



Virtual Valentine's Day

Julie Mitchell on preparing food from afar. p. 6
Lynette Majer celebrates the return of romance with fun wines this Valentine's Day. p. 7



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Stanley Tucci and Colin Firth star in *Supernova*. PHOTO: COURTESY BLEECKER STREET

The shades of love on screen

BY MICHAEL SNYDER

SINCE CELLULOID BEGAN threading through projectors, the movie industry has banked on exploiting our love of love stories. That's continued today as digital code translates into sound and light for the purpose of mak-

ing our hearts swell and tear ducts leak. Over the decades, there's been no shortage of feature films about couples coming together in amusing or stressful circumstances, traversing comedic or dramatic gauntlets and, more often than not, attaining happy endings of one sort or another. And frequently the studios

and distributors take the obvious route of releasing such projects on or around Valentine's Day.

Movies about lovers are as de rigueur in mid-February as bouquets of flowers and boxes of chocolates. Director Garry Marshall actually built his 2010 ensemble comedy

SNYDER, continued on 9

REYNOLDS RAP :: Opinion

District Attorney Chesa Boudin is a man without a plan

And San Francisco citizens are paying the price

BY SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

THIS PAST NEW YEAR'S EVE, 45-YEAR-OLD PAROL-ee Troy McAlister was evading a robbery in a stolen car. He ran a red light, striking and killing 60-year-old Elizabeth Platt and 27-year-old Hanako Abe in the crosswalk at Mission and 2nd Streets. As of April 2020, McAlister faced a three-strikes life prison term for a 2015 robbery, based on previous convictions for carjacking and robbery. But San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin issued a policy last February not to pursue three-strikes cases, granting McAlister credit for the five years he served.

After his release, McAlister was arrested several more times for auto burglary, drugs, and theft. On Dec. 20, he was arrested on suspicion of driving a stolen vehicle and possessing burglary tools. Rather than charge McAlister with new crimes, Boudin kicked the cases to state parole officers. Just 11 days later, McAlister killed Platt and Abe. The tragedy shocked San Franciscans, but having

REYNOLDS RAP, continued on 4

SUPERVISOR :: Opinion

Gratitude for mutual aid

Recovery is a team effort

BY AARON PESKIN

WE DID IT. WE MADE IT TO ANOTHER YEAR. SAN Francisco closed out one of the worst years in modern U.S. history with another shutdown after a statewide surge in Covid-19 cases, but reemerged in 2021 with a renewed sense of hope.

On Jan. 20, we listened to inaugural speeches filled with optimism and compassion from competent and engaged leaders ready to meet this moment of challenge with urgency and commitment. We watched the first woman, Black and South Asian American be sworn in as vice president, my childhood friend and former classmate, Kamala Harris. Within the first hours of taking office, President Biden signed executive orders to rejoin the Paris Accord, halt construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline, masks, and issue federal aid to struggling Americans.

SCHOOLS AND HOMES

Here in San Francisco, we were encouraged that President Biden signed an executive order committing to 100 percent FEMA reimbursement for our shelter-in-place hotel rooms for the homeless through September, which will keep homeless individuals safely sheltering in place

DISTRICT 3 SUPERVISOR, continued on 2

LA DELIZIOSA VITA :: Recipes



Add whatever you like to your crab Louie salad. PHOTO: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

Dungeness crab has finally arrived

BY SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

EVERY YEAR FOR CHRISTMAS Eve, I make my mom's Rhode Island clam chowder and a big crab Louie with fresh, sweet Dungeness crab. This year, however, I served the chowder alongside a Caesar salad,

because crab season was delayed. Even now that crab is here it can be hard to find. At one store I visited there was a hand-drawn sign on the seafood case reading, "It's out of our claws! No Dungeness crab!"

Without a doubt, the best place to get Dungeness crab is Alioto-Lazio

Fish Company (440 Jefferson Street at Hyde, 888-673-5868, crabonline.com), one of the last family-operated fishing companies in San Francisco. You simply can't beat crab fresh off the boats. Sisters Annette Traverso and Angela Cincotta are the third generation operating the Alioto-Lazio Fish Company, a woman-owned business that has been located on Fisherman's Wharf for more than 70 years.

The fishing fleet travels 25 miles or more past the Golden Gate Bridge. Only male crabs measuring 6¼ inches from point to point can legally be harvested, with average weights between 1½ and 2 pounds. The fishermen travel back and forth into the harbor — it takes hours to reach the right spot, hours of work stringing the pots, and hours to return. Alioto-Lazio sells their crabs live, whole cooked, or cleaned and cracked. They also ship their crustaceans overnight. If you haven't had crab from the first ladies of the wharf, you're missing one of San Francisco's greatest gastronomic gifts, as well as part of its rich fishing history (that is sadly disappearing).

With the pandemic, traditional crab feeds are off the table, but Alioto-Lazio is offering a virtual crab feed

LA DELIZIOSA VITA, continued on 6

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BECOME A PART OF HISTORY IN BRINGING RAIL SERVICE TO DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 26, 2021

The Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) is soliciting applications from Bay Area residents to serve on the TJPA Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to help shape the discussion in the development of Phase 2 of the Transbay Program and provide input in the operation of the Salesforce Transit Center and rooftop park. The Phase 2 project includes the Downtown Rail Extension (DTX), which will connect Caltrain's commuter rail service and the California High-Speed Rail Authority's statewide system to downtown San Francisco. Past CAC members have contributed to the successful planning, development and construction of Phase 1 of the Transbay Program, which includes the Salesforce Transit Center and the Salesforce rooftop park.

The TJPA seeks to appoint Committee members that represent the diversity of the Bay Area. There are seven full-term and one half-term seats available representing the following constituencies: Daily Caltrain Rider into San Francisco, Daily AC Transit Rider into San Francisco, Daily MUNI Rider on a line that serves the Transit Center, Member of the Citywide (SF) business community, Disabled Advocate, San Francisco based Transit Advocate, Regional Transit Advocate and Representative from Labor.

CAC full-terms are for a period of two-years and each member is eligible to serve a maximum of three consecutive terms. The TJPA CAC meets on the second Tuesday of the month from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. Due to the Stay Safer at Home order, meetings are currently held remotely. Meetings are normally held at the TJPA office at 425 Mission Street, Suite 250, San Francisco, CA. Consistent attendance is required.

Applicants are encouraged to apply for all seats listed on the application that they qualify for. If you are interested in being considered, please submit an application to the TJPA via e-mail at cac@tjpa.org or by mail: 425 Mission Street, Suite 250, San Francisco, CA 94105. Applications are available on the TJPA website at <https://www.tjpa.org/tjpa/cac/cacrecruitment> and are due February 26, 2021.

CNSB#3433199



Chinatown is getting a lifeline from city funds and private fundraising.

PHOTO: BILDPHOTOGRAPHY

District 3 Supervisor continued *from cover*

while the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing finalizes a transition plan into more permanent supportive housing. I'm proud that three of those housing sites will be located in District 3, and that we are close to opening the city's first Transitional Age Youth Navigation Center in Lower Polk, even amid pandemic setbacks. In addition, the recent announcement that San Francisco's Covid-19 reproductive rate is back under 1.0 (at 0.99) means that we've successfully slowed the spread and will soon start reopening under California's guidelines. The city has launched three high-volume vaccination sites, and pending supply of doses from the state, is hoping to vaccinate all of San Francisco by June.

When the SFUSD administration delayed finalizing a plan for phasing in a reopening of our schools, city officials, parents, and teachers banded together to demand reasonable movement based on science. Meanwhile, here in San Francisco our community-based organizations have stepped up to staff learning hubs from Chinatown to the Tenderloin. I am grateful to our Department of Children, Youth and Their Families; Recreation and Park; library staff; and after-school programs that are doing double-duty to keep our kids safely engaged and learning.

BUSINESSES

With national press sounding the alarm about the imminent extinction of "America's Chinatown," the city has stepped in with emergency bridge funds to pay shuttered restaurants to make nutritious, culturally appropriate meals (over 300,000 of them over the next eight weeks) to feed low-income families and seniors sheltering in our


Chinatown SRO hotels. Chinatown Community Development Center is fundraising to expand the emergency Feed and Fuel program, and you can support by donating at chinatowncdc.org. Thank you to those of you who have been ordering takeout and patronizing the legacy businesses in Chinatown, especially over the holidays. This is our Chinatown, and we're not going to let it vanish.

I also want to thank those of you who joined our fundraising efforts to support the crabbing community that was burned out of their shed operations at Pier 45 at the start of the pandemic. We were able to raise almost \$75,000 in private donations from loyal San Franciscans who weren't going to let our beautiful crabbing community go under. With your support, they were able to procure new crab pots and prep them in time for Dungeness season. Please visit Fisherman's Wharf or our amazing family restaurants in North Beach to get your Dungeness while it lasts.

Finally, I also want to thank the voters of District 3 again for electing me to serve a fifth and final term as supervisor. President Walton has appointed me to continue serving on the Land Use and Transportation Committee, as well as chair the Rules Committee. If you are interested in serving on a public board, commission, committee or task force, you can find a list of city-wide vacancies and guidance on applying at sfbos.org.

It's been such an incredibly difficult year. And we made it through together, like the City That Knows How, like the city that I know and love. Thank you for sticking together and sticking it out. We can and will recover, if we can keep this up.

See you in the neighborhood.

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CITY RENTS DROP 27 PERCENT

Rents in San Francisco closed out 2020 with a 2.7 percent drop in December, bringing the 12-month decline to 27 percent, according to data from Apartment List. Median rents in the city were reported as \$1,992 for a one-bedroom and \$2,305 for a two-bedroom apartment.

San Francisco has the largest drop in rents in the Bay Area, but it is not alone. Apartment List reports that rents fell in all of the 10 largest cities in the metro area; for example, rents in Oakland declined 13.7 percent in 2020, and San Mateo's dropped 15.6 percent over the same time period.

CENTRAL SUBWAY DELAYED BY COVID-19

The long-planned and long-under-construction Central Subway has had a few more months tacked onto its schedule by pandemic-related needs for quarantining, materials delays, remote work, and safety protocols, as well as some design changes resulting from underground site conditions. “Before the pandemic, we anticipated that construction would be finished by the end of [December 2020], with customers riding trains at the start of revenue service a year later,” SFMTA reported in late 2020. “Our current projections put the completion of construction this spring and the start of service in the following spring of 2022.”

COVID CLAIMS ANOTHER YEAR OF CAMP MATHER

The coronavirus has claimed a second consecutive year at Camp Mather, a family summer camp owned by the city. The camp, which serves about 500 campers and 70 employees a week when open, features shared bathrooms, meals, and social activities, making social distancing nearly impossible. “The health of our campers and staff are the most important consideration,” said Recreation and Park Department General Manager Phil Ginsburg. “The Covid-19 transmission risk simply remains too high.”

MUNI ROUTE UPDATES

On Jan. 23, Muni announced some permanent and temporary changes to its routes and services as it continues to try to work its way out of the pandemic disruption. From shortened routes for the T-Third Street trains and buses and the 8AX-Bayshore A Express, to new and restored service for the 22-Fillmore bus and other routes, the changes could affect your ability to get to work or other destinations. For details on the changes, visit sfmta.com.

NEW LIFE IN LOCAL BUSINESS

Despite a pandemic year that was a terrible blow to many small businesses, signs of life have sprung up on San Francisco's Northside even in these tough times. In addition to Luke's Grocery (News Briefs, November 2020), Golden Gate Valley Neighborhood Association's Phil Faroudja has pointed out health-conscious food shop Balanced Bites (2181 Union Street), health-conscious dog food shop Mishka Dog Boutique (2163 Union Street), and women's clothing store Lima Lemon (2266 Union Street).

And now filling the former Bistro Aix spot (3340 Steiner Street) is a new Peruvian restaurant Jaranita SE, from the team behind La Mar Cebicheria Peruana (Pier 1½, The Embarcadero). Jaranita will have a focus on charcoal-grilled chicken.

CRIME UPDATES

Automobile burglaries took a dramatic turn downward to start the year. For the week of Jan. 4-10, 2021, there were 37 auto burglaries in the area covered by Northern Station, for a year-to-date total of 58. That's a 64 percent drop from the 2020 year-to-date total of 181. For the first 10 days of 2021, robberies were down slightly from the previous year for the same time, dropping from 9 in 2020 to 8 in 2021.

But criminals giveth with one hand, taketh with the other. Other burglaries were 39 for the first 10 days of the year, up 70 percent from the 23 that were reported for the same time in 2020.

WIENER TAKES ANOTHER SWING AT HOUSING DENSITY


State Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) has introduced SB 10, his latest attempt at getting the state to address its housing shortage by allowing increased density. According to the Senator's office, SB 10 would let cities upzone areas that are close to job centers and or transit in existing urban locations, allowing up to 10-unit buildings. Two earlier attempts by Wiener were killed in previous years by fierce opposition from his colleagues.

“California’s massive housing shortage is driving people into poverty and homelessness and threatening our environment, economy, and diversity; we must take bold steps to end this devastating crisis,” said Wiener. He said that his bill “provides cities with a powerful, fast, and effective tool to allow light-touch density exactly where it should be: near jobs, near public transportation, and in existing urbanized areas. SB 10 will help move California away from a sprawl-based housing policy and toward a more sustainable, equitable, and effective housing policy.”

FACTS AND FIGURES

\$1.25 million: Remaining amount needed to finish the creation of Francisco Park, according to the Francisco Park Conservancy . . . **2 pizzas and 2 pints of ice cream:** part of the \$419 a night “Galentine’s Escape Package,” the “ultimate girls’ trip getaway” at the Meritage Resort and Spa this Valentine’s Day in Napa . . . **6:** age of a child in immediate danger who is rescued by someone needing to trespass or damage a vehicle to effect the rescue; under a new law that took effect Jan. 1, the rescuer is exempt from civil or criminal liability . . . **AB 236:** a bill in the state Assembly that would strengthen campaign disclosure laws, requiring expanded disclosure of “dark money” donors . . . **1:** number of points added to a driver’s record for a second violation within 36 months of the ban on using a handheld cellphone while driving, under a new state law taking effect on July 1, 2021 . . . **10,000:** San Francisco’s targeted number of daily vaccination doses.

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The trials of Gavin

Local boy makes good — then hits turbulence

BY JOHN ZIPPERER

IN NOV. 2018, GAVIN NEWSOM was elected governor of California, a liberal Democrat winning with a landslide 24-point margin in one of the bluest states in the Union. It was as if he were a poker player holding a royal flush, and his opponents had already tossed the keys to their late-model Lamborghinis onto the pot.

He was at the top of his game, but let's drop the poker metaphor, because I've exhausted my paltry knowledge of it. The point remains: Newsom was a popular governor, with a state economy thrumming along nicely, giving him plenty of voter goodwill and tax dollars to tackle big problems like education, homelessness, and housing. Even when the pandemic hit, Newsom emerged as one of the more adept governors, responding quickly, communicating clearly how Californians should protect themselves and each other, and pushing the federal government to up its game while at the same time not antagonizing the thin-skinned President Trump.

But one dinner has proven to be costly to the governor's current standing and threatens to bring

a premature end to his political career.

They say that no publicity is bad publicity, as long as they spell your name correctly. Governor Newsom certainly would rather not have had his name in certain news stories in November. First we learned he had attended a gathering at the high-priced French Laundry even as Californians were being told to stay home, socially distance, avoid church services, and more or less hibernate. It's not a great time to visit a laundromat, even if it does serve good food. But the publicity got worse, with photos of the little shindig revealing that this gathering was indoors, that most of the people around his table were not wearing masks, nor were they socially distanced.

Overnight, Newsom went from popular policy wonk governor to a hypocrite capable of doing a dumb thing. Suddenly a fringe attempt to recall him from office took on new life.

The French Laundry visit was "an absolute breach of trust," political analyst Melissa Caen told me during a recent political roundtable. On that same panel, Carson Bruno noted that San Francisco Mayor London Breed had her own French Laundry visit



Gov. Gavin Newsom at the site of the September North Complex Fire. PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

earlier in November. "It seems to be the hopping place during the pandemic," he said.

Though Breed's visit reportedly didn't violate guidelines, and Newsom rather clumsily tried to explain state and local restaurant rules were different things, Bruno said it still hurts their message. People are having enough trouble trying to understand the rules during the pandemic. Political leaders asking people to make sacrifices must rely on trust. "He lost that trust," said Carson. "How [does he] win back that trust?"

How seriously in danger is Newsom's governorship? The only real threat is a recall attempt that has been gathering steam, fueled by anger over pandemic restrictions on business and religious congregations. "People had every reason to think this was kind of a joke," KQED News reporter Guy Marzorati told me.

"Ever since Newsom took office in 2018, there have been a series of slow-starting and quickly ending recall campaigns against him. . . . Even this campaign initially was really slow at collecting signatures, and then all of a sudden it took off in November" after the French Laundry revelation. The recall effort received an extension on the deadline to collect the 1.5 million signatures needed to qualify for the ballot (it already claims more than 900,000 signatures). The recall has "kind of taken off and it's gotten the attention of the governor's office and the governor's political staff," said Marzorati.

If Republicans start to smell gubernatorial blood in the water, then GOP money might flow into the recall effort. But just as there are reasons for Newsom to worry, there are perhaps more reasons for worries on the part of people

looking to jump on that particular anti-Newsom bandwagon.

"He's going to be fine, unless this recall group comes up with a better alternative," said Caen. "Right now, it's like Gavin Newsom or—*who?*" Bruno said that its supporters also have to make a case for holding a recall in 2021, the year before Newsom will be up for reelection anyway. Why waste time and money on an additional statewide election?

To resurrect the poker analogy, it's a good bet that Newsom will survive his current turbulence; he's still got a good hand. If he can pull off school reopenings, speed up the vaccine rollout, and be ready to fully reopen the economy at the appropriate time, he could soon be looking back at the recall and this bumpy beginning to 2021 as just a bad memory.

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Reynolds Rap

continued from cover

researched this column for six months, I know there are many other cases of repeat offenders freed by Boudin's office who went on to commit heinous crimes.

Boudin talks a big game. Phrases like "decarceration," "social justice reform" and "restorative justice" slide off his tongue with the slickness of a snake oil salesman. He preaches about how the prison system is stacked against people of color — and I agree with him. The problem is, Boudin has no plan, and those being victimized most often are people of color. Sadly, both offenders profiled in this column are young, Black men who slipped through the cracks of a fractured system, leaving one of them dead, one facing life in prison, and devastated family members on all sides.

THE MANY RED FLAGS OF ZION YOUNG

Zion Dwayne Young has been caught up in the legal system since he was a juvenile. By age 16 he was already committing robberies. On Oct. 7, 2018, at age 18, Young was arrested in Marin County for trespassing, assault with a deadly weapon, and having an active warrant for his arrest in San Francisco. Just over a year later, on Dec. 11, 2019, Bayview Station officers responded to a report of a vehicle evading San Francisco sheriffs in Hunter's Point. After a struggle, officers took Zion Young into custody and charged him with obstruction, receiving or concealing stolen property, addict in possession of a firearm, possession of ammunition, convicted felon in possession of a firearm,

and carrying a loaded firearm in public. But then-District Attorney George Gascon — whose politics are aligned with his successor Boudin — dropped the charges, and Young was freed.

On Feb. 20, 2020, San Francisco police saw a silver Toyota with no license plates parked completely on the sidewalk. They found Zion Young in the passenger seat next to the driver, 26-year-old Fagamalama Pasene (remember that name) and a young woman in the backseat. Officers saw a glass pipe commonly used for smoking methamphetamines with residue. They cited Pasene for having no license plates and parking on the sidewalk. When Young reached toward the floorboard, officers asked him to exit the vehicle. He took off running and jumped a fence, where a witness told police they saw him toss a gun. Officers located a loaded Arminius .38 caliber "Titan Tiger" and eventually took Young into custody. A records check revealed Young had a prior "felon in possession of a firearm" charge. He was booked on 11 felonies related to firearms, but, according to former SFDA spokesperson Alex Bastian, the charges were reduced to one misdemeanor gun charge and Young was released on an ankle monitor.

Less than three months later, on May 7, 2020, San Francisco police responded to a shooting in the Portola District. They found 19-year-old Kelvin Chew suffering from a gunshot wound. He died at the scene. According to a friend, Chew, the son of Chinese immigrants, had just finished a class on Zoom and wanted to get some fresh air. Members of the community and evidence led police to the suspects, Fagamalama Pasene and Zion Young, who they believe killed Chew in a botched

robbery. Pasene was charged with murder and attempted robbery, and Young was charged with murder, attempted robbery, and more of those firearm offenses that have haunted his young criminal life. Charging documents indicate Young was the shooter. Both suspects are currently being held without bail awaiting trial.

THE EXTENSIVE RED FLAGS OF VERMOND JONES

On May 14, 2020, Fremont police identified 21-year-old San Francisco resident Vermond Jones as one of three suspects in a crime spree that included a violent home invasion robbery. During the home invasion, suspects pointed firearms at the victim, made the victim lie on the ground, ransacked the residence, and stole multiple items. The suspects also attempted two other robberies in the East Bay and the brutal robbery of a woman in San Francisco — all on the same day.

Jones had an extensive and violent criminal history and was a documented member of the "Fillmore - Knock Out Posse" gang. He had been arrested for 35 separate charges with six separate cases pending in San Francisco, including burglary (multiple counts), carrying a loaded firearm, grand theft from a person, possession of a stolen vehicle (multiple counts), false imprisonment, and child endangerment. Despite all this, Jones was free on an ankle monitor, which he wore during the crime spree.

On Oct. 1, 2020, on Geary Street in Union Square, a group of suspects attempted to steal a Rolex watch from a man. As a struggle ensued, the victim was able to turn the gun around and shoot one of the suspects — Vermond Jones — who later died at the hospital. During his 21 years,

Jones was arrested more than a dozen times and charged with over 70 crimes.

COULD MCALISTER, YOUNG AND JONES HAVE BEEN SAVED?

By releasing violent repeat offenders, Boudin is not only letting down victims and their families, but he's also letting down offenders — often young men of color — and their families. The mother and uncle of Troy McAlister told ABC7's Dion Lim they were heartbroken for the victims, angry at Boudin for not keeping McAlister locked up, and saddened by the loss of someone they loved. "I'm very sorry, I wish it hadn't happened and I will be praying for her and I hope she is doing likewise for us," McAlister's mother said. "Even though Troy didn't get hurt or killed, it's the end of his life."

Could Troy McAlister, Zion Young, and Vermond Jones have been saved? With Young and McAlister facing life in prison and Jones dead, we'll never know. One thing is certain: Kelvin Chew, Hanako Abe, and Elizabeth Platt would all be alive today had someone paid attention to all those red flags. No one disagrees the justice system needs to be reformed, but that won't happen overnight. Boudin often says there are other options besides prison, but he never provides any concrete examples. He's a man without a plan, and talk is cheap — but lives shouldn't be. Until Boudin has programs in place instead of empty words, San Francisco's top prosecutor needs to do whatever it takes to keep the city safe, even if it means doing something he hates: locking people up.

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Go virtual this Valentine’s Day

Cooking classes and more to inspire your at-home celebration

BY JULIE MITCHELL

WHILE SOME THINK that Valentine’s Day is a “throwaway” holiday, true romantics like to shower their sweethearts with chocolate, flowers, and intimate dinners or weekend getaways. Although an indoor restaurant meal and overnight trip may not be part of the picture, in addition to traditional cards, chocolate, and flowers, you can make your Valentine’s Day special with a virtual celebration.

ONLINE INSPIRATION

You might have had your fill of home cooking, but there is a wealth of online cooking classes geared toward couples specifically designed for Valentine’s Day. **Appetite 4 Seduction** (appetite4seduction.com) is sponsoring an Aphrodisiac Valentine’s Day cooking class Feb. 12–14 to create a sensual meal for two for \$50 per person. The class is sponsored by Eventbrite and hosted by Shani Delamor, a chef who has worked in restaurants in New York, France, Italy, and Mexico. This live class will cover everything from setting the table and knife skills to discovering how to prepare aphrodisiacs to creating a mouth-watering menu that will spark passion and awaken your senses. You’ll learn how fiery foods can stimulate your sexual

appetite while having fun with your partner. The class is interactive, which will allow participants to engage with the instructor as well as other guests. The experience includes a list of cooking supplies and needed cookware, a playlist to put you in the mood, and recipes. The Valentine’s Day dinner menu features asparagus with hollandaise sauce; pasta with baby peas, chicken, prosciutto, and parmesan-cream sauce; and chocolate lava cake with ice cream. You supply your own cocktails or wine and the cooking ingredients. Details will be emailed to attendees one week before the live session, and ticket sales will close at noon the day of the event; recorded classes will be available for anyone who can’t attend the live session.

VALENTINES AND GALENTINES

Online Valentine’s Day celebrations include a Facebook live virtual Valentine’s Day party, a chocolate truffle-making class, and a workshop on Feb. 13 where you can learn how to make a special grazing board on Zoom. You can also find games, parties, and other activities to share with your sweetie. Visit eventbrite.com for additional information. **Cozymeal** (cozymeal.com) offers a wealth of online cooking classes year-round as well



Christopher Elbow offers artful chocolate gifts. PHOTO: FACEBOOK.COM/ELBOWCHOCOLATES

as chef-crafted meal prep and team-building activities. You can choose from simple meals like building a charcuterie board to making your own sushi, plant-based meals, and pizza. You can also create your own customized cooking class. Prices range from \$29–\$39 per device. For Valentine’s Day, Cozymeal has created two special Galentine’s Day events for you and your gal pals: One is a “pajama-clad” interactive online brunch cooking class featuring sparkling pink-lemonade mimosas to sip while you learn how to prepare a ricotta frittata with fresh spinach and basil, and crème-brûlée French toast topped with warm caramel sauce. An alternative is a live interactive cooking class where you’ll make laksa, a rich, spicy Singaporean noodle soup and a complementary fizzy Singapore sling cocktail. All of Cozymeal’s classes are fully interactive, and the chef will answer questions

and provides tips. You can order ingredients for the meals and have them delivered to your door.

BAKE AND SIP

Culinary Artistas (culinaryartistas.com) also offers a generous array of online cooking classes for kids and adults that can be customized to suit your preferences, from virtual private classes to happy hours. In February you can attend a flower-and-chocolate Valentine’s cookies-and-cordials class where you’ll concoct your own aphrodisiac liquor from scratch along with baking delicate rose-petal-speckled shortbread cookies.

SWEETS FOR YOUR SWEET

If you’d still like to treat your sweetheart to fine chocolate, there are several local shops where you can purchase sweets online or in person. **Recchiuti** (One Ferry Building #30, 415-834-9494, recchiuti.com),

is open daily and has a lovely assortment of handcrafted Valentine’s confections. **Christopher Elbow** (401 Hayes Street, 415-355-1105, elbowchocolates.com) also offers artful handmade chocolate gifts, and the store is open Monday-Saturday. And while longtime favorite **See’s Candies** (754 Clement Street, 415-752-0953, sees.com) has closed several locations during the pandemic, some are still open like the store on Clement Street, or you can order a traditional heart-shaped box of chocolates sure to warm your loved one’s heart online. Virtual activities may not be as elegant as dressing up and going out on Valentine’s Day, but if you’re not up for outdoor restaurant dining, an online celebration is enjoyable, fun, and even a romantic option. *Email: julie@marinatimes.com*

La Deliziosa Vita
continued from cover

package this year — they cook, clean and crack the crabs then add sourdough bread, cocktail sauce, and crab cookies. You can pick it up at your school, church, or event site, then get on Zoom with everyone and chow down. While straight out of the shell is my favorite way to eat Dungeness crab, it’s also wonderful in everything from salads to pastas. One of my all-time favorite Dungeness dishes was the crab angel hair lasagna at the Crab House on Pier 39 (temporarily closed). When it disappeared from the menu, I created my own version to satisfy my craving, which I’ve shared below. The second recipe is a classic crab Louie based on my favorite one at the Wharf’s oldest sit-down restaurant, Fishermen’s Grotto No. 9 (Pier 45 at Taylor, 415-673-7025, thegrottosf.com). The origin of the Louie is one of great debate, but Helen Brown said in her West Coast Cookbook, “it was served at Solari’s in San Francisco in 1914.”

CRAB ANGEL HAIR LASAGNA
Serves 8

- 1 cooked Dungeness crab, cracked and cleaned (about 2 cups of crab) with reserved “crab butter” from top shell (optional)*

- Béchamel Sauce**
 - 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
 - 4 tablespoons flour
 - 2 cups whole milk
 - ¼ teaspoon Kosher sea salt
 - ¼ teaspoon or so white pepper (use black if you don’t have it)
- Lasagna**
 - 1 pound angel hair pasta, cooked very al dente
 - ¼ cup fresh Italian parsley, stems removed and leaves roughly chopped
 - 1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
 - 1 tablespoon cold butter cut in chunks**Crab butter is the fatty mustard-yellow tomalley, or roe, in the top shell. It’s the foie gras of the crab with sweet, briny and mineral overtones.*

Crack and clean crab and remove meat from shells (it’s not hard to do, but if you’re squeamish most markets will crack and clean for you). Set aside two cups of meat and reserve the crab butter in a separate small prep bowl for the sauce. Preheat oven to 400 degrees and set a large pot with 4-6 quarts water over medium-high heat. Make the béchamel sauce: In a medium saucepan, melt 4 tablespoons unsalted butter. Whisk in 4 tablespoons all-purpose flour until well combined and the “floury” taste is

cooked out, about 7–8 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high and slowly whisk in milk. Bring to a gentle simmer, then reduce heat to medium-low, stirring constantly until sauce is thickened and smooth, about 15 minutes. Mix in the crab butter (if using) and salt, turn off heat, and set aside. Add 1 tablespoon salt to boiling water and once it returns to a full rolling boil, add angel hair and cook for half the time recommended on the package so it remains very al dente. Drain and rinse with cold water to stop the cooking. Butter a 9x13 baking dish on bottom and sides. Rub a little olive oil on the bottom, then add a layer of pasta. Spread a thin layer of sauce and add some crab. Sprinkle with parsley and grated cheese. Repeat layers, ending with a layer of angel hair. Dot the top with pieces of butter, sprinkle on a little coarse sea salt, and more cheese. Bake in the middle of the oven about 20–30 minutes, or until top is brown and bubbly. Allow to set about 10 minutes before cutting into individual squares for serving. Serve with extra cheese for passing at the table.

CLASSIC CRAB LOUIE
Serves 4

Louie Dressing

- 2 cups Best Foods mayonnaise
- ¼ cup heavy cream

- 2 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
 - Dash of hot sauce
 - 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
 - 2 tablespoons lemon juice, freshly squeezed
- Salad**
One head iceberg lettuce
Fresh meat of two Dungeness crabs
Ripe tomatoes (if in season), cut into wedges
 - 1 small can whole black olives
 - Canned beets, shredded or sliced
 - 2 pastured eggs, hard-cooked and cut into wedgesPepperoncini (optional)
Avocado slices (optional)
Lemon wedges

Whisk dressing ingredients in a bowl and refrigerate until ready to serve. Tear apart the head of lettuce, wash and thoroughly dry the leaves. Refrigerate until lettuce is crisp cold. Make a bed of lettuce on a large serving platter. Top with a mound of crab. Place tomato wedges, olives, beets, hard-cooked eggs, and, if using, pepperoncini and avocado slices, around the platter. Serve with dressing and lemon wedges on the side.

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com. Follow the Marina Times on Twitter @TheMarinaTimes and like us on Facebook @MarinaTimes.

Fun wines for Valentine’s Day

BY LYNETTE MAJER

WHILE WE BRAINSTORMED topics for this month, our film writer, Michael Snyder, commented that there had been precious few good romantic movies in the past four years, musing whether that was related to the outgoing presidential administration. Interesting thought, I mused in return. That first couple’s separate sleeping arrangements was widely reported, and the frequent hand swatting to avoid hand holding widely documented.

So what a treat to see Jill and Joe Biden behaving as though they really like each other with their many PDAs from hand-holding, to back massaging, to hugs and kisses, their personal love story coming through our screens and into our homes. It was comforting and provided some much needed hope that it portended well for a return to more normalcy as a country.

With the Bidens as inspiration, go forth and make your Valentine’s Day fun and special. Sure it, may be somewhat challenging with some normal avenues of celebration unavailable, but we still have our imagination and creativity. And if you don’t have someone to share it with, celebrate anyway, and toast to all that’s good.

In the spirit of fun and celebration and hope, here are some wine suggestions for your Valentine’s Day:

- Besa Mi Vino California “Just Right White” and “All Day Rosé” NV, \$40/six-pack**

Canned wine has been gaining in popularity due in part to its convenience and durability — for one, it’s much easier (and lighter) to pack a few cans in your backpack for an outdoor event than it is a bottle. This award-winning “ethically responsible” wine is organic, vegan, gluten free, and sulfite sensitive. The crisp and dry rosé with berry notes is sure to please rosé fans, although I preferred the white, which is light and smooth, with a tad of fizz — both are just right for your Valentine’s Day picnic or hike.
- Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte Réserve Exclusive Rosé NV, \$56**

Consistently rated 90 points and above by critics and peers, this blend of 45 percent Pinot Noir, 45 percent Meunier, and 10 percent Chardonnay is big on the bubbles and berry notes with a full mouth feel and dry finish. We enjoyed this Champagne on a thrilling New Year’s Eve with a puzzle and Anderson Cooper, so that qualifies it as the perfect fun wine to share on any special occasion, especially Valentine’s Day due to its lovely pale pink hue. These bubbles are also available in splits for a more portable option.
- Lush Wines ChocoVine NV, \$10–\$12**

We’ve probably all been given that square of chocolate to taste with a red wine as

the perfect complement — take a nibble of chocolate then a sip of wine, and it’s heavenly, right? So why not combine the two? ChocoVine has done just that with variations (raspberry, dark chocolate, and whipped cream) that combine French Cabernet and Dutch chocolate. These wines are clearly not for wine connoisseurs, but they’re fun, and yes, tasty without being too sweet. Not a fan of sweet beverages, I was well prepared to wince at these, but I didn’t — they taste like what they are, wine and chocolate. They go down very easily (I had consumed nearly an entire bottle before realizing it and required a nap), so sip with caution. All varieties have a heart on the label, and the raspberry checks the box for the right color. Serve it chilled as the perfect light dessert.

Opaline Pinot Noir Brut Rosé, \$8

Let’s be honest. We’ve all bought wine based on the bottle or the label, and we (some of us anyway) can remember that now-vintage Mateus Rosé with its antique-looking label, and we are all familiar with Italian Chianti in its straw-covered bottle. This light-on-the-bubbles sparkling wine comes in an eye-catching, light-reflecting, faceted bottle and is a lovely pale salmon color, with a fruity, refreshing palate that is just dry

enough and a price point attractive enough to stock up for the weekend.

Paradise Ridge 2014 Sparkling Shiraz, Russian River Valley, \$52

This Santa Rosa winery burned to the ground in the 2017 Tubbs fire, with its surviving LOVE sculpture becoming an iconic symbol of hope amidst the widespread massive destruction wrought through the county. After a two-year reconstruction it reopened, only to close several months later due to the pandemic (wines can be ordered online for delivery or pickup, 707-528-9463, prwinery.com).

The winery makes a fun sparkling shiraz, popular in Australia, and showing up more frequently stateside. The wine is a complex Syrah with a great pedigree from the Rockpile and Russian River AVAs, which is then put through a traditional Methode Champenoise process. The winemaker calls it “a party in a bottle,” and while I do prefer white and Rosé bubbles, I like this well enough, and wouldn’t hesitate to pop this cork for any celebration, especially Valentine’s Day.

Cheers — stay safe, and be kind.

Email: lynette@marinatimes.com

Take a nibble of chocolate then a sip of wine, and it’s heavenly, right?



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FEBRUARY 2021 : 7

Award-winning photographer opens gallery on Sacramento Street

BY SHARON ANDERSON

“I have faith that art is unwavering — and ‘essential’ — the word of 2020!”
— Margaret Cheatham Williams

OPENING A GALLERY IN 2021 IS indeed a bold leap of faith. With retail shuttering and off-and-on stay-at-home orders, Margaret Cheatham Williams is bringing her award-winning narrative photography to the esteemed Sacramento Street shopping district. What moved her to open a gallery during the Covid-19 crisis? “It’s either brilliance or insanity, depending on the day’s news,” Williams said. “... I was experiencing such a dramatic wanderlust, and I spent a fair amount of time rediscovering favorite photographs from my archive. ... I wanted to share art in a physical sense, as I think we are inundated with images on the web, and it felt important to have a tangible space in which to connect with the work and with viewers. I also was experiencing such a desire to change up my surroundings, and bring in physical reminders of the world at large, so I assumed (or hoped!) that others would feel the same way.”

CHARACTER STUDIES AND ROADSIDE FINDS

The world at large shows up in Williams’s photography in the form of documentary-style storytelling, a craft honed during her nearly seven years as a visual journalist and editor at *The New York Times*. Her work as an independent film producer captures moments that touch on the intersection of health, family, and personal identity. Her expression is also rooted in a love of travel and the quiet capture of scenes not always noticed.

Her first exhibition, “Thoroughfare: A way or place for passage,” encapsulates the

idea of the thoroughfare, featuring roadside finds from Williams’s cross-country adventures. “*Ice Fishing*” reveals two figures in bright blue coats on the white sheet of a frozen lake in the Catskills, the image bisected by a dark row of trees and moody grey skies.

Inspired by the early work of William Eggleston, and with a car dealer father, Williams has “a thing for vintage cars.” This theme is represented in several of the works displayed, including the black-and-white photograph “*Falcon*,” which is dominated by a hazy sky punctuated by a single car below a dark tree line in an otherwise empty parking lot, a highway sign making a lonely appearance in the distance while the driver of the car bows his head. The viewer is the omniscient third person, a point of view suggestive of film narratives, and our imaginations fill in the details of what adventures these scenes hold. In whimsical works like “*Hector*” we’re rooted to the street scene by a young man’s smirking gaze behind the wheel of a classic car, while in “*Driveway Sessions*,” a boy with a French horn simultaneously serenades and stares down the camera. A sense of nostalgia, motion and stillness runs through the works on display.

Williams almost exclusively shoots on medium format film, bringing a texture and granularity in keeping with the realness of her character studies and discarded objects — worn and expressive like the materials in her visual field. She offers her work framed as editioned archival giclée prints, and also creates custom Lucite panels as well as custom iron work. Moxie’s Daughter showcases all three forms. In the future, Williams hopes to display the work of other photographers with a journalism background.

WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

Williams is the latest female to open a business on Sacramento Street, an arts-



Top to bottom: *Ice Fishing*, Catskills, New York; *Driveway Sessions*, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. PHOTOS: MARGARET CHEATHAM WILLIAMS

and-design district that has grown into a female-owned business mecca with 62 percent of businesses operated by women. The gallery is named after the artist’s mother, Moxie, whom Williams says is “my fiercest supporter, best critic, and guide in all things.”

Moxie’s Daughter: Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.–6 p.m., by appointment only. 3356 Sacramento Street, MoxiesDaughter.com

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 KEVIN MCCARTHY

HARDCOVER FICTION

1. **Hamnet**, by Maggie O’Farrell
2. **The Midnight Library: A Novel**, by Matt Haig
3. **Anxious People: A Novel**, by Fredrik Backman

HARDCOVER NONFICTION

1. **A Promised Land**, by Barack Obama
2. **Bag Man: The Wild Crimes, Audacious Cover-up, and Spectacular Downfall of a Brazen Crook in the White House**, by Rachel Maddow
3. **Spirits of San Francisco: Voyages through the Unknown City**, by Gary Kamiya and Paul Madonna

PAPERBACK FICTION

1. **The Dutch House: A Novel**, by Ann Patchett
2. **The Channel Sisters**, by Judith Little
3. **Interior Chinatown**, by Charles Yu

PAPERBACK NONFICTION

1. **Life Undercover: Coming of Age in the CIA**, by Amarylis Fox
2. **Betrayal in Berlin: The True Story of the Cold War’s Most Audacious Espionage Operation**, by Steve Vogel
3. **Uncanny Valley**, by Ann Wiener

CHILDREN’S BEST SELLERS

1. **Ambitious Girl**, by Meena Harris
2. **Joey: The Story of Joe Biden**, by Jill Biden
3. **Pirate Stew**, by Neil Gaiman

NEW AND NOTABLE RELEASES

Keep Sharp, by Sanjay Gupta

Keep Sharp debunks common myths about aging and cognitive decline, and explores whether there’s a “best” diet or exercise regimen for the brain. Gupta answers all your questions and

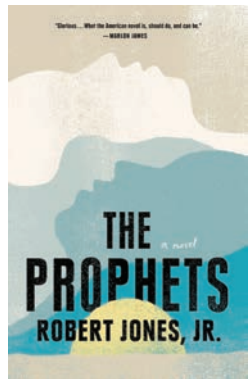
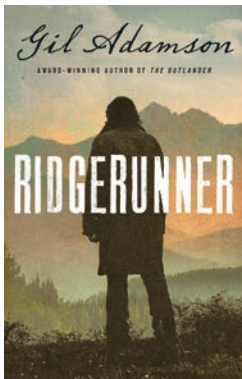
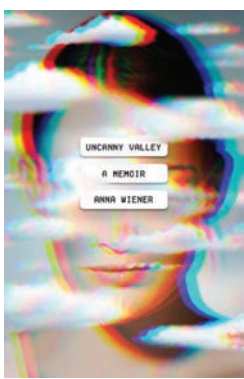
provides a personalized 12-week program featuring practical strategies to strengthen your brain every day.

Ridgerunner, by Gil Adamson

After nearly 20 years, the notorious thief known as the Ridgerunner has returned. Set against the backdrop of a distant war raging in Europe and a rapidly changing landscape in the West, Adamson’s follow-up to her award-winning debut, *The Outlander*, is a vivid historical novel that draws from the epic tradition and a literary Western brimming with a cast of unforgettable characters touched with humor and loss, and steeped in the wild of the natural world.

The Prophets, by Robert Jones Jr.

With a lyricism reminiscent of Toni Morrison, Jones fiercely summons the voices of slave and enslaved alike. *The Prophets* masterfully reveals the pain and suffering of inheritance, but is also



shot through with hope, beauty, and truth, portraying the enormous, heroic power of love.

Perestroika in Paris, by Jane Smiley

From the Pulitzer Prize-winning and best-selling author, a captivating, brilliantly imaginative story of three extraordinary animals and a young boy whose

lives intersect in Paris. Smiley’s beguiling new novel is itself an adventure that celebrates curiosity, ingenuity, and the desire of all creatures for true love and freedom.

Kevin McCarthy can help you find your next book at Books Inc. in the Marina (2251 Chestnut Street, 415-931-3633, booksinc.net/sfmarina).

Valentine's Day around the holiday. Perhaps hedging his bets, he also top-loaded it with star power: Julia Roberts, Jennifer Garner, Anne Hathaway, Shirley MacLaine, Bradley Cooper, Jamie Foxx, and a few more big names or talents on the rise. Not that the final product was anything beyond mediocre. But it was released on Feb. 12, two days before Cupid's big blast, and went on to gross over \$215 million. Pretty good numbers for a romantic comedy — especially a tepid one.

People have their favorite romance movies and are known to watch them over and over. For instance, when my sister wants to get a dose of cinematic lovey-dovey, she goes for the classics. Her motion pictures of choice are the elegant 1957 weepy *An Affair to Remember* with Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr and the 1980 sci-fi fantasy *Somewhere in Time* with Christopher Reeve and Jane Seymour. And she has at least one less-heralded go-to in the genre: the sweeping 2008 historical saga *Australia*, starring Hugh Jackman and Nicole Kidman. At almost three hours in length, this Down Under epic is a bit of a slog and also suffers from odd shifts in tone, but my sister adores Jackman and Kidman and eagerly watches their affair evolve when she craves a shot of onscreen passion.

These days, you'd expect a market clamoring for the sort of escapism promised by Hollywood tales of love, but the most significant relationship films that are coming out in the general vicinity of Valentine's Day 2021 are two rather dark dramas about older couples in crisis. For all their downbeat aspects, *Supernova* and *Two of Us* address the capacity of love to foster devotion, in line with the familiar marital vow promising steadfastness "in sickness and in health."

NAVIGATING LOVE AND LOSS

Supernova, written and directed by Harry Macqueen, concerns the committed partnership between Sam, a well-known concert pianist played by Colin Firth, and Tusker, an acclaimed author played by Stanley Tucci. These companions of 20 years have been out and proud, and now they're taking a road trip through the British countryside on their way to a special recital by Sam. Rather than a joyful getaway, the journey, including stopovers with friends, is fraught with trepidation because Tusker is grappling with dementia. It doesn't take long to realize that there's a crossroads ahead, and an emotional collision is inevitable. To the actors' credit, they never overplay the situation and still earn our concern. Tucci, in particular, is marvelous as Tusker confronts the possibility of losing so much so soon and worries how it will impact Sam. The depiction of fidelity and the potential for tragedy are palpable and powerful.

Supernova is in theaters and will be available via digital platforms on Feb. 16.

As for the twosome of *Two of Us*, their coupling is a problem in itself. The drama, France's submission for the upcoming Academy Awards, finds the clandestine love between Nina (renowned German actress Barbara Sukowa) and Madeleine (Martine Chevallier of the Comédie-Française) threatened by multiple crises. For years, these two women have



Anya Taylor-Joy stars in Autumn de Wilde's *Emma*. PHOTO: FOCUS FEATURES

lived in separate apartments across a hall from one another, but they've been lovers on the down-low the entire time — and careful not to tell the family of the once-married Madeleine. Now retired and longing to live openly, Nina and Madeleine plan to leave France for Rome and move in together, until unforeseen developments force them to dig deep in different ways and somehow salvage their shared future. Neither character is above reproach in the way they react to the challenges they face; Nina is particularly desperate. Nonetheless, Sukowa and Chevallier keep them genuine and sympathetic.

Two of Us will open in theaters and be available digitally on Feb. 5.

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF ROMANCE

Although the mix of sad and sweet provided by *Supernova* and *Two of Us* can be satisfying, you may be seeking a lighter mood in the spirit of Valentine's Day. Consider this pair of recent movies concerning the things we do for love — or what love does to us. *Emma* is the latest screen adaptation of the eponymous 1815 novel by Jane Austen. Even if the material is familiar, director Autumn de Wilde has delivered a fresh, delightful interpretation of Austen's 19th century comedy of manners about

a good-looking, well-to-do, and clever young woman whose desire to meddle in the romantic lives of her friends prevents her from realizing there could be an ideal partner for her in close proximity. Anya Taylor-Joy, currently reaping kudos for her performance in the binge-spurring miniseries *The Queen's Gambit*, is adorable as Emma, the perfect blend of sophistication, smugness, and genuine decency. Her supporting cast, including Bill Nighy as her father, Johnny Flynn as the aristocratic boy-next-door, and Mia Goth as the dear friend Emma wishes to assist, are just right.

In a more contemporary vein, *Plus One* tags along with two young, recently single friends, Ben and Alice, who decide to escort one another to the summer's string of weddings because everyone around them is getting married. Their plan is for Ben to be Alice's wingman and vice versa as they each try to hook up with someone new and wonderful. The result is a fine rom-com. The leads are played by a couple of show-biz legacy kids: Jack Quaid, son of actors Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan, and Maya

Erskine, daughter of jazz drummer Peter Erskine. They're both really good, and Maya is a genuine discovery — brash, sometimes profane, yet lovable. *Plus One* may seem like a trifle at first. Still, it has so many honest moments about modern relationships and the wavering line between friendship and love that it is, in fact, quite a gem.

VINTAGE LOVE FROM THE VAULTS

As alluded to in this piece, there are many vintage romantic movies that deserve a revisit and are available on cable outlets or via the streaming services with deep libraries. On the classic comedy side, you'll find Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert bickering and falling for one another during a road trip in Frank Capra's adorable 1934 rom-com *It Happened One Night*. How about *The Lady Eve*, the piquant, surprisingly moving 1941 screwball comedy about a female con artist (Barbara Stanwyck) trying to fleece the nerdy heir (Henry Fonda) to a brewery fortune — a masterpiece from the masterful filmmaker Preston Sturges? Also of this wacky ilk: *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940), *Bringing Up Baby* (1938), and *His Girl Friday* (1940).

Legendary tear-jerkers in the manner of *An Affair to Remember* include the 1942 wartime gem *Casablanca* — pure power and passion in a tale of reunit-

ed star-crossed lovers Rick (Humphrey Bogart) and Ilsa (Ingrid Bergman) who try to survive treacherous circumstances in the exotic North African city of the title. Along similarly heart-breaking lines: the evergreen *Gone with the Wind* (1939), *A Matter of Life and Death* a.k.a. *Stairway to Heaven* (1946), and *Brief Encounter* (1945).

Roman Holiday, Audrey Hepburn's delightful 1953 coming-out party, is a chaste pleasure wherein she plays a princess who meets a smitten newspaperman (Eddie Albert) and goes among commoners for the first time. The grandiose 1967 adaptation of the best-selling novel *Doctor Zhivago* presents suave Omar Sharif and dewy Julie Christie as its lead lovers amid snowy post-Russian Revolution landscapes. For fantasy fans, Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* is the artist's visionary, dreamlike 1946 take on the *Beauty and the Beast* fable.

MAKING YOUR HEART SING

You can even go the musical route with the brightly-colored 1964 French bauble *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, starring a young Catherine Deneuve and featuring the bittersweet songs of Michel Legrand. And *West Side Story* — the 1961 movie of the Broadway hit — moves Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* to New York's inner city neighborhoods and updates it with enduring music by Leonard Bernstein and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim.

Great couples and great couplings abound in the studio vaults: Bogie and Bacall in *To Have and Have Not*, Woody Allen and Diane Keaton in *Annie Hall*, Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore in *Ghost*, Richard Gere and Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman*, Jack Lemmon and Shirley MacLaine in *The Apartment*, and Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet in *Titanic*. And if you're feeling particularly randy, the go-to comic couple is Meg Ryan and Billy Crystal in 1989's *When Harry Met Sally*; the orgasm-at-a-deli scene will either quell your erotic impulses or fire you up, even as it makes you laugh.

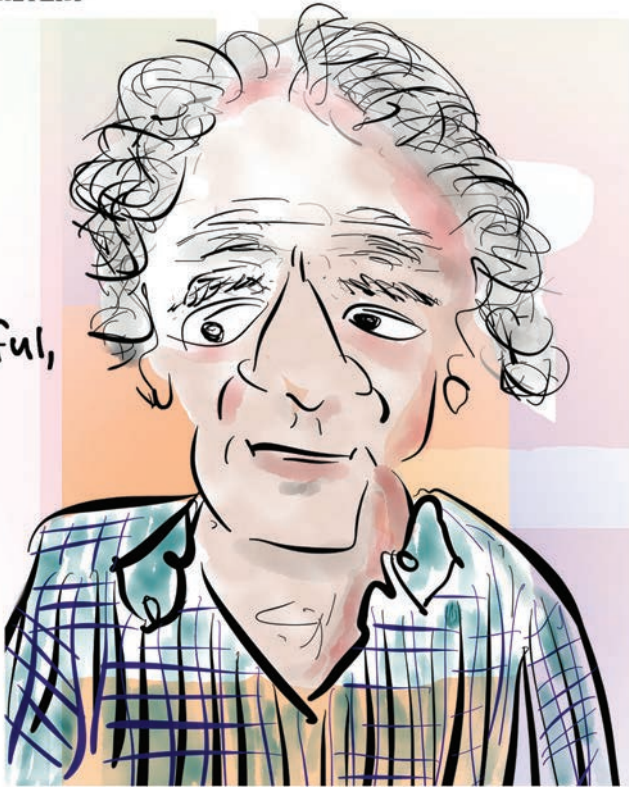
Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture on Michael Snyder's Culture Blast, via GABNet.net, Roku, Spotify, and YouTube, and The Mark Thompson Show on KGO radio. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster

‘Emma’ is a fresh, delightful interpretation of Austen’s 19th century comedy of manners.



OUR CULTURE
BY JOE DWORETZKY

I am hopeful,
kind of



2021

Finding hope in 2021

BY LIZ FARRELL

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THE start of 2021 to feel like a rinse and repeat of 2020, between surging Covid numbers and the insurrection at the Capitol — and that was just the first 10 days. Unfortunately, turning the page on a calendar did not make all of our problems go away. We are still dealing with the pandemic, political divisiveness in our country, racial injustice, inequity in education and off-the-charts crime in our city. However, with promising news of a vaccine distribution plan, I am determined to stick to my new year's resolution of keeping my kids and myself hopeful. Here are a few ways we can do that:

COMMIT TO SELF-CARE

Taking care of our bodies and our minds is something we teach our children from a young age, but when life all around feels heavy and daunting it becomes all the more important. It is all about the basics such as brushing your hair and teeth every day, getting dressed, and as I remind my sons, this includes changing your underwear and socks every day. When you are working or learning remotely, these basics can easily slip by the wayside.

It is also important to keep up with the care that makes us feel good. For me that is my morning Zoom workout or a walk with a

friend. For our kids, self-care may look different, but the goal is the same — to integrate positive habits into their daily routine. This could be keeping a journal, mindful coloring, or meditation. Before the pandemic I could probably count on one hand how many times I had meditated, but this has become a nightly ritual with my 8-year-old. We listen to a 10-minute relaxation and sleep meditation, and it has really improved our sleep and our ability to calm our minds and slow down the anxious thoughts that can race in our heads.

GET INVOLVED AND GIVE BACK

Another way we can find hope is by getting involved and giving back in our community. This helps us keep perspective and allows us to focus on something bigger than ourselves. During the pandemic this could be diving into an issue we care about, which for me was reopening playgrounds. As a family we have also done a lot of volunteer work. Without the busy sports schedules and social calendars, we have more time to give back. We have done things remotely like writing letters to troops overseas or thank-you notes to first responders. We have also had some wonderful experiences together packing food at a pantry and pop-up food bank.

Over the summer, I was feeling especially helpless and hopeless



Have a plan to keep yourself and your kids hopeful. PHOTO: FIZKES

about what was happening in our city in regard to crime. I have witnessed numerous instances of blatant stealing at Walgreens. Then fall came and we found our kids would be able to return to school, which has been a blessing, but I am constantly aware of the thousands of children who need to be in school for food security, safety, and resources, and who are not. So I am working with an organization, TogetherSE, on webinars with speakers on these topics to better understand them and what we can do to make effective change.

STAY POSITIVE

This one may be the hardest and the one that is easier said

than done. However, optimism is a learned behavior and is a teachable skill that we can model for our children. Part of this is how we are able to reframe our thoughts or find a different outlook. When my teenagers tell me how mean I am that they can't go to their friend's house and how they are stuck at home with nothing to do, I try to help them reframe how they are feeling by reminding them to think of it more as being safe at home with an opportunity to connect with their family. After a few major eye rolls they usually get the point even if they will never admit it. At family dinners we usually take time to say what we are grateful for that day. Grat-

itude is a great way to train our brains to see the positive.

These past 11 months have challenged us and our children, and it looks like it might continue this way for a bit longer. As parents when we start to feel overwhelmed and discouraged, try this: turn it off and tune it out. Model for your kids when those feelings start to arise to turn off the television, stay off social media, and do something good for yourself or your community. There are known physical and mental benefits to staying hopeful and optimistic, and as hard as it may seem at times, it is like I always tell my kids: "nothing is impossible."

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How to feel better about feeling bad

BY THALIA HALE

THE COVID PANDEMIC HAS HEIGHTENED our mental health dilemma in this country with direct effects of the illness and indirect effects of isolation, unemployment, and financial uncertainty.

Depression can also be associated with many physical conditions including headaches, chronic pain, ADHD, sleep disorders, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), fibromyalgia, and more.

Sadly, depression is a condition that has been growing rapidly as there are 10 times more people affected by major depression now than in 1945. Though depression can be linked with change in brain chemistry and genetics, there are societal changes impacting this condition.

With a modern fast-paced lifestyle, we have become more "self-focused." Our concerns and problems are solely ours and not shared with our community. In non-Westernized societies, the individual concerns become group concerns.

Psychological studies since the 1950s show that the way we perceive the world has changed. Instead of feeling like we have control over what happens to us, we are more likely to believe we have little control over our life outcome. People who believe they are in control of their fate are more likely to take care of their health, enjoyably advance their careers, and engage in community roles. The rise

in this shift of perspective mimics the rising rate of depression.

FUEL YOUR MOOD

Research has shown that a healthful diet can minimize risk of severe depression. In the United States, processed foods are making up 60 percent of grocery store purchases. Foods associated with a higher likelihood of depression included processed meats, sugar-containing foods and drinks, white bread, white potatoes, and alcohol.

A whole foods diet including vegetables, protein, and liver can supply the nutrients like B12, folate, B6, and magnesium needed for healthier brain chemistry. Hard to stomach for some, but liver is mentioned because it is a powerhouse of energy supporting nutrients.

By maintaining a healthy blood sugar balance using a low-sugar diet, one can reduce inflammation throughout the body, including the brain. The difficulty that people affected by depression face is that many processed foods contain sugar, which temporarily elevate the happy brain chemical, serotonin. This makes a lifestyle shift particularly challenging, because sugar perpetuates cravings and emotional eating. This is where the support of medical professionals and loved ones is incredibly helpful.

Using dietary interventions can be empowering, as people have the opportunity to feel that they do have control of the life they lead.

MOVE YOUR BODY

Exercise is an incredible tool to get the good endorphins flowing, and it can be as simple as taking a leisurely walk. It is especially helpful to reduce anxiety symptoms, as it allows your body to detox excessive energy.

In studies, subjects both on and off antidepressant medications experienced more long-term improvement when they implemented a regular exercise regimen. The challenging element of exercise in many people affected by depression is that they are also affected by chronic pain.

Like diet, it can be a double edged sword where it hurts to move and it also hurts to be immobile. Again, in these instances it is important to incorporate health professionals who give guidance on safe movements and progress forward.

SETTLE YOUR MIND

In our modern world, we are potentially surrounded by stimulus from the moment we wake up until we fall asleep. And after some time of being in the habit of being busy, we have to pump some heavy breaks to bring back space for being quiet. A few tools to bring you back to the present moment include yoga, tai chi, gratitude practice, inspirational quotes sprinkled around the house, and meditation.

These tools take time to become habits, but many find by taking a moment to clear their minds they actually find more

productivity. This time can help you to take a step back to assess what is simply keeping you busy and what is actually making you happy. This practice further reinforces a feeling of empowerment over one's own outcome.

CONSIDER ANTIDEPRESSANTS

If someone is suffering from depression, making these changes might feel like moving mountains, and antidepressant medications may be necessary. Due to the stigma surrounding mental health, many people avoid the use of medications. However, the support of medication may be what is needed for someone to feel clearer and to be able to make healthy changes.

It is important to consult with a health professional about different options and create the best plan of action.

THE TORTOISE WINS

To make lasting changes in our health, it is important to take small, achievable steps and understand which domino has to fall first to initiate the rest. There is also no better time than the present to make these changes.

Thalia Hale is a naturopathic doctor who holistically addresses the root cause of disease with particular focus in hormones, digestion, and chronic infections. For more information, visit her website: drthalia.com.



There are reasons for optimism in Bay Area real estate. PHOTO: GAREY DE MARTINI

Real estate’s new normal

The housing market looks ready for a big 2021

BY GAREY DE MARTINI

THE NEW YEAR IS WELL UPON US, and thankfully 2020 is now long gone. Of course, there will be carryover — many of the challenges we faced in 2020 are still unfortunately much a part of our daily lives. But we can all hope for a better tomorrow, and truly take comfort in knowing that in the not-too-distant future Covid-19 will be less of a factor, and consequently the economy and our lives will be able to return to a near-normal.

All in all, 2020 was a rather remarkable year for San Francisco real estate. In spite of the pandemic, a battered economy, and an interruption in the way properties could be sold, home values actually went up in the city.

According to the San Francisco Association of Realtors, based on a rolling 12 months of data, the median price for a single family home in 2020 was \$1,650,000, up 3.1 percent over 2019 — and an all-time annual high. Meanwhile, the median price for a condo or loft during the same period was \$1,206,000, down 3.1 percent from the previous year.

HOUSING HOPE

There were 2,229 single-family homes sold in 2020, up 2.3 percent over 2019. And there were 2,426 condos or lofts sold, down 4.3 percent from the previous year.

According to Ron Wong with Compass Real Estate, December ended strong. “Responding to off-market deals, expired listings and vaccine talk, serious buyers started to resurface,” he said. “At the same time, a large number of sellers began to coordinate with agents to prepare for the listing of their homes in 2021.”

Momentum carried into January. Early in the month buyers were actively looking, and there were many multiple-offer situations on single-family homes. According to several sources, the real estate market was especially strong in Marin and the East Bay.

“A Sunset house went on the market and two days later got multiple pre-emptive offers,” said Mike Tekulsky, Wong’s partner at Compass. “In the East Bay, a North Oakland house got twelve offers and will sell at least 45 percent over asking,” he added.

Low interest rates and good weather contributed to the strong start. Condominiums continue to be the best bargain in the city, and savvy buyers are beginning to catch on. When things open up again industry insiders believe that there will be a big increase in demand, and consequently price. Now they say might be the best time to get a foothold in the condo market.

There is a chance that open homes may be a thing of the past, even postpandemic. They were once considered an important part of the home-buying process, but according to a recent SFGate.com report, buyers have grown comfortable with searching for homes online and touring them remotely. If genuinely interested, buyers can ask listing agents for a viewing appointment.

For both agents and sellers, this is actually a positive change, because in the past the majority of people visiting a home during an open house were never actually going to buy the property. Buyers benefit as well, as they are no longer rushed to look at as many homes as possible in an all-too-short two-hour window on any given weekend.

PROPOSITION 19

What is now just beginning to emerge is the impact of Proposition 19 on the market. This is a hot topic among real estate agents, according to Wong.

Proposition 19, billed as “The Property Tax Transfers, Exemptions, and Revenue for Wildfire Agencies and Counties Amendment,” passed with 51.1 percent of California voter approval in November. As a result, 2021 will see sweeping changes in property taxes assessed on personal residences. Those changes are just now coming on line.

For residents age 55 and older, severely disabled, or a victim of a wildfire or natural disaster, there is much to like about Proposition 19. Effective April 1, 2021, those eligible homeowners can sell their homes and take their property tax base with them to any other property they buy for the same value or less in the state of California.

Teresa J. Rhyne, with the TR Law Group, explains the proposition and its ramifications clearly in a recent column published by *The Press Enterprise*. She notes that residents over age 55 can also benefit from the proposition even if they’re looking to upgrade to a more expensive home.

According to Rhyne, the rub is for their children. Essentially, beginning on the 16th of this month, a transfer of a principal residence by a parent to a child is only exempt if the parent was using the property as their principal residence and the child will also be using the home as his or her principal residence immediately following the transfer.

The details on all of this can become fairly involved. Suffice it to say, this is uncharted territory. However, because of this proposition, there will most likely be an increase in the volume of homes sold this year and beyond.

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Wells Fargo Bank.....	2100 Fillmore St.
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Pets Unlimited (Inside).....	2343 Fillmore St.
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Russian Hill/Nob Hill

Crepes House	1755 Polk St.
Corner at Polk.....	1600 Jackson St.
Peets Coffee	2139 Polk St.
Starbucks Coffee	1505 Vallejo St.
Beauty Supply	1409 Green St.
Corner at Polk.....	1485 Vallejo St.
1760 Restaurant	1687 Washington St.
Nob Hill Grocery (Inside).....	1600 Hyde St.

North Beach/Embarcadero

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North Beach Pizza	501 Union St.
Family Hat Makers	1612 Stockton St.
Mario’s	662 Union St.
The Board Room.....	693 Green St.
Cole Hardware	627 Vallejo St.
St. Francis Church.....	414 Columbus Ave.
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Corner at Green.....	1511 Stockton St.
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PIER 35.....	Pier 35
Park Opposite Ferry Plaza.....	1 Embarcadero
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Other

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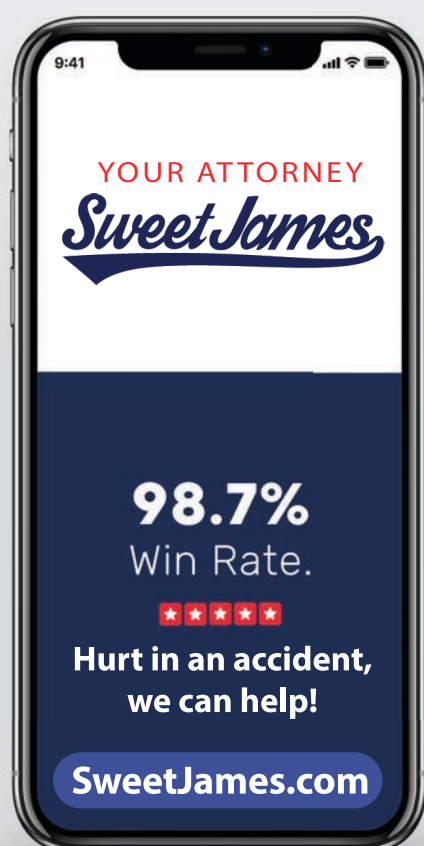
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