starring in S.F. native Carol Channing's most famous role. \$56–\$256, 888-746-1719, shnsf.com

DANCE

S.F. Ballet: Kaleidoscope

Various days, Feb. 12–23
War Memorial Opera House
Enjoy Balanchine's Kaleidoscope: Divertimento No.15 with Milleped's Appassionata and Dawson's Anima Animus. \$29–\$375, 415-865-2000, sfballet.org

15th Annual Black Choreographers Festival

Sat.–Sun., Feb. 16–17 & 23–24
Dance Mission Theater (3316 24th St.)
Celebrate Black History Month with a host of premieres featuring unique and dynamic performances. Visit website for programs and featured choreographers. \$15, 415-826-4441, dancemissiontheater.org



Jessica Lang Dance

Thu.–Sat., Feb. 28–March 2
YBCA (701 Mission St.)
Jessica Lang's work draws equally from modern dance and ballet, transforming and redefining movement with stunning visuals and emotional engagement. Saturday's performance is a family matinee with a different program; visit website for details. \$25–\$70, ybca.org

PHOTO: YBCA.ORG

MUSIC

Wooden Fish Ensemble

Sunday, Feb. 10, 4 p.m.
Old First Church (1751 Sacramento St.)
Known for their innovative juxtapositions of Eastern and Western music, old and new, and traditional and avant-garde/experimental sounds, Wooden Fish Ensemble performs works by Hyo-shin Na and Galina Ustvolskaya alongside folk songs from Korea and Japan. \$25, 415-474-1608, oldfirstconcerts.org

Chinese New Year Concert & Dinner

Saturday, Feb. 16, 5 p.m.
Davies Symphony Hall
This vibrant event draws upon Asian traditions, past and present. Enjoy the festival reception's host of activities followed by a performance of Eastern and Western repertoire by the symphony. Continue the festivities after the concert at the dramatic and glamorous Imperial Dinner. \$40–\$70 (concert), \$500 & up (dinner), 415-864-6000, sfsymphony.org

Presidio Interfaith Center Concert: Where Freedom Rings

Sunday, Feb 17, 4–5 p.m.
Presidio Chapel (130 Fisher Loop)
Celebrate the music of African American composers with soprano Yolanda Rhodes, vocalist/pianist LaDoris Cordell, pianists Josephine Gandolfi and Deane Rucker, and violinist Susan C. Brown. Free, 415-561-3930, presidio.gov

27th Annual Noise Pop Music & Arts Festival

Daily, Feb. 25–March 3
Various S.F. & East Bay locations
S.F.'s favorite indie music, arts, and film festival returns. Visit website for schedule. \$12–\$35/individual tickets, \$188–\$850/festival badge. 415-375-3370, noisepopfest.com

NIGHTLIFE

Brooke Evers

Saturday, Feb. 9, 10 p.m.–3 a.m.
Temple Nightclub (540 Howard St.)
Glammy D.J. Brooke Evers has made a career playing at some of the most notable supper clubs in her home country of Australia, and she's now working directly with songwriters on original music. \$20, 415-312-3668, templesf.com

Anthony Gomes

Wednesday, Feb. 13, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m.

Biscuits & Blues (401 Mason St.)

Toronto's singer-songwriter-guitarist Anthony Gomes brings his virtuosic, burning blues to San Francisco. \$24, 415-292-2583, biscuitsandblues.com

No Plans

Friday, Feb. 22, 10 p.m.–2 a.m.

Southside Spirit House (575 Howard St.)

Every fourth Friday Southside Spirit House presents "No Plans," with incredible music by inspiring local D.J.s. Start or end your night here. Late-night kitchen. Dance, drink, enjoy life. Free, 415-543-5874, southsidesf.com

FILMS & LECTURES



21st Annual SF Indiefest

Daily through Feb. 14

Roxie Theater (3117 16th St.)

Victoria Theater (2961 16th St.)

Feast on the best independent, alternative, and subversive cinema from around the world. \$13–\$15/individual films, \$40–\$250/festival passes, 415-662-3378, sfindie.com

PHOTO: THE UNICORN (2018), SFINDIE.COM

Salvator Mundi

Thursday, Feb. 21, 6 p.m.

The Commonwealth Club (110 The Embarcadero)

As the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death approaches, Leonardo expert Martin Kemp delves into Salvator Mundi, one of the fewer than 20 paintings by Leonardo, which sold for \$450 million in 2017. \$20, 415-597-6705, commonwealthclub.org

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

After Dark: Craft

Thursday, Feb. 7, 6–10 p.m.

Exploratorium

In a world increasingly synthetic, robotic, and removed from human touch, commune with the soul of things made by hand — yours or someone else's. Sip craft beer, experience the work of local craftspeople and meet them face to face, and get your own hands working on something new. Ages 18 & up; \$15–\$20, 415-528-4444, exploratorium.edu

67th Pacific Orchid Exposition

Fri.–Sun., Feb. 22–24

S.F. County Fair Bldg. (1199 Ninth Ave.)

The largest orchid show on the West Coast features thousands of blooms, and offers a diverse variety of orchids for sale. \$12/day, \$30/ three-day pass, pacorchidexpo.org

Financing the Future of Water

Thursday, Feb. 28, 6 p.m.

The Commonwealth Club (110 The Embarcadero)

For most Americans, water will be the primary way they experience the effects of climate changes: drought, floods, storm water, and wastewater discharges. Cynthia Koehler, executive director of WaterNow Alliance, will explore new options to finance strategies that ensure a resilient future for water flow. \$20, 415-597-6705, commonwealthclub.org

POTABLES & EDIBLES

Pints & Pretzel Making

Wednesday, Feb. 6, 6–8 p.m.

Almanac Beer Taproom (2704 24th St.)

Learn how to make delicious German pretzels while enjoying German-inspired lagers in this hands-on workshop. \$35, almanacbeer.com

Science of Cocktails

Friday, Feb. 8, 9 p.m.–midnight

Exploratorium

Celebrate the Exploratorium's 50th year with some of the Bay Area's best bartenders, and enjoy inventive libations, cocktail-related science programs, delectable bites, and much more. \$150 & up, 415-528-4444, exploratorium.edu

Lunar New Year Celebration

Tuesday, Feb. 5, 11 a.m.

Sur la Table

Get Lunar New Year off to a tasty start with dishes that represent luck, happiness, and fortune. You'll explore Chinese ingredients, and practice essential skills like wok sautéing, steaming, and stir-frying. \$59, 800-243-0852, surlatable.com

SPORTS & HEALTH

36th Annual S.F. Half Marathon

Sunday, Feb. 3, 8 & 8:10 a.m.

Golden Gate Park

Choose from a 5K, 10K, or full course in this scenic course selected several times as Road Race of the Year by the Road Runners Club of America. \$55–\$95, getfitkpsf.com

Brain Fitness & Longevity: Keep Your Mind Fit for Life

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

Cavallo Point – the Lodge at the Golden Gate, 601 Murray Circle, Sausalito, CA 94965

Learn how to keep your mind and memory vibrant at every life stage: how health habits affect memory, the relationship between diet and brain function, and more, including effective relaxation techniques. Free, RSVP to Debbie Coller at 415-339-2692, debbie@bluewavemedicine.com; cavallpoint.com

Magnolia Meditation

Sunday, Feb. 24, 10–11:30 a.m.

S.F. Botanical Garden (1199 Ninth Ave.)

Celebrate magnolias through mindful meditation. The program will include a docent presentation of some of the garden's most stunning magnolias followed by moving, walking, and stationary meditation. \$15, eventbrite.com

CHILD'S PLAY

Music Around the World: Influences of Africa

Saturday, Feb. 2, 2 p.m.

Davies Symphony Hall

Join the SF Symphony's Music for Families series on an exciting music tour celebrating African cultures, the spirit of jazz, and African American composers. Come early and collect stamps in your musical passport, enjoy the instrument petting zoo, coloring stations, and the conductor photo station. Ticket holders receive free online materials to enhance musical discovery at home. \$27–\$64 (half price for children), 415-864-6000, sfsymphony.org



Children's Theatre: Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

Saturday, Feb. 9 & 23 & March 2 & 16

Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center

All ages will enjoy this classic fairy tale of the jealous queen and the banished stepdaughter, who is then befriended by a family of dwarfs who help her find her true love. \$15 & \$18, 415-248-2677, ctasf.org

PHOTO: FACEBOOK.COM/CTASF

Lunar New Year Celebration for Families

Sunday, Feb. 17, 10:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Asian Art Museum (200 Larkin St.)

Enjoy dancing, art-making, storytelling, and an interactive lion dance performance. Learn about the zodiac calendar and Year of the Pig characteristics, have your name written in Chinese calligraphy, and more. Visit website for schedule. Free with admission (\$15), 415-581-3500, asianart.org

Family Matinee with the Cultural Heritage Choir

Saturday, Feb. 23, 11 a.m.

Miner Auditorium, SFJazz

The award-winning Cultural Heritage Choir trace the indelible folk music traditions of Odetta, Harry Belafonte, Lead Belly, and more, to celebrate the joy, wonder, and innocence of childhood. \$5–\$23, 866-920-5299, sfjazz.org

E-mail: calendar@marinatimes.com

Children's Theatre Association of San Francisco Presents

Snow White and the 7 Dwarfs

Sunday January 27 - 2pm
Saturdays Feb 9, 23 & March 2 10:30 am & 1pm
Saturday March 16 - 10:30 am

Musical theater for children
 Presented at the Cowell Theater
 Fort Mason Center
 Marina Blvd. at Buchanan
 San Francisco

Tickets
 \$15 children
 \$18 adults

For tickets and information
 visit www.ctasf.org
 or call (415) 248-2677
 or Facebook.com/CTASF

Director: Bill Starr
 Musical Director: Bill Keck
 Producers:
 Debi Curley
 Nancy Leavens

Produced by special arrangement with The Dramatic Publishing Company of Woodstock, Illinois

FEB 14 2019

UNION STREET

WINE WALK

VALENTINE'S DAY - LOVE AND WINE

Love and wine, a perfect pair. From Pam and Jim to Ellen and Portia, we are celebrating all of our favorite pairs from fiction to reality. We invite you to join us for a date night on Union street with lots of wine, shopping and of course, love.

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Outreach February 2019

Events for San Francisco Chinese New Year 2019 will take place soon—and you can't miss the Grand Parade on February 23! Starting on the corner of 2nd and Market streets, this parade is one of the largest Chinese New Year's celebrations in the world. People will come from near and far to help ring in the Year of the Pig. And if you're attending, Muni can help you get to there and back again, car-free. Save time and avoid crowds by purchasing your fare before boarding Muni with [MuniMobile](#)®. Skip the lines and buy tickets ahead of time or on the go, then activate when you are ready to ride. With MuniMobile, your phone is your fare.

FIND FREE TO LOW-COST IMMIGRATION LEGAL HELP IN SAN FRANCISCO

Visit the City of San Francisco's Immigrant Support Hub (immigrants.sfgov.org) to find immigration legal service providers that speak your language, are high quality, trusted, free to low-cost, and help you with your application fees. Get connected to information on immigration screenings, DACA, asylum, green card renewal, TPS, deportation counsel and much more at: immigrants.sfgov.org.

Come see your local government at work!

The Board of Supervisors hold weekly meetings most Tuesdays at 2:00 p.m. in Rm. 250 of San Francisco City Hall.

Upcoming Meetings:

- February 5
- February 12
- February 26
- March 5
- March 12
- March 19

Share Your Best Thinking

Attend public comment during the full Board of Supervisors meetings, or a Committee meeting held weekly in the Legislative Chamber or the Committee Room (Rm. 263 of San Francisco City Hall)

UNABLE TO ATTEND A COMMITTEE OR BOARD MEETING IN PERSON?

1. Watch the rebroadcast on Channel 26.
2. Watch live online at sfgovtv.org.
3. Obtain Agendas and Minutes at: sfbos.org/events/calendar/upcoming.

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In Person: Room 244, San Francisco City Hall #1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, SF, CA, 94102
Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

CNS-3213428#

The Adventures of Skylar Grey

Heaven help the ones who fly away

BY SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

*I'll take it year by year
Watching the dust go clear
We're all afraid to fear
Or to remember
How we remember
Heaven help the ones who fly away
Heaven help the ones who have to stay
and place the blame
Maybe what you think of me won't change
But I still
Hold on, hold on
Hold on to the old days*

— Ingrid Michaelson, "Old Days"

"You need to come soon," said the nurse. "Can you bring Blue? He keeps asking for Blue." Steve's pit bull-Lab had been with me since Steve was diagnosed with colon cancer in January 2018.

It was mid-September. The first round of chemotherapy was encouraging, shrinking the tumor by 50 percent. But now, the tumor was fighting back with a vengeance, blocking his intestines and spreading throughout his stomach. He aspirated and got pneumonia, all within a few days.

When Blue and I walked into his room, he weakly reached out, his hand covered with bruises from the many tubes and needles. He was down 30 pounds, his face gaunt, and his usually sparkling blue eyes, dull. He tried to smile. Blue tucked her tail between her legs. I gently nudged her toward the bed, and Steve was able to touch her briefly before she slunk away. "She's scared," I said. "I know," he said hoarsely. "Me too."

He clutched my hand, trembling. "Please take care of her, Suzie," he said. I squeezed his hand. "You know I will, Steve. I love Blue and so does Skylar. They're best friends, just like us ..." He told me he loved me, and I told him I loved him, too.

The night nurse came in and asked Steve how he was feeling. He said he was in a lot of pain so she increased the morphine drip. I held his hand as his eyes slowly closed. His breath was labored, and the nurse came over and hugged me. "This tumor is a bad one in a bad place," she said. "He's been suffering, but it won't be long now."

I sat down in a plastic chair, a little numb and a little lost as I stared out at the Golden Gate Bridge shrouded in fog. Blue went to Steve's bedside, stretched her neck to sniff the air, and then curled up under the window a foot away.

When I had visited a week ago, Steve said he was at peace with leaving his body as long as he knew Blue would be taken care of. We had a good laugh with the nurses about how it was my fault he had her in the first place. I had called Steve on a lovely summer day in 2009 when I was fostering three pit bull mix puppies for Rocket Dog Rescue. "Come meet my new puppies." He agreed, and I made a pitcher of martinis. "This little grey one is cute," he said. A few cocktails later, he went home with Blue.



Constant companions: Steve and his beloved pit bull mix, Blue.

I can't imagine my life without Steve. For nearly two decades we were friends, seeing each other through new loves and breakups. Even when those loves weren't reliable, our friendship always was. When my dad got dementia, Steve was my rock. He would bathe him because my dad didn't want me to. He would take him to the VA Hospital, where they would get haircuts and eat lunch. "I figure you could use a break," he would say.

When Jazzy's cancer returned, Steve was there when the veterinarian told me they couldn't save her. "Do you want to be there?" she asked. "She's already asleep,

so she won't know." I turned to Steve. "I can't ... that's not how I want to remember her." Steve wrapped me in a bear hug. "I'll go. I didn't get a chance to say goodbye." When he returned, I fell

Blue went to Steve's bedside, stretched her neck to sniff the air, and curled up a foot away.

into his arms crying uncontrollably. "She was wrapped in a warm blanket," he said through tears, "She went so peacefully."

It was Steve who Kickie called for during her last night. "You get some rest," he said stoically. The next day, he dealt with the nurses and the mortuary so I didn't have to.

There were many good times, too: Eating at a zillion restaurants for my reviews; sojourns with the dogs to Baker Beach and the Albany Bulb; spectacular trips, from Mendocino, Marshall, Half Moon Bay, and Carmel to Santa Monica, Venice Beach, and Marina Del Rey for my column about traveling with your dog.

"I think God is a dog. That's why Dog is God spelled backward," he said to me once while we watched the sunset at Crissy Field. As Steve took his final breaths, I knew his soul was with Dog, and a piece of my heart would fly away with him, never to return.

Email: susan@marinatimes.com

MomSense ∴ A screen in every pocket



Children are getting phones at younger ages, as this photo shows. PHOTO: WAVEBREAKMEDIA

Cell phones: A new rite of passage

BY LIZ FARRELL

THE CELL PHONE HAS BECOME A new rite of passage in our children's lives. It is not as exciting as a first step or learning to ride a bike, but it is life changing for them and for us as parents. It is a big decision, and children seem to be getting phones at a younger age. Research shows that on average children in the United States are 10 years old when they get their first smartphone.

After years of begging and several PowerPoint presentations prepared by my daughter, we recently decided the time had come and decided to give her a phone for her 13th birthday. I did a lot of prior research and thought I was prepared, but there have definitely been a few surprises. Here is what I have learned that might help ease this new rite of passage:

DETERMINE THE TIMING

How do you determine the right time? There is no magic age. It depends on the child, the family situation, and the need. There are a few considerations: Can your child take care of it? Smartphones are not cheap, so give your child a few responsibility tests to see if he or she can handle keeping track of and taking care of it. Does your child need it? Or just want it because it is "cool" or because a lot of other kids have one? For us, it came down to my daughter wanting some more independence and freedom to walk places and meet friends, and we felt more comfortable having her do this if she had a way to call us or call for help. You may find that with sports or other after-school activities a phone becomes necessary for safety.

Maturity level is another important consideration and whether your child can handle everything that comes with a smartphone — Internet browser, texting, and social media for teens.

SET LIMITS

One of my biggest fears and concerns has always been the idea of giving our child the "world in her pocket," but after a lot of research and determining what parental controls and limits we were going to put on the device and our daughter, it didn't seem as daunting. Most issues arise when parents just give their child a smartphone — which I like to equate with giving your children the keys to a car without teaching them how to drive. They need instruction, limits, and tools to navigate this new sense of freedom.

For us, I purchased the phone and set it up ahead of time, which included taking off or disabling apps and setting up parental controls. At her birthday dinner before she got the phone, she got an envelope with a contract in it — a two-page detailed contract outlining the rules, responsibilities, and expectations, including acceptable places (where and when) to use the phone. After she signed it, she was presented with the phone. My husband and I spent a lot of time on the contract, customizing it to fit our family and our lifestyle. This has been key and has helped eliminate many (not all) frustrations over her always having her nose in her phone.

A LIFE-CHANGING DECISION

This experience has been life changing both for her and for us as parents in both good and bad ways. This is a big decision and should not be taken lightly or done with little forethought. Once you give a phone to your child there is no turning back. I always thought, *how different can a phone be from an iPad — they do virtually all the same things?* Now having gone through the experience I can say they are very different. The biggest difference is that a phone is a pocket device that goes everywhere with your child, which makes

I spent a lot of time on the contract, customizing it to fit our family and our lifestyle.

it that much more important to set those limits about where and when it can be used. Nothing starts a fight faster in our backseat than one of them on a device when the other two don't have one. A pleasant surprise of my daughter having a phone is how easy and convenient it has been for me to communicate a change in plans or to coordinate a pick up.

Technology has changed how our children are growing up and how parents have to adapt. It is a huge part of their lives and how they are communicating and connecting with each other and with us. I believe in guided access — giving them a little bit at a time, similar to sugar. The kids who never have any and then do go crazy and then that's all they want, but in moderation everything is better. So whether you are trying to hold off as long as possible or contemplating this decision now, make sure to do your homework and be prepared.

Liz Farrell is the mother of three young children and the founder of TechTalks, a consulting group to help schools and families have productive and healthy conversations around social media and technology. Email: liz@marinatimes.com



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Office of Small Business
City Hall, Room 110

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 8AM-5PM
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The San Francisco Police Department wishes you a safe and happy 2019 and reminds you to Park Smart to help prevent auto burglaries:

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 - * Shopping? Hold onto your purchases until you leave. Thieves often watch parking lots to spot shoppers dropping bags off in their car.
 - * Visiting? Check luggage at your hotel- don't leave it in your auto.
- If your car has been burglarized, here's what to do:
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* Did the break-in already happen? Report the crime on the non-emergency line at 1-415-553-0123. You may request that an officer come to the scene. You can also call 3-1-1 and file a police report online at <https://sanfranciscopolice.org/reports>. Visit any San Francisco Police station to have your vehicle fingerprinted.

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Dr. Priscilla Chan says solving the housing crisis will take everyone's involvement.
PHOTO: ED RITGER

Age of the oligarchs

BY JOHN ZIPPERER

IN THIS HOUSING CRISIS, CAN THE BAY Area's billionaires do what its more humble citizens can not?

Marc Benioff told a gathering of techies in October that "there's a group of people in the city who are willing to give, and there's a group of people in the city who don't." He also told the *Guardian*, "We have 70 billionaires in San Francisco [regionally]. Not all of them are giving money away. A lot of them are just hoarding it."

Benioff of course was a major supporter of the voter-approved Proposition C, which will tax mid- to large-scale businesses in the city to provide several hundred million dollars more for the city's homeless efforts.

One billionaire couple that is putting its money where Benioff's mouth is is Dr. Priscilla Chan and husband Mark Zuckerberg. Their Chan Zuckerberg Initiative is part of a broad coalition of forces that is bringing \$500 million to the region's housing problem.

That's a lot of money. And it's only a drop in the bucket.

Housing in the Bay Area has become such a debacle of insufficient quantity, red tape, bureaucratic blocks, and community delays that we are hundreds of thousands of housing units below what is needed just to keep up with job growth. By at least one calculation, since 2011 there have been 531,000 jobs created in the Bay Area but only about 124,000 new housing units permitted.

That imbalance of course hurts almost everybody. People who are homeless are even less likely to find shelter; low- and middle-income alike struggle to find or keep housing, and often end up with long commutes (made even worse by policies that penalize driving and parking, even if they're just driving to a suburban BART station). Companies are hit by ever-higher wage demands to compensate for the cost of living here.

"It really has come to a point where we all need to get together and really think about that complex, comprehensive solution that we need in the Bay Area for everyone to thrive, especially the most vulnerable," Chan said in announcing the housing partnership.

You could, of course, build housing. Like several hundred thousand units of it, for example.

But so far, even stretch goals are inadequate. The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative group, which includes backing from the San Francisco Foundation, some tech

giants, and others, would build or preserve more than 8,000 homes in the Bay Area over the next decade.

You could build 8,000 new housing units in San Francisco alone *each year* for a decade and you wouldn't solve this problem. That's not to knock the groups behind this initiative; they genuinely deserve praise for bringing together policymakers, corporations, activists, affordable housing experts, and philanthropists to put some real money and expertise on the table.

It's just to say, as Benioff might, that it doesn't let others off the hook. It doesn't let other billionaires off the hook for solving the problem, it doesn't let legislators off the hook for helping create the problem and not solving it, and it doesn't let average citizens off the hook for hating change so much that they refuse to accept the logic that more people need more housing units in which to live.

A UC Berkeley study paper estimated that in the year 2000, it cost about \$265,000 per unit to build affordable housing in San Francisco. Nineteen mostly boom years later, you know that figure's higher, but just for a conservative estimate, \$265,000 times 400,000 missing units means a needed investment of about \$106 billion. No one is talking about that kind of money to really tackle this housing crisis.

I have previously cited Dr. Peter Linneman's comments about providing housing for populations — you can either stack them up, spread them out, or kill them (see "Something's gotta give," *Marina Times*, May 2015).

Let's ditch the third option as *of course* ridiculous. That leaves us with spread them out (they live in ever-more far-flung suburbs cleared from wilderness and wetlands) or stack them up (build tall). Though my personal preference is to spare the environment and build tall, I think the reality of California flight-from-reality politics is that we will end up doing both. But sooner or later, we'll have to. That's 400,000 units we're behind in the Bay Area alone; statewide it's even more.

New Gov. Gavin Newsom is reportedly making housing a priority of his first term in office. He has talked about committing \$500 million for middle-income housing, and he has challenged companies in the state to match that amount.

Good move, but it's still just two more drops in the bucket.

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