



Season's doings

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Liz Farrell offers guidance for destressing your holidays. p. 10



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Hansuke Yamamoto in Helgi Tomasson's *Nutcracker*. PHOTO: ERIK TOMASSON / COURTESY S.F. BALLET

S.F. Ballet returns to the stage with the 'Nutcracker'

NOTHING SAYS THE HOLIDAYS quite like the San Francisco Ballet's *Nutcracker*. This year's production is particularly special because it marks the ballet's return to the stage for in-person performances after 21 months as the city emerges from Covid restrictions.

The company has a long history with Tchaikovsky's ballet, staging the first American production in

1944. Helgi Tomasson's production premiered in 2004, and is set in San Francisco during the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. It includes a backdrop of the city's famous Victorian houses, in addition to scenes from the exposition, making it a wonderful tribute to San Francisco.

"I wanted to capture the hope, progress, and civic pride felt by San Francis-

cans following the 1906 earthquake," says Tomasson. We're approaching this year's *Nutcracker* and the 2022 Season in a similar spirit."

San Francisco Ballet, War Memorial Opera House, 201 Van Ness Avenue, 29 performances and related programming Dec. 10-30; 415-865-2000, sfballet.org

— L. Majer

REYNOLDS RAP | Opinion

Is the Port of San Francisco trying to put an 80-year-old crab company out of business?

BY SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

THE ALIOTO-LAZIO FISH COMPANY, OPENED IN THE 1940s on San Francisco's iconic Fisherman's Wharf, is the last of five fishing businesses started by Tom Lazio. Opened with relatives Frank Alioto and Sal Tarantino, it was a beacon to local fishermen who unloaded fresh fish and crab, sold directly to the public at wholesale prices. Granddaughters Annette and Angela started helping out in their teens, mostly in the back office. When Lazio passed away in 1998 at the age of 92, wife Annetta Alioto Lazio took over and, when she passed away in 2003 at age 98, "the girls," as they're known on the wharf, took over the day-to-day operations. It wasn't easy in a male-dominated industry. The same fishermen who had worked with their grandfather for 30 years refused to deliver products. Their phone lines were cut, and when they were working they occasionally delivered death threats. Undeterred, the women found fishermen up north to come to the rescue, and today the Alioto-Lazio Fish Company is the last commercial fish processing and selling business on the wharf.

The work is not for the faint of heart, involving long hours from early morning until late at night unloading boats, fileting fish, shoveling ice, putting Dungeness crabs in the live tanks, and cooking hundreds of the prized crustaceans. During California's season they're from the briny bay just beyond the wharf, while out of season the crabs

REYNOLDS RAP, continued on 5

SUPERVISOR | Opinion

When the perfect becomes the enemy of the good in housing politics

BY CATHERINE STEFANI

AT OUR OCT. 26 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING, I thought we would be hearing a routine California Environmental Quality Act appeal in Supervisor Matt Haney's district. As an attorney, I have always strictly adhered to that law during these appeals, refusing to allow them to be used to delay or kill projects unless there is a strong legal reason to do so. So when I reviewed the planned project at 469 Stevenson Street before the board meeting, I was certain the appeal would be denied.

The proposed project consisted of 495 units of housing on space Nordstrom had used for valet parking; 118 units were affordable, equaling 24 percent of the project. Currently occupying the parking lot are homeless tents. The project was also near a BART station and located within reach of thousands of potential jobs for residents. We all know building housing near transit makes obvious sense. Further, it included retail space, many community benefits, and would have created more than 1,000 union jobs at a time when more than 1,400 skilled workers are out of work.

But no — apparently not good enough. When the arguments against the project ensued after the hearing, I was somewhat perplexed. The reasons for granting the appeal (made by an affordable housing nonprofit) didn't add up for me. I heard a variety of reasons, including gentrifica-

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MICHAEL SNYDER ON ... FILM



Adam Driver and Lady Gaga star in Ridley Scott's *House of Gucci*. PHOTO: FABIO LOVINO © 2021 METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PICTURES INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Stellar star turns bring real to reel

Recent docudramas and biopics offer impressive performances

BY MICHAEL SNYDER

IT MAY SEEM LIKE EVERY OTHER movie released lately is based on a true story, and that perception is not too far off. Even if the indus-

try has become over reliant on such adaptations, some of the best feature films released over the past few weeks could be labeled docudramas, biopics or, at least, inspired by actual people and events. And all of them

are graced by bravura lead performances.

'HOUSE OF GUCCI'

If there were any questions about Stefani "Lady Gaga" Germanotta's bona fides as an actress, her turn as Patrizia Reggiani in director Ridley Scott's fascinating and often droll *House of Gucci* should dispel them. Gaga, the Grammy-decorated singer, songwriter, and musician, earned respect and best actress Oscar, BAFTA, and Golden Globe nominations for her movie debut in the 2018 remake of *A Star Is Born*, and she should definitely receive some awards season love for her vibrant, complex portrayal of Patrizia.

House of Gucci traces the history of the famed Italian fashion house from the time Patrizia, the working-class daughter of a successful trucking company owner, met reserved business student Maurizio Gucci — one of the potential heirs to the Gucci empire — and seduced by the opulence and glamour, she decides to get hold of as much of it as she can. Patrizia and Maurizio (a quietly calculating Adam Driver) begin a relationship that leads to a tempestuous marriage that embroils the couple in a battle

SNYDER, continued on 7

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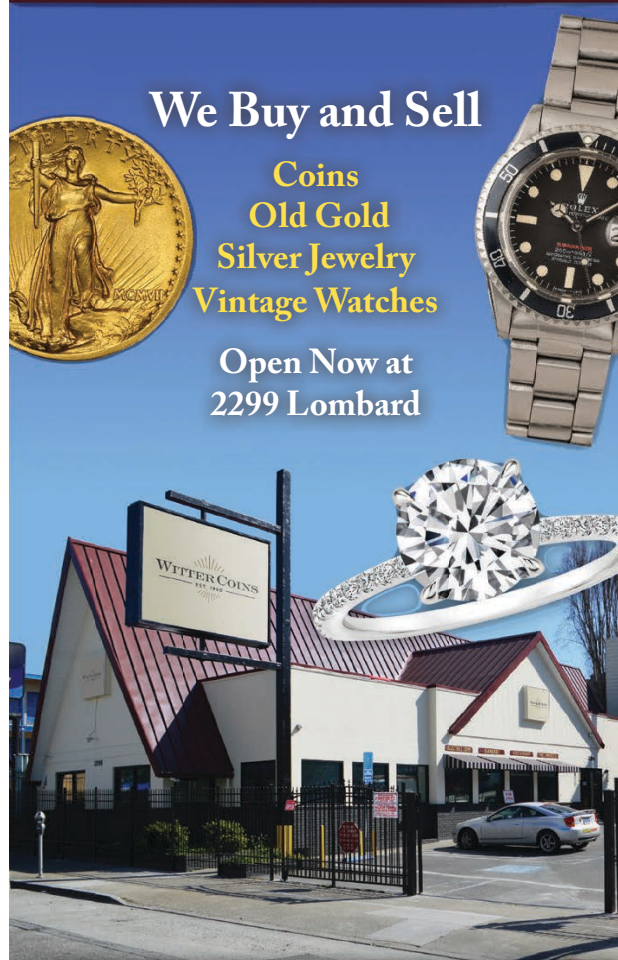
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Supervisor

continued from cover

tion, shadow impact, and vague seismic concerns. Apparently these concerns were not addressed adequately by the Planning Department in its 1,129 page environmental report. The Planning Commission also approved the project, and the parking lot was already zoned for housing and listed for residential development.

So when I saw the vote was going south for Supervisor Haney — a project he approved in his District 6 — I proudly seconded his motion to deny the appeal, stating that I don't know how housing is ever going to be built in this city if we continue to let the perfect be the enemy of the good. I also pointed out that the board said the week prior that we needed more family housing and this project had exactly that. The board voted 8-3 to grant the appeal, while I dissented, with Supervisors Haney and Safai.

This shocked not only me but many others, including the State of California, which is now investigating the issue and may bring a lawsuit against the city for improperly denying a zoning-compliant housing project. If the lawsuit is successful, the project will be approved, and the city could be on the hook for additional monetary penalties and damages.

We cannot continue to reject projects like this if we ever hope to address our city's housing shortage. The cost of housing in San Francisco is among the highest of any U.S. city, and it's too expensive for many. It's become incredibly difficult to recruit teachers, nurses, and first responders to our city, because they cannot find a place to live, and we cannot have a thriving city if working people cannot afford to live here.

D2: DENSER THAN YOU THINK

These discussions always bring up what all 11 districts are doing with housing production. We know that production is low across the entire city, and current population density varies greatly among neighborhoods. People often wrongly assume that our D2 neighborhoods are sparsely populated. However, District 2, along with Districts 6, 3, and 5 are among the densest in the city. About 85 percent of the households in District 2 are in multiunit buildings. Parcels in District 2 have, on average, about 3.6 units of housing on them.

The Marina, Pacific Heights, the Presidio, and Presidio Heights all have fewer single-family housing than the citywide average. This density makes it difficult to find new parcels for housing development, but when those parcels are available, we

should make the most of them. Despite these challenges, I have supported multiple housing projects in District 2 that have done exactly that.

MY PROJECT ENTITLEMENTS

I have entitled more than 1,000 units of new housing in District 2 during my first term, which is more units than built in the district since 2010. The projects include 2800 Geary Street, 3333 California Street, 2670 Geary Street (the Lucky Penny site), and the former California Pacific Medical Center site on California Street. In addition to housing, these projects add new community-serving amenities, like public open space, ground floor retail, and child-care facilities. I successfully pushed the developer to increase the density of 3333 California Street by adding 186 units of affordable housing for seniors instead of the large-scale office space originally planned.

The Lucky Penny space is a prime example of how to make the most of a parcel. Originally zoned for only 21 units within the allowed height of 80 feet, I passed legislation to increase the density to allow for 101 units within the eight-story building envelope (which will be more affordable by design given the smaller size of the units). This project is located within a transit-rich corridor and around many amenities, fulfilling the desire for walkable, environmentally conscious neighborhoods. I also passed legislation to make certain the developer's inclusionary housing fee of \$4.5 million stays within a one and a half mile radius of the project instead of the larger citywide fund to help facilitate more affordable housing in District 2 — including more affordable senior housing.

Projects like these prove that we can find new ways to increase density and build housing in dense neighborhoods without compromising neighborhood character or placing vulnerable communities at risk.

The project on Stevenson Street, while beneficial, would not have solved the housing crisis alone, but it's certainly a prime example of how we got into this mess. Since 2010, San Francisco has authorized only about half of the housing needed to meet current demand. Instead of finding fault with every housing proposal, city leaders need to take an active role in helping housing projects over the finish line. Whether it's housing or other challenges like crime and homelessness, too often in San Francisco ideology trumps common-sense beneficial solutions — also known as letting the perfect be the enemy of the good. On so many levels, San Francisco no longer has time for that.

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Gov. Gavin Newsom moved quickly to help local governments respond to the looting spree. PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA

The No Sympathy for the Devil tour Or, The Grinch Who Looted Christmas

BY JOHN ZIPPERER

"We just installed our expensive new home security system. I thought the vats of hot oil & the machine gun turrets were excessive, but after the raids on the Nordstroms in Walnut Creek, I said ok."

—Bestselling novelist Lee Goldberg

THERE'S AN OLD AXIOM THAT "ALL politics is local." If only it would stay there.

Here in San Francisco and across California, we're ending 2021 with a lot of our dirty laundry dumped in piles in the front yard in clear view of the neighbors. Perhaps in 2022, we can do better?

WWJD: WHAT WOULD JED DO?

In the fictional world of *The West Wing*, Democratic political advisors begin to worry when Arnold Vinick launches his presidential campaign. Vinick, a not-very-conservative Republican senator from California, is particularly a threat because, as deputy chief of staff Josh Lyman says, "a Republican who wins in California wipes us out in the Electoral College." Without the Golden State's treasure chest of electoral votes, the Democrats are kaput nationally, just as the Republicans can't lose Texas and have any chance of gaining the White House.

In the real world, it's a good news/bad news situation. California has only gotten bluer since *West Wing* first aired, and the recent farcical gubernatorial recall only underscored the role of the state GOP as the Nickelback in the political arena. But California hasn't only become more Democratic, it's also become, well, weirder. And others are noticing, which hurts Democrats nationally.

Crime is one topic national Democrats should definitely not let California take the lead on. If it's not videos of staff watching helplessly while people fill bags with stolen goods at Walgreens, then it's stories of flash mobs looting high-end stores. Both serve to elect Republicans. A recent national NBC News poll gave the GOP a 22-point lead in terms of ability to handle crime.

In the wake of numerous looting reports, Gov. Gavin Newsom came out swinging, promising state support for prosecuting the criminals. "I have no sympathy, no empathy whatsoever for people smashing and grabbing, stealing people's items, creating havoc and terror on our streets. None. Period," Newsom said, according to CBS Bay Area.

"We want real accountability," Newsom said. "We want people prosecuted and we want people to feel safe this holiday season. . . . We're talking about safety, people's

health. We want to protect people and we want to respect people's rights, including small business owners — and I say this knowing that my business has been broken into three times this year."

For his part, San Francisco's embattled district attorney Chesa Boudin also talked uncharacteristically tough, promising prosecutions while also shrugging off any blame for the violent crime wave.

In the Boudin-or-not-to-Boudin debate raging in San Francisco, all crime reports are seen through the lens of the need to defend or attack the district attorney. Crime is up across the country, not just here; but as very blue cities across the country vote on crime-related issues and candidates — whether it's Minneapolis or Atlanta or New York — voters and policymakers are increasingly choosing to hire more police, not fewer. Whether those actions can serve to rebalance that 22-point GOP lead on the issue of crime won't really be seen until the next round of elections. Which are likely to be brutal for Democrats.

BETTER THAN GUAM

Another area where San Francisco is a poster child for incompetence is housing.

Several decades ago, I was amused to see a bumper sticker in my Midwestern home state reading "Wisconsin: Far Better than Guam." Maybe there's another city that performs worse with housing than San Francisco, in which case hey, we're far better than Guam; but even if so, that's no cause for patting ourselves on the back.

San Francisco supervisors once again shed crocodile tears for the city's housing-challenged after they voted to kill a planned housing development on a SOMA parking lot, despite it providing around 100 affordable units. (District 2 Supervisor Catherine Stefani was one of only three supervisors who supported the development.) Local intra-lefty politics are exacerbating the city's already-terrible housing policy, as Dan Walters noted for CalMatters: "Supervisors who voted against the development offered various rationales, but it appears that one unspoken factor may be retribution against Supervisor Matt Haney, whose district includes the project, and who supported it. Haney is running for one of San Francisco's seats in the state Assembly against David Campos, whom most other supervisors support."

It's like *Mean Girls*, with quorum votes.

Meanwhile, state officials in Sacramento stopped dictating to department stores how to display their wares long enough to notify San Francisco officials that the city

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NEWS BRIEFS : Drought, shopping, and more

Home for the holidays

Shopping local and saving water

BY JOHN ZIPPERER

MORE DROUGHT MEASURES

If you thought that atmospheric river a little while ago would take care of our parched state, think again. The drought continues, and as a result Mayor London Breed and the city's Public Utilities Commission declared a water shortage emergency, approving plans to conserve water and reduce its usage. The city set a target of a 10 percent reduction in water usage that will apply to all 2.7 million of SFPUC's customers in San Francisco, Alameda, Santa Clara, and San Mateo.

"We are in a drought with far-reaching consequences, and it has become clear we all need to do even more to address it," said SFPUC General Manager Dennis Herrera. "San Franciscans have been doing their part and have some of the lowest water usage in the state. This emergency water shortage declaration will help all of our customers pull together and move in the same direction."

SFPUC will implement a temporary drought surcharge for retail water and wastewater customers of up to 5 percent beginning in April 2022.

The city move follows Gov. Gavin Newsom's declaration of a drought emergency for 50 of the state's 58 counties earlier this year. Newsom called for people to voluntarily reduce water use by 15 percent.

SHOP AND DINE IN THE 49

The city launched its eighth annual Shop and Dine in the 49 campaign to promote local businesses during the holiday season. The campaign kicked off on Dec. 1 and features a trolley car visiting various neighborhood shopping districts, a City Hall Holiday Pop-Up (beginning Dec. 7, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.) with local artists and makers, and other activities and promotions.

"Small businesses are an essential part of what makes San Francisco such a vibrant and desirable place to live, work and visit," said District 2 Supervisor Catherine Stefani. "As we emerge from the pandemic, we must do everything we can to support our local, small businesses to ensure they fully recover. I urge every single San Franciscan to join me and Shop and Dine in the 49 this holiday season."

To find out when the trolley tour comes to your local neighborhood shopping district, visit shopdine49.com.

CRIME SNAPSHOT

For the year to date through Nov. 21, Northern Police Station reported a mixed bag of crime statistics for the district it covers. Violent crimes were mostly up, with human trafficking involving sex up from one to three, robbery up 3.17 percent (from 284 to 293), and assault up 16.84 percent (from 196 to 229). Property crimes

were all down except for larceny theft, which rose 5.12 percent; declining were burglary (down 13.95 percent), motor vehicle theft (down 11.03 percent) and arson (down 5.41 percent).

In other Northern Station news, Capt. Paul Yeop has moved on to a new position in the police chief of staff's office. As of mid-November, Lt. Jason Sawyer took over command of Northern Station as acting captain.

BRIEFLY NOTED

The Presidio Trust announced a spurt of new lease signings for commercial space on **Crispy Field and the Main Post**, including The Bay School, the artificial intelligence company Cresta, women's health care provider The Pill Club, ad agency Camp and King, and others . . . some vehicles will find their way onto the Great Highway on days it's closed to traffic; it's part of a three-month pilot program that will bring **food trucks to the Upper Great Highway**, reports the Recreation and Park Department . . . the University of California San Francisco is launching a three-year pilot program to invest millions of dollars in **local housing and minority-owned small businesses**, including ASIAN, Inc., REDF Impact Investing Fund, Pacific Community Ventures, and the San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund . . . And as of Nov. 13, the **North Beach San Francisco Public Library branch** resumed seven-day service; it is open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday; 10 a.m.-8 p.m. on Tuesday; 1-8 p.m. on Wednesday; 1-6 p.m. on Friday; and 1-5 p.m. on Sunday.

FACTS AND FIGURES

10: ranking of San Francisco in a survey of "Most Instagrammable Skylines" by photography rights platform Pixsy; Jakarta, Indonesia, was in first place . . . **1 million:** combined number of new jobs expected to be added in 2022 in Boston, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, according to a report from ThinkWhy . . . **10:** ranking of California in CardConnect's survey for states "with the highest search interest in 'start a business with no money,' but California didn't even show up in the top 20 of states listed by new business applications . . . **50:** this year's tree lighting by the Nob Hill Association in late November was the 50th consecutive year of the tradition . . . **4:** ranking of San Francisco in rent.com's list of the best cities for public transportation; Boston was in first place . . . **double:** during the pandemic, 12- to 13-year-old U.S. children went from spending 3.8 hours to 7.7 hours a day online, according to UCSF researchers.

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Politics

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might have violated state law with its multiple votes to kill housing projects. Who's the criminal now?

There is good reason to expect that midway through 2022, San Francisco voters will choose to have a different district attorney. But so far, voters have yet to hold their elected officials accountable for the city's miserable housing decisions. Matt Haney might be able to change that if he

successfully sticks Campos with the label of NIMBY king.

The best reason for getting crime and housing policies correct is to make our local world here in this 49-square-mile city better for ourselves, our neighbors, and our visitors. But the second best reason is to prevent "San Francisco values" from once again being used to cancel Democratic officeholders across the nation.

Feedback: letters@marinatimes.com; Author: john@marinatimes.com

Reynolds Rap

continued from cover

come from Washington. As the only company on the wharf to ship crab, they do a booming business during the holidays, which usually coincides with the opening of the season (though it's been getting later each year). Need a gift for a crab lover who has everything? Send them the San Francisco Package, number two: a pair of Dungeness crabs and a loaf of the city's legendary sourdough bread.

Standing in the cavernous building at 440 Jefferson Street (bonus, they have parking), I watch a feisty crab lift one claw over the tank as if trying to escape. Angela "Angel" Cincotta notes that their shells are too heavy and eventually "he'll fall back in." Nearby, giant steel pots emit the sweet smell of cooked crab. In the front, petrale sole (one of my favorites) glistens on crushed ice. Not only is it impeccably fresh, the price is better than you'll find at any supermarket. Despite all the hard work and years of establishing themselves as women fish purveyors in a man's world, Angel and her sister Annette Traverso say their biggest battle has been with the Port of San Francisco, which manages 7.5 miles of City waterfront and reports to the five member Port Commission.

OIL SPILLS AND RED TAGS

According to Angel and Annette, in 1999 plans emerged at the California Department of Boating and Waterways displaying new designs for the Port of San Francisco that included a "restaurant row" and J-10, the lot where Alioto-Lazio sits, demolished for "open space." In August 2000, the Port handed Alioto-Lazio a three-day notice to cease all processing and vacate the premises. According to the Port of San Francisco, workers at the Hyde Street Harbor noticed damage, so they sent an engineer to inspect. That engineer returned a finding of rotting pilings that could "topple at any moment." Wharf J-10 was red tagged, and all equipment was ordered removed within seven days. Behind the main building in what is known as Fish Alley, a decrepit wooden shed was condemned. But it wasn't just any old shed — it was the place thousands of crabs were cooked and fish was unloaded from incoming boats for decades. "We know they want the land back," Angel says. "It's prime property."

In Dec. 1, 2001, the company won a \$3 million lawsuit against the Port, with help



Sisters Annette Traverso and Angela "Angel" Cincotta. PHOTO: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

from their attorney, Angela Alioto. ("She's our cousin from the political Alioto side," Annette says.) The lawsuit alleged the Port of San Francisco neglected its duties as a landlord to regularly inspect J-10 and keep them informed of its condition. The Port of San Francisco appealed, but in 2004 Alioto-Lazio prevailed and the jury award was upheld. Also in 2004, a suspicious two-alarm fire happened in the condemned fishing shed.

But the sisters had bigger fish to fry. Back in 2003, the Port of San Francisco notified tenants that fuel storage tanks owned by Exxon Mobil had leaked, contaminating the water and soil. From 2004 to 2007, Alioto-Lazio tried to work with the Board of Supervisors to do something about the contamination. "Annette's son Lucian was born without fingers on one hand," Angel says. "His birth corresponds directly with the clean-up job on the tank farm. He went to the meeting with us, just 10 years old, and he stood in front of the supervisors and held up his hand and begged them to test the soil so future kids wouldn't end up like him." Their district supervisor at the time was the same supervisor they have today: Aaron Peskin. "He's never done anything to help us," Angel says. "After that meeting the board made the decision to just demolish it and not do any testing."

And then it happened again.

In 2007, while demolishing Wharf J-10, the sisters say the Port of San Francisco deviated from its plans by pulling the piling from the ground, causing more oil to leach into the water and soil. "It took the demo crew over three hours to call the Office of Emergency Services," Angel says. Still, no action was taken against the Port of San Francisco. The following year, then-City Attorney Dennis Herrera sued Exxon Mobil, claiming 3,884 gallons

of petroleum and 210,000 pounds of tar had been found in the soil and groundwater near the former site of the fuel tanks at the address shared with Alioto-Lazio. "We asked to join the lawsuit," Annette says. "But Herrera said only the Port of San Francisco was damaged, so we had to sue separately." In June 2009, Alioto-Lazio filed their own lawsuit against Exxon Mobil and the Port of San Francisco for harming their family's business and health.

THE CRAB POTS CONSPIRACY

In 2010, Angel was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. "Of course, we wonder if it's related to the contamination," she says. In 2011, Alioto-Lazio closed for 10 months during the clean-up. "All we wanted to do is get back to our business," Angel says. "Instead, we were dealing with politics and the Big Oil industry." In 2012, the lawsuit against the Port of San Francisco and Exxon Mobil settled out of court.

Since reopening in November 2011, Angel and Annette say the Port of San Francisco has continued to harass them in what seems like a concerted effort. The stories are frightening — and in a city known for some of the worst government corruption in the country, entirely plausible. In 2018, while unloading a small catch, the hoist came down on Angel. "Had it been a full load, I would be dead," she says. Annette nods. "It was visibly tampered with. Someone in intel told her there was a contract out on her life and she should stay out of the dark."

While the experience was unnerving, Angel continued her daily routine. "A couple weeks later at 5 a.m. on Bay Street by the Safeway, a car comes alongside me and attempts to push me off the road into the parked cars. I slammed on the breaks and he had to overshoot me."

Then there's Anita Yao, the wharfinger in charge of collecting rents (a job that pays \$125,000 with salary and benefits). "She gave herself the title of harbormaster and the Port allowed it," Angel says. "They paid for her to take all these trips and make contacts in the industry, and now she's doing a wholesale seafood business on the side." During a meeting regarding the Lazio-Alioto leasehold, Yao presented architectural drawings "done with taxpayer money" for putting floating docks in for fishing boats. "That got stopped," Angel says.

Then in the spring of 2020, the distinctive sheen of fuel bubbled up yet again, stretching from Hyde Street Harbor to Leavenworth Street. "They've been trying to contain the oil leaking ever since," Angel says, pointing to the blue and green streaked water beyond a chain link fence. "They put in a reactive barrier to contain it, but that's full. Some of the workers told us with it being the third spill, this should be a superfund site."

On top of it all, last month the Port Commission voted unanimously to allow the sale of live Dungeness crab directly from fishing boats. They also voted to make permanent a program that allows whole fish to be sold from boats. "Businesses at the waterfront lost 40 percent of their revenue because of the pandemic," Port Executive Director Elaine Forbes said. At the October Port Commission meeting, Angel and other wholesalers expressed concern about creating "unfair business competition" with low permit fees for participating boats.

Despite pressure from the Port and no help from the Board of Supervisors, their current lease doesn't expire until 2036, and Angel says the ladies of Alioto-Lazio have no intention of giving up. "This is our life; it's in our blood. It meant a lot to our grandparents and our parents and it means a lot to us. Walking away isn't an option."

To find out what fresh fish is available, call Alioto-Lazio Fish Company in the morning 415-673-5868. To order for delivery visit online visit crabonline.com (they offer overnight shipping). To buy crab and fish in person, visit the storefront at 440 Jefferson Street at Fisherman's Wharf Mon-Fri 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sat. 7 a.m. to noon (closed Sundays).

E-mail: susan@marinatimes.com. Follow Susan and the Marina Times on Twitter: @SusanDReynolds and @TheMarinaTimes.

CITY AND COUNTY OF
SAN FRANCISCO

Prepared by The Office of the Clerk of the Board Pursuant to Admin. Code 2.81

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PUBLIC NOTICE

REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE

DECEMBER 2021

Tell the Redistricting Task Force where to draw the San Francisco Supervisorial District lines! Visit the Redistricting website for directions on how to virtually attend their meetings. Website: www.sf.gov/public-body/2020-census-redistricting-task-force Contact the Clerk, John Carroll, at (415) 554-4445 or rdtf@sfgov.org for more information.

ASSESSMENT APPEALS BOARD VACANCIES

Help resolve legal and value assessment issues between the Assessor's office and property owners. Board vacancies are as follows: Board #1 – two; Board #2 – three; and Board #3 – five. Hearings are quasi-judicial, conducted in a manner similar to a court setting, with evidence and testimony presented by the parties. The Board then evaluates the evidence and testimony and renders its decision. To be eligible for seat appointment, you must have a minimum of five years professional experience in California as either a: (1) public accountant; (2) real estate broker; (3) attorney; or (4) property appraiser accredited by a nationally recognized organization, or certified by either the Office of Real Estate Appraiser or the State Board of Equalization.

WOMEN, INFANT & CHILDREN (WIC) NUTRITION PROGRAM

San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFPDH) WIC Nutrition Program provides healthy foods, nutrition tips, breastfeeding support, health care referrals and community information. To learn about California WIC Program, visit www.MyFamily.WIC.ca.gov or call 1-888-942-9675. To enroll in SFPDH WIC Program visit, www.sfdph.org/wic to start your application or call 628-217-6890 to make an appointment. Newly pregnant individuals, working families, including military and migrant families are encouraged to apply! WIC welcomes dads, grandparents, foster parents, or guardians who care for eligible children.

CHILD SUPPORT MATTERS

Child support matters can be complicated, stressful, and confusing. The Department of Child Support Services helps parents understand the process so they know their rights and options for making and receiving support payments. We are available to assist you in person or by phone. Call us today at (866) 901-3212 or visit us online at www.sfgov.org/dcss to learn how we can help you. Schedule an appointment to open your case at <https://sfgov.org/dcss/opening-case>.

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CITY AND COUNTY OF
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REDISTRICTING OUTREACH NOTICE

DECEMBER 2021

THE REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE HAS BEGUN!

Every ten years, the district boundaries of San Francisco's Supervisorial districts are redrawn to ensure that each district maintains equal population of residents. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the redistricting process.

The Task Force needs your input!

Tell the Task Force where you would like to draw the San Francisco Supervisorial District lines!

As they convene, they will look to YOU and collect your opinions, ideas, and concerns around your District lines and the impacts to our communities.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- First Monday of Every Month at 6:00 p.m.
- Third Wednesday of Every Month at 6:00 p.m.

Please visit the website for information on Special Meetings.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- Attend meetings Please see the website for specific directions: www.sfelections.org/rdtf
- Submit comments by emailing rdtf@sfgov.org or calling (415) 554-4445
- Join the email list to receive updates issued by the Redistricting Task Force.
- To sign up, visit www.sfelections.org/rdtf
- Follow the Redistricting Task Force on Facebook and Twitter: @RedistrictSF

www.sfelections.org/rdtf

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Sofia Córdova shines a light on women refugees at the Chinese Cultural Center

BY SHARON ANDERSON

SOFIA CÓRDOVA'S VIDEO INSTALLATION *dawn_chorusiii: the fruit they don't have here* depicts the stories of six Bay Area women who journeyed to the United States as refugees, fleeing lives made untenable by political and religious persecution, extreme poverty, and gender violence. The hour-long video is constructed on a loop, welcoming visitors to enter or exit the story at any point of the narrative. Córdova invited the women to come together for a series of painting sessions to create a large, fantastical backdrop against which she filmed them as they told their stories.

Córdova is from Puerto Rico and is based in Oakland. Her work is diverse and ambitious, encompassing sci-fi as alternate history, dance music's liberatory dimensions, climate change, migration, revolution — historical and imagined — as it relates to class, gender, race, late capitalism, and its technologies. She is also half of the musical duo Xuxa Santamaria, which scores all her video and performance work.

COMMUNITY-BASED STORYTELLING

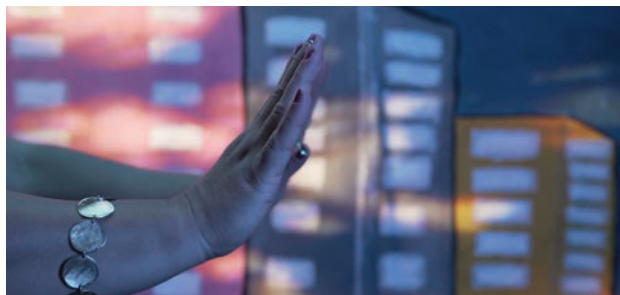
In 2018, the public art project, *A Body Reorganized*, found Córdova in collaboration with the Chinese Cultural Center and the San Francisco Art Commission to raise questions about the meaning of sanctuary and how it exists in the cultural imagination through the lives of six Bay Area individuals. It was during this project that Córdova met Chinese dissident Tian Shi, who is part of a community of asylum seekers from China's '89 Democracy Movement. Excitement about the project

spread through the community and, as a result, several women reached out to Córdova out of a need to share their experiences and be heard. While listening to their stories, the artist began to understand the need to make space for women from around the world to tell their stories of displacement. Issues relating to displacement and migration remain largely untold. The idea was proposed to have a long-form storytelling project to amplify immigrant and refugee women's voices and to bring a creative process to their experiences.

Córdova's *dawn_chorusiii* was created in conjunction with community-based agencies such as Gum Moon Women's Residence and EL/La Para Trans Latinas to find women interested in artistic collaboration and story sharing. The artist worked individually with each collaborator to help craft a retelling of journeys from China, Columbia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and more.

THE NATURE OF STORYTELLING

Córdova's work often blurs the lines between documentary and fantasy, with some stories taking on layers that seem from the imagination. The stories are intermingled and integrated with photos, animation, audio recordings, phone interviews, and scripted lines. In her artist statement, Córdova writes: "There are holes and omissions in this telling. Not all is told or told to conform with realism. This work is about the birds, rivers, trees, fruit, forests, apartment blocks, and the people and streets of six lives and the forces that lead one to leave the treasured and familiar behind. This work stresses that the future and the present and the past are never



Film stills from *dawn_chorusiii: the fruit they don't have here* by Sofía Córdova. Animation in collaboration with artist Kate Rhoades. IMAGES: COURTESY SOFIA CORDOVA

apart from one another and that borders only serve those in power."

"It is so important to amplify our diverse communities' stories through creativity," said Jenny Leung, CCC's executive director. "CCC is committed to uplifting underserved artists' voices for a just and equitable future."

41 ROSS

The film will be projected on a wall at the back of 41 Ross, a neighborhood art space and interactive studio in Chinatown, co-run by CCC and the Chinatown Community Center. The location brought an extra layer of historical relevance and meaning for the artist — showing the film in the heart of Chinatown binds the stories with an area of San Francisco known as a sanctuary for generations of immigrants.

The CCC is a nonprofit arts organization established in 1965; it is dedicated to elevating underserved communities while giving voice to equality through education and contemporary art.

The video installation is the final iteration of the *dawn_chorus* series, a docu-fantastical weaving of stories about climate change, gender violence, capitalism, empire, migration, and the places where these subjects intersect.

"dawn_chorusiii: the fruit they don't have here:" through Jan. 29, 2022 at 41 Ross, 41 Ross Alley, Wed.-Sat., 11 a.m.-4 p.m., free, 415-986-1822, cccf.us/post/dawn_chorusiii.

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 CHRIS HSIANG

HARDCOVER FICTION

1. **The Sentence**, by Louise Erdrich
2. **Oh William!:** A Novel, by Elizabeth Strout
3. **Our Country Friends:** A Novel, by Gary Shteyngart

HARDCOVER NONFICTION

1. **Her Honor:** My Life on the Bench ... What Works, What's Broken, and How to Change It, by LaDoris Hazzard Cordell
2. **A Carnival of Snackery:** Diaries 2003-2020, by David Sedaris
3. **The Dawn of Everything:** A New History of Humanity, by David Graeber and David Wengrow

PAPERBACK FICTION

1. **Dune**, by Frank Herbert
2. **The Paper Demon and Other Stories**, by Rosaleen Bertolino
3. **The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo**, Taylor Jenkins Reid

PAPERBACK NONFICTION

1. **The Best of Me**, by David Sedaris
2. **Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants**, by Robin Wall Kimmerer
3. **111 Places in San Francisco That You Must Not Miss**, by Floriana Petersen

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

1. **The Hawthorne Legacy (The Inheritance Games Book 2)**, by Jennifer Lynn Barnes
2. **Aaron Slater, Illustrator (The Questioners)**, by Andrea Beaty and David Roberts
3. **Big Shot: Diary of a Wimpy Kid Book 16**, by Jeff Kinney

NEW AND NOTABLE RELEASES

Renegades: Born in the USA, by Barack Obama and Bruce Springsteen

Renegades is based on the Bruce Springsteen and Barack Obama podcast, *Higher Ground*, a dialogue between two famous but different men.

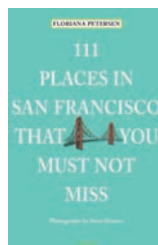
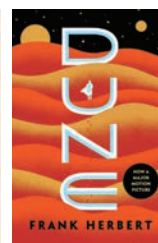
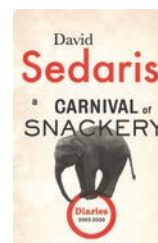
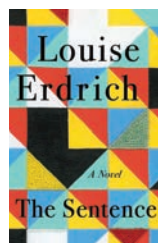
They did not so much interview each other as engage in conversation: conversations between friends who became closer over the years despite their respective fame and busy schedules.

Now those conversations have transformed into a coffee table book featuring more than 350 photographs that range from intimate personal family portraits to all sorts of pop culture visual references.

Termination Shock: A Novel, by Neal Stephenson

Termination Shock is a technological thriller tackling climate change in an all-too-convincing future just around the corner.

At first glance, this 700-page doorstop packed with scientific tidbits from every discipline might seem intimidating, but Neal Stephenson's many fans know to expect a propulsive



pace with a wild cast of memorable and entertaining characters, and an encyclopedia's worth of thought-provoking concepts.

Stephenson's novels may well be science fiction's equivalent to Thomas Pynchon.

The Annotated Arabian Nights: Tales from 1001 Nights, by Yasmine Seale and Paulo Lemos Horta

This book is a brilliant new translation of the classic tales loved the world over. Combined with scholarly background information and beautiful design, this literary treasure will inspire readers of all ages.

Chris Hsiang can help you find your next book at Books Inc., 2251 Chestnut Street, 415-931-3633, booksinc.net.



Saniyya Sidney as Venus Williams in *King Richard*. PHOTO: COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Snyder

continued from cover

for control of the Gucci brand, long overseen by Maurizio's stern, tradition-minded father Rodolfo (a cruel Jeremy Irons) and bold, visionary uncle Aldo (a jovially flamboyant Al Pacino). Lurking on the sidelines is Aldo's somewhat unhinged and perpetually demeaned son Paolo (a stunningly unrecognizable Jared Leto). Although its rather lengthy depiction of real-life family conflict, scandal, and criminal machinations can veer toward melodrama and farce, *House of Gucci* is graced by a slyly witty script and Scott's confident direction. It also offers the joy of watching Gaga go toe to toe with the cast's wealth of great actors, including Salma Hayek as a TV fortune teller who gains Patrizia's trust.

'KING RICHARD'

Determined almost to the point of obsession, Richard Williams pushed his young daughters Venus and Serena to strive for greatness, and they grew up to become history-making tennis champions. Featuring Will Smith's appropriately dominant characterization of Williams, *King Richard* is an unfussy, even-handed look at a flawed but canny man as he rises above economic hardship in his rough and tumble Southern California hometown of Compton and ignores the naysayers to give athletically gifted sisters Venus and Serena a chance to realize the potential he sees in them. Williams fathered five children with his first wife, but *King Richard* — directed in a straightforward manner by Reinaldo Marcus Green — suggests the man's devotion to his second family while making it clear that his number-one priority is the well-being of his budding tennis phenoms. That drive to achieve Williams's master plan for the sisters is at the heart of Smith's performance in *King Richard*, and it seems to be reflected in the willing sacrifices endured by their mother, Williams's second wife Brandy (Aunjanue Ellis), and by the camaraderie between the girls and their three stepsisters. Although you may question Williams's motives and methods after watching *King Richard*, it leaves little doubt that he fostered the unprecedented, barrier-breaking, record-setting success of two Black sisters in what was always thought of as a sport for the white and well-to-do.

'TICK, TICK ... BOOM!'

Andrew Garfield (*The Eyes of Tammy Faye*, *The Social Network*) is typically impressive as the lead actor in *Tick, Tick ... Boom!* — and he's a downright revelation as a singer in this movie version of the on-stage biographical musical revue by the late Jonathan Larson. In case the name doesn't resonate, Larson created the innovative, long-running, and socially potent Broadway sensation *Rent*, which brought a blend of rock and confessional pop to new heights on the Great White Way.

Tick, Tick ... Boom! tells the story of composer Larson's struggle to break into musical theater production while living the Bohemian lifestyle he'd go on to portray in *Rent*. It's about his struggle to

realize his dream of Broadway success, and his relationships with his girlfriend, Susan, his best buddy since childhood; his mentors; his recalcitrant agent; and various arty companions and diner coworkers at the renowned lower Manhattan eatery the Moondance Diner. One production number snowballs into a jubilant who's who of Broadway living legends, illustrating how much they all revered Larson and respect the film's director, Lin-Manuel Miranda. Yes, that Lin-Manuel Miranda, who does a fine job of making this mix of theater piece and dramatic recreation hang together. Larson's struggle, beautifully realized by Garfield, is engaging and quite moving, and the songs are lovely, whimsical, or both. As a bonus, there's a wonderful cast of singing actors including Vanessa Hudgens as an up-and-coming theater kid, Alexandra Shipp as Susan, Judith Light as Larson's agent, and Bradley Whitford as Stephen Sondheim. Losing Larson too soon was a tragedy, yet the evergreen *Rent* and *Tick, Tick ... Boom!* guarantee that his art endures.

'SPENCER'

Rather than another boilerplate biographical project about a dearly departed darling of the tabloids, *Spencer* presumes how things might have played out for the Princess of Wales, formerly Lady Diana Spencer, during a few days at Christmas in 1991 as her marriage to Prince Charles, England's heir to the throne, was on its last legs. With the media going bonkers in search of dirt on the royals and Diana in particular, she must put on a brave face for her two sons when the Windsor clan gathers at Queen Elizabeth's Sandringham Estate and makes a few holiday-mandated public appearances.

Taking on the majority of screen time, Kristen Stewart plays the troubled princess and does the richest and the most nuanced work of her career so far. Stewart may not be a dead ringer, but she's so good at depicting Diana's emotional turmoil and her grace in the face of abuse that ranges from passive-aggressive to downright aggressive — the plight of the caged bird — that you buy her as the woman.

Elevated by Stewart, *Spencer* is a worthy addition to the wealth of narratives about this aristocratic soap-opera-turned-tragedy. It also doesn't hurt that three superb players from Britian provide support: Timothy Spall as estate manager Major Alistar Gregory, Sean Harris as the estate's head chef, and Sally Hawkins as Diana's maid and confidante. *Spencer* was made by Pablo Larraín, the politically astute Chilean filmmaker whose résumé includes *Jackie*, the powerful dramatic evocation of a brief period in Jacqueline Kennedy's turbulent life, so he's clearly in his element with his portrait of another celebrated woman trying to weather a high-profile crisis.

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.

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Impress your guests with prime rib and Yorkshire pudding

It's easier than you think

BY SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

MY DAD LOVED THE HOUSE OF Prime Rib, a San Francisco classic located on Van Ness Avenue. He started going when he was in the Navy, and became friends with the host, Gus, who was a fixture for decades. My dad always ordered his meat “English cut,” meaning thin slices, but his favorite part was the Yorkshire pudding the waiter added to the plate. The name is deceiving — it’s not a pudding but rather like a popover; a batter baked in the oven that becomes crisp and brown on the edges and stays soft in the center. It’s perfect for sopping up gravy. You can make it in one dish and slice it or you can use muffin or popover tins to produce individual portions.

Because my dad loved Yorkshire pudding, I decided to make it for Christmas one year along with prime rib, silky mashed potatoes, gravy from the drippings, and Brussels sprouts (a favorite vegetable in my household). Everyone loved it, so it became a tradition.

As for buying a prime rib, spend the money and get a good one: pasture raised and humanely treated. I feel like a hypocrite saying this, because I love animals, but if you’re going to eat meat, make sure you know where it came from and how it was cared for. You can usually order a roast by the number of ribs — you can do a boneless roast, but it’s not nearly as impressive, and the ribs make for a great bone broth later.

I make Lawry’s whipped horseradish ahead of time to serve on the side (if you’re familiar with the famous “pink horseradish” from House of Prime Rib, this is similar), and have included the recipe below, along with a simple recipe for making gravy from the pan drippings.

The “best mashed potatoes ever” is my adaption of chef Joël Robuchon’s famous *pommes purée* at his restaurant L’Atelier de Joël Robuchon. These aren’t your mom’s mashed potatoes (it involves several extra steps and loads of butter), but it’s a worthwhile splurge for the holidays. You’ll need a couple of specialty tools, but they’re tools I recommend any home cook have. A potato ricer for straining the potatoes the first time, and a tamis (pronounced tam-ee) or a very fine mesh sieve, with a dough scraper or a wooden spoon, for the second pass. I use my grandfather’s old food mill from Italy that has a hand crank with a metal paddle that helps facilitate pushing the potatoes through the fine mesh.

And finally, if you don’t like Brussels sprouts, switch them out for a salad, some slow-braised collard greens, or creamed spinach to complete the meal.

THE BEST MASHED POTATOES EVER

Serves 4–6

- 5 medium russet or Yukon gold potatoes (I use 3 russets and 2 Yukon gold)
- 1 cup unsalted butter (2 sticks), room temperature, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 cups whole milk, brought just to a boil and kept warm
- ¼ cup half and half, room temperature
- Sea salt to taste

Scrub the potatoes well, put them in a large stockpot, and add cold water until potatoes are completely covered. Bring them to a boil, then lower heat and simmer until a paring knife goes through without much resistance (40 to 50 minutes).

Drain potatoes thoroughly; once they are cool enough to handle, peel them (the skins will come off easily). Push the peeled potatoes through a ricer into a tall stockpot over low heat. Stir vigorously with a wooden spoon to dry them completely (3 to 5 minutes).

Add cubed butter a little at a time and stir until well incorporated. Add milk in a slow stream while vigorously whipping potatoes with a wooden spoon. Add half and half and continue whipping until you reach a creamy consistency.

Pass the whipped potatoes through a tamis using a silicone spatula into a large bowl. By now the potatoes will be room temperature.

Rinse and dry the stockpot, add potatoes back to the pot, and set over low heat, stirring constantly until warmed through.

For extra decadence, melt 3 tablespoons of unsalted butter in ½ cup of warm whole milk or heat ¼ an additional cup half and half. Drizzle over potatoes while stirring. Salt to taste and serve immediately.

YORKSHIRE PUDDING

Serves 4–6

- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs
- ¾ cup milk
- ½ cup pan drippings or vegetable oil

Mix the flour and salt together in a medium-sized bowl. In smaller bowl, beat together eggs and milk until frothy. Stir in dry ingredients until just incorporated. Refrigerate mixture for two hours (optional).

Heat oven to 450 degrees (turn up the temperature after you remove the meat to rest).

Pour pan drippings or vegetable oil into a 9x9-inch oven-safe baking dish. Put dish in oven for about 30 seconds, or until drippings (or oil) is just smoking. Remove dish from oven (carefully), pour in batter, and return dish to oven. Bake until puffed up and brown on the edges, about 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

PRIME RIB ROAST

Serves 4–6

Note: The meat must be brought to room temperature before roasting or it will not cook evenly. This will take from 2 to 4 hours, so plan accordingly. Cooking time will vary based upon the size of your roast; estimate 12 minutes per pound for roasting time.

- 1 prime standing rib roast, room temperature
- 2 tablespoons butter at room temperature

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Pat the roast dry. Smear the cut ends only of the roast with the butter (you can also add herbs or garlic to the butter). Do not salt the outside as it will draw out moisture.



Top: Simple to make, Yorkshire pudding is the perfect accompaniment to soak up gravy. Bottom: Creamy “best ever” mashed potatoes benefit from a double straining process. PHOTOS: SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

Place the roast, ribs down or fat side up, uncovered, in a heavy stainless-steel roasting pan. (The rib bones are a natural rack.) Sear the roast for 15 minutes at 450 degrees, then turn the oven down to 325 degrees for the remainder of the cooking time. Every 30 minutes, baste the cut ends of the roast with the fat in the bottom of the pan.

About 45 minutes before the estimated end of the cook time, begin checking the internal temperature with a good instant-read digital thermometer (I use a Thermopen — they’re expensive but worth it for their accuracy). Insert the thermometer in the thickest part of the roast, not resting in fat or touching bone.

Cook until meat reaches an internal temperature of 120 degrees. Remove to a heavy-duty cutting board with a deep enough well to hold the juices. Cover loosely with aluminum foil, and let sit approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Do not skip the resting stage. Cutting into the meat too early will cause a significant loss of juice. The roast will continue to cook as it sets, rising to 125 to 130 degrees (medium rare). While roast rests, make gravy from the pan drippings (recipe follows).

Using a sharp carving knife, slice between the bones. If you are not comfortable cutting through the ribs, ask the butcher to separate the meat and use string to tie it to the bone. Serve with Lawry’s whipped horseradish (recipe follows).

LAWRY’S WHIPPED HORSERADISH

Makes 1 cup

- 1 cup whipping cream
- ¼ teaspoon Lawry’s Seasoned Salt
- 2 tablespoons prepared horseradish, well drained

- 1 dash of your favorite hot sauce (or more if desired)

Using a stand or hand mixer, whip cream until stiff peaks form. Fold in seasoned salt, horseradish, and hot sauce until well mixed. Cover and place in refrigerator until ready to serve.

PAN DRIppINGS GRAVY

Makes 4 cups

- 6 tablespoons drippings
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 4 cups of low sodium beef or vegetable broth

Place roasting pan over two stove burners over medium heat. Skim and discard any excess fat from the juices in the roasting pan. Using a wooden spoon, scrape the dark drippings and any crunchy bits from the sides and bottom of the pan.

In a separate container with a lid, shake together all-purpose flour and broth to make a slurry. When the pan drippings are lightly bubbling, slowly add the slurry mixture, stirring constantly with a wire whisk. If it starts to thicken, immediately stop adding the remaining slurry. You may not need to use all the slurry, depending on the amount of drippings that were left in the roasting pan.

If lumps develop, you should be able to use a wire whisk to remove them. You can also pass the finished gravy through your tamis or fine mesh sieve. If your gravy is too thick, add additional broth, stirring constantly. Season to taste with salt and pepper, pour into a gravy boat, and serve tableside.

E-mail: recipes@marinatimes.com



Sparkling Rosés for holiday celebrations

BY LYNETTE MAJER

I'M NOT A HUGE FAN OF ROSÉ IN GENERAL, which is a little too hyped and most are just not to my taste — but I'm an unabashed cheerleader for sparkling Rosé. Why? Well, visually for one. The color is lovely (and pink is not my color), but in a glass, it's just pretty and elegant — maybe it's that salmon-colored tinge that makes the difference. Food-wise, its naturally high acidity makes it a great complement to just about anything on the plate. Taste-wise, bubbly Rosés are generally fresh, fruity, and manage to be dry (enough) and creamy. That hits all the marks for me.

Besides being food friendly there are other reasons to drink bubbles. This one might be the most compelling — it's easier on our livers. The natural mold toxins in wine, leftovers from filtration in the production process, can have an adverse effect on liver detoxification, causing imbalances in otherwise healthy gut bacteria. Sparkling, however, has the lowest level of these mold toxins, so you and your liver can enjoy guilt-free.

Another reason is the glass — whether flutes or tulips, or the retro coupe, they're all fun and feel special. Yet another is that sound of the popping cork, which just says, "Celebrate!" Regardless of whether it's the end of the week (or day, I won't judge), a holiday, or other special occasion, all are worthy of celebrating, something we all need in today's world, right?

So here are some suggestions for holiday bubbles:

Jacuzzi Sonoma Coast Sparkling Brut Rosé 2018, \$30

Made with fruit sourced from the winery's vineyards in Sonoma's Carneros and Petaluma Gap AVAs, this blend of Italian varietals Nebbiolo, Sangiovese, and Barbera has watermelon, berry, and other fruit notes and is a deep pink in color. The cool climate of the vineyards allows for a long growing season and produces wines with balanced acidity and fruit. This would be a sure bet for holiday gatherings, and its on-trend color is a lovely accent to any table. Head up to the tasting room in Sonoma, which includes a great gift area adjacent to the Olive Press, where you can also taste from a large selection of olive oils.

Korbel California Brut Rosé NV, \$13

This sparkling is one of Korbel's most award-winning wines. It's refreshing and off-dry with berry flavors, and its lovely

blush color comes from the blend of Pinot Noir, Sangiovese, and Gamay, with a portion of Chenin Blanc added for delicacy, which also lends slight melon flavors. To maintain the color balance and complexity, a small amount of young red wine is added. It's always in my fridge available for regular sipping, or to grab for a last-minute invite.

McBride Sisters Collection Hawke's Bay New Zealand Sparkling Brut Rosé NV, \$25

This sparkling is my new favorite find, and I love that it's owned not only by women, but by sisters, and they are Black — one grew up in Monterey, the other in New Zealand — and their company has lots of good values, like sustainability and social awareness. This bubbly has soft, floral, berry, and creamy notes on the nose and the palate, and a dry finish. It's perfect for all foods and occasions. Check out their website for a fun brunch cocktail recipe using this sparkling, Oakland 75.

Roederer Anderson Valley Brut Rosé Multivintage, \$35

Adhering to the belief that exceptional estate vineyards create exceptional sparkling wines, the Roederer family spent several years exploring California wine regions before settling on Anderson Valley. This bubbly blend of 56 percent Pinot Noir and 44 percent Chardonnay is elegant and crisp with nutty citrus flavors and hints of berry, melon, and citrus with creamy undertones, despite its minimal malolactic fermentation. Be sure to stop at the tasting room on your next trip to Mendocino — their elegant tasting flutes are available for purchase.

Schug Carneros Rouge De Noirs 2016, \$40

Schug is well known for its Pinot Noirs, and produces this cuvee of 100 percent sparkling Pinot Noir "for the love of it." Dry and delicate, rich with berry flavors, it's a lovely expression of the Pinot varietal. The rare color of this Pinot sparkling, significantly darker than Brut Rosé, results from a three-day cold soak of both juice and skins, followed by a cold fermentation in steel tanks of the juice only, and then followed by a secondary bottle fermentation. This "méthode traditionnelle" is the same method used to produce Champagne.

Cheers! Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season.

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Creating stress-free holidays

How to enjoy the season and bring joy to yourself and others

BY LIZ FARRELL

I AM NOT SURE THERE IS SUCH A THING as stress-free holidays, but if the pandemic has taught us anything, then it is O.K. to slow down and be super intentional about where we give our time and energy.

As life begins to return to normal and with the holidays approaching, it can be easy to take on more and more without even realizing how much stress we have added. The problem then is we wake up one day and realize we are completely burnt out and have missed all the joy of the season. So, how can we be more intentional with our time and energy, especially around the holidays? Here are a few tips to get you started:

SAY NO

This is hard for some of us. I speak for myself here, because I like to have my hand in a lot of different things, and I have an amazing ability to think I can do it all. Sometimes, as moms, we feel that saying “no” is a sign of weakness, but as we all learn the importance and practice of self-care, I think it is just the opposite. Instead of feeling guilt or pressure, remind yourself that by saying no to someone else you are saying yes to yourself.

Saying yes to ourselves can be one of the

most important tools for mental health, especially around the holidays. One of the ways we can do this is by setting time aside every day to do something that nourishes us. It could be as simple as listening to a meditation, taking a walk, calling a friend, or taking a bath. Another way we can do this is by prioritizing how we want to spend our time and with whom. Once we are clear on our priorities, then say no to tasks and obligations that don't align. This takes some practice but, in the end, you may find you are happier.

PLAN AHEAD

Between decorating, cooking, shopping, and sending holiday cards, it is easy to see how we can get to Christmas Day and feel totally depleted. Planning out what you are going to do, limiting what you do, and getting a head start on it can help you to be intentional. It also can help you avoid the last-minute frantic energy that can be stressful for us and those around us.

My family often reminds me that in the frenzy of trying to do so much, I'm not always the most enjoyable person to be around. So while intentions are good, sometimes doing less and planning creates a happier person to be around. It is supposed to be a season of joy and happiness, after all. A simple way to plan is



Amid the busy times, take a moment to nourish yourself. PHOTO: VIKTOR GLADKOV

to make a list of everything you need to get done before the holidays, then take a hard look at the list and figure out what you really want to do and what is going to bring joy to you and others around you, and then make a schedule, so it doesn't all fall to the last week.

REASON FOR THE SEASON

If you feel your holiday spirit is waning and you start questioning the purpose in all the craziness, take a moment to do something for others. Different things put different people in the holiday spirit, but for me that holiday spirit comes from volunteering. I find there is no better way to help remind myself or my children of the true reason for the season than helping others.

We are so fortunate to have so many wonderful organizations close by that need volunteers, especially around the

holidays. A few of my favorites are adopting a family at Compass Family Services or TogetherSF's Feed 5000 event, where the whole family can help load groceries to help those confronting food insecurity. If you or your kids love to bake, consider dropping off some holiday goodies at your local fire house, police station, or hospital to thank our essential workers, especially after the past year.

While it may be impossible to eliminate stress entirely during the holidays, I hope practicing these tips will enable you to take control over the stress and find peace, happiness, and joy in this year's festivities. It really can be “the most wonderful time of the year.” I wish this along with good health for you and all your loved ones.

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Expect fewer crazy price hikes in 2022, analysts say. PHOTO: SYLVAIN COLLET/PIXABY

A sign of the times

BY GAREY DE MARTINI

THINK YOU'VE SEEN FEWER OPEN house signs in San Francisco lately? That is likely the case, but perhaps for a different reason than you might expect. It's not necessarily because there are fewer homes for sale, but because real estate agents are simply not posting "for sale" signs in front of their listings. The same is true for "open house" directional A-frame signs.

"Posting a for-sale sign seems tantamount to saying 'Vacant and Staged, Come Break-In,'" said Matt Fuller, co-founder of Jackson Fuller Real Estate and a past president of the San Francisco Association of Realtors. "The thinking is that serious home buyers are using an app to assist them in their home search."

When buyers use an app, they know when open homes are scheduled, and more likely than not have a map with GPS already in the app. This eliminates the need to have for-sale signs in front of houses, and open-home A-frames crowding corners. Open homes are back, but the signs may be gone forever.

A NUMBERS GAME

The question remains: Are there fewer homes on the market right now? According to Ted Andersen with the *San Francisco Business Times*, the net number of homes on the market in the city, which peaked in October, dropped in early November to 1,150. Inventory levels were down 36 percent on a year-over-year basis, but were still 25 percent above 2019 for the same period.

There are homes for sale throughout the city, but unfortunately, not enough of them. The number of well-qualified buyers is still far greater than the number of homes available for purchase.

Single-family homes remain the most desirable segment of the market, but days on market remained low and prices were up for both single-family homes and condominiums. While high-amenity, high-dues, large luxury condo buildings have been price-challenged by a glut in supply, condos in boutique-size buildings with low dues and few shared amenities continue to do well.

For the year, San Francisco neighborhoods that saw the largest increases in the highest median price per square foot include the Marina, Corona Heights, and Pacific/Presidio Heights, while the neighborhoods that saw the largest increases in percent of list price received for condominiums include Corona Heights, Sunset, and the Richmond.

NO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Of course affordable housing remains an issue. "What a complete and utter embarrassment to our city," Fuller said about a

recent vote by the Board of Supervisors. "Eight supervisors who label themselves 'pro-housing' voted no on almost 500 new homes to be built on an empty parking lot — a project that the neighborhood's elected supervisor fully endorsed. Usually we Realtors are mad at only three to five supervisors at a time, so eight sets a record of sorts."

The year 2021 was an absolute nightmare for would-be homebuyers across the country, according to Lance Lambert with fortune.com. Even if they could find a home within their budget — no easy task as inventory hit a 40-year low — there's a good chance would-be buyers lost out in a frenzied bidding war. That's not an exaggeration: At one point this spring, a staggering 74 percent of U.S. home listings were getting multiple offers.

But there might be a tiny bit of good news for house hunters: The industry consensus is that the 2022 housing market will see less crazy price hikes. Some of that cooling is already apparent.

Looking ahead, National Association of Realtors chief economist Lawrence Yun said even though there might be a decline in sales in 2022, he still forecasts home sales will outdo prepandemic levels across the nation. According to mortgagenewsdaily.com, his prediction is based on an anticipation of more inventory in the coming months. That supply will be generated, in part, from new housing construction — already underway — as well as from the conclusion of the mortgage forbearance program (temporary suspensions or reductions due to hardship during the pandemic), which in turn will cause some homeowners to sell.

Mortgage rates, inflation, supply chain issues, and labor shortages could of course have a significant impact on all of these projections. For example, there had been a wood shortage earlier in the year, and just when the cost of lumber finally came down, there was suddenly a shortage of appliances and cabinets. Construction delays continued.

As 2021 comes to a close, Fuller looked back on the year in San Francisco and talked about what he found most remarkable. "It was the little things; an escrow without 14 identical 4-page forms waiving COVID liability; dropping my kid off at school in the morning; an indoor meal with clients at a restaurant," he said.

"And despite all the common frustrations, I am encouraged by the number of my fellow city-dwellers I see with a deep, deep love for San Francisco, and a simultaneous desire to help make [the city] a better, safer, cleaner, and more housed city for all of us. And as for those 'San Francisco is dying' stories? Not my experience at all."

Feedback: letters@marinatimes.com

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Amazing value-add opportunity in San Francisco's Cow Hollow: two buildings, one parcel. Situated on Laguna and Greenwich Streets is a corner six-unit apartment house; next door is a 2-unit building. There are 2 vacant units (one in each building). Seismic is complete.

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