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Kick off June with the Jazz Festival, the Stern Grove Festival, Frameline film festival, Pride events, and so much more as San Francisco shows off for the summer. p. 6

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Left to Right: Detail of *Barack Obama* by Kehinde Wiley; Detail of *Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama* by Amy Sherald. PHOTO: COURTESY SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

The Obamas come to San Francisco

WHEN THE OBAMA PORTRAITS were unveiled in February 2018 at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in Washington, they attracted record-breaking crowds and made international headlines. The portraits became a cultural phenomenon, evoking tears from viewers and a sense of camaraderie and community among those

waiting hours in line. The museum even published a book about the impact of the portraits. Now San Franciscans will have their turn to view the work of artists Kehinde Wiley and Amy Sherald, the first African Americans to be commissioned by the Smithsonian to create the official presidential and first lady portraits. Both artists have addressed the historical lack of

Black representation in art history through the genre of portraiture to depict African Americans. **The Obama Portrait Tour:** Tue.–Sun., 9:30 a.m.–5:15 p.m., June 18–Aug. 14, free–\$15 (visit website for ticketing details), de Young Museum, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive, 415-750-3600, famsf.org

—L. Majer

REYNOLDS RAP :: Opinion

The mansion that fentanyl built

The Feds arrested a family of Tenderloin drug dealers. One was building a lavish home in Honduras.

BY SUSAN DYER REYNOLDS

“A significant percentage of people selling drugs in San Francisco, perhaps as many as half, are from Honduras ... we need to be mindful of the impact our interventions have. Some of them have family members in Honduras who have been or will be harmed if they don't continue to pay off the traffickers who brought them here.”
— San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin, speaking at a virtual town hall, July 25, 2020

ONE YEAR AGO, I WROTE A COLUMN ABOUT THE brazen drug dealers in San Francisco's troubled Tenderloin neighborhood (“Two overdoses in 10 minutes,” Reynolds Rap, July 2021), in which I called attention to a video of San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin. Currently facing a recall election on June 7, Boudin told a stunned Zoom audience in July 2020 that “we need to be mindful of the impact our interventions have” He went on to say that half the dealers are from Honduras and have been trafficked here to sell drugs. That seemed far-fetched to me, especially because

REYNOLDS RAP, continued on 4

SUPERVISOR :: Opinion

A direct attack on women's rights and safety

BY CATHERINE STEFANI

WHEN, AS A SITTING SENATOR, VICE PRESIDENT Kamala Harris asked Brett Kavanaugh whether he could think of any laws that specifically governed a man's body, he couldn't. He stuttered and stammered. He would later say that he does not have a position on the matter, and he would later lie to the Senate Judiciary Committee and claim that *Roe v. Wade* was settled law. Last month, a leaked draft ruling revealed that the Supreme Court of the United States likely has the votes to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Nearly 50 years ago, the Supreme Court rightfully recognized a woman's right to have autonomy over her own body and guaranteed a federal constitutional protection of the right to privacy and access to safe abortion care. Now, right-wing extremists who sit on the highest court in our land are threatening to strip women of their reproductive freedoms. The physical health and safety of women, and especially minority women, are directly threatened by the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.

SUPERVISOR, continued on 2

UNION STREET FESTIVAL



Union Street Festival in 2019. PHOTO: NAOMI ROSE

Union Street Festival returns

BY LESLIE DRAPKIN

YEP, WE'RE BACK! RETURNING after three years, Union Street will once again kick off the summer festival season in San Francisco with a weekend of much-needed

celebration. A tradition since 1976, the festival always takes place the first weekend in June, this year on Saturday, June 4 and Sunday, June 5 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Four blocks of Union Street from Fillmore to Octavia streets will be

closed to through traffic, making way for plenty of music and live entertainment, tons of food, and vendor tents featuring a variety of arts, services, and children's activities. This family-fun free outdoor event celebrates the neighborhood in great style. The return this year is especially important because of the challenges of the pandemic. The festival is a great way to bring neighbors together by highlighting old and new businesses along with special sponsors excited to be a part of the community. It is also a wonderful opportunity to bring attention to Union Street itself, one of the most beautiful streets in the city. The historic San Francisco Victorian setting has always been home to a wide variety of specialty shops, restaurants, bars, and service businesses, and it is definitely building back. The return of the festival is a positive example of exactly building back. As we slowly emerge from the pandemic, Union Street is excited and proud to be able to “bring it on!”
Union Street Festival: Sat.–Sun., 10 a.m.–6 p.m., June 4–5, Union Street (Fillmore to Octavia), unionstreetsf.com



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The battles over abortion are shifting into high gear. PHOTO: FLICKR.COM/FIBONACCIBLUE

Supervisor continued from cover

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE AT RISK

It is appalling that the Supreme Court may refuse to protect women's rights and their health and safety. It's not shocking, though, given that the antichoice justices were all conservative extremists appointed by presidents who didn't win the popular vote.

Women's health and safety is too easily dismissed. Even in San Francisco, our local Planned Parenthood clinic and their patients frequently endure threats and harassment from out-of-town antichoice protesters. In 2020, the local prosecution of domestic violence cases went down by almost 20 percent. Furthermore, 79 percent of survivors seeking emergency shelter were turned away due to lack of space, and San Francisco's daily newspaper callously dismissed the needs of domestic violence survivors for plainly political reasons. They shamefully did not see fit to endorse Proposition D, which would provide civil legal representation to survivors fleeing their abusers.

As I write this, I hope that Proposition D has already passed to establish the right to civil counsel for domestic violence survivors in San Francisco, but the fact that an initiative to support victims was not embraced by some when it has the potential to help so many women trapped in abusive relationships, is equally appalling and anything but progressive.

While we work to protect victims in San Francisco, I am deeply concerned about what the overturning of Roe v. Wade would mean for the health and safety of women living with abusers across this country. It is common for abuse to escalate when a woman becomes pregnant, and not uncommon for abusers to

use pregnancy as a way to hold partners against their will. Pregnancy and then caring for a child creates significant physical, financial, and mental consequences that can make leaving an abusive partner nearly impossible.

If Roe v. Wade is overturned, at a minimum, states will have the ability to regulate abortion access. Abortion will likely be banned in 26 states. We are lucky to live in a state that respects women enough to allow them to make their own reproductive decisions. However, women across the country will not be so fortunate and will need to come here from neighboring states to seek appropriate medical care.

This ruling disproportionately impacts low-income and communities of color, and it puts our most vulnerable women at risk. The right to choose should not depend on where you live in the United States. The right to choose is a fundamental protection of the right to life and liberty.

OTHER CIVIL LIBERTIES ARE AT RISK

The leaked Supreme Court ruling puts other civil liberties at risk. Since the 1960s, the Supreme Court has invoked the due process clause of the 14th Amendment to provide us all with a right to privacy. This has led to rulings expanding civil liberties like birth control access, interracial marriage, and same-sex marriage.

Given that nearly two-thirds of Americans support reproductive freedom, the Supreme Court's willingness to overturn Roe v. Wade is a clear signal that we should expect attacks on other popular civil liberties as well. We must protect the rights our society has fought so long and hard for — and that means electing individuals that represent the will of the people and fighting for the right to choose at every level of government.

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Mayor London Breed and other dignitaries, including Supervisor Catherine Stefani (seated, right), announce the opening of Francisco Park. PHOTO: JIM WATKINS/SF REC AND PARK

Summer in the (new) park

BY JOHN ZIPPERER

FRANCISCO PARK OPENS

For six decades, Russian Hill’s Francisco Reservoir lay dormant, unused and surrounded by fencing. That prime location at Bay and Hyde streets is now the new 4.5-acre Francisco Park, which was officially opened in late April. The park includes a large lawn for gathering, children’s playground, nature exploration space, fenced dog run, and community garden.

“Francisco Park is a testament to the power of public service,” said District 2 Supervisor Catherine Stephani. “I have been working with the community and city departments to bring the Francisco Park project to life since 2008 when I was a legislative aide to Supervisor Michela Alioto-Pier, and I’m thrilled to see it completed. Francisco Park is a crucial public resource that will ensure San Francisco’s northern waterfront is open and accessible to everyone for generations to come.”

The Francisco Reservoir was first constructed in 1859 to serve the booming gold rush population. It ceased being used in the 1940s after the Lombard Reservoir opened a block away.

The new park was made possible by a successful effort by the Francisco Park Conservancy to raise \$27.5 million for construction and maintenance; in addition, the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department purchased the land for \$9.9 million in 2014 from the Public Utilities Commission.

“The Francisco Park Conservancy is pleased to grant the gift of the park improvements to the San Francisco Rec and Park Department,” said Conservancy Board President Leslie Alspach “It has been a successful public/private partnership to build this park; a partnership that will continue to keep the park a great community asset to enhance the lives of all San Franciscans and visitors for decades to come.”

CRIME UPDATE

In an update on Northside crime year-to-date through May 8, Northern Station police report that there were increases in the categories of rape (up 66.7 percent), assault (61.5 percent), motor vehicle theft (8.7 percent), arson (26.3 percent), and larceny theft (15.3 percent). Only robbery (down 29.2 percent) and burglary (down 39.1 percent) showed decreases; human trafficking involving sex remained unchanged.

CANDID CAMERA

District 3 Supervisor Aaron Peskin, Mayor London Breed, and the San Francisco Police Department are cooperating on a plan that would allow police to temporarily access non-city-owned cameras during circumstances “that involve immi-

nent danger of death or imminent danger of serious physical injury — as well as during significant events with public safety concerns, and investigations relating to active misdemeanor and felony violations,” according to the mayor’s office. Currently, law enforcement is barred from viewing live video footage from third-party cameras except when there is imminent danger of death or serious injury.

That might be a seemingly small change, but in a city like San Francisco, any change to law enforcement comes with lots of qualifications and worries about privacy. The new policy would come with oversight provisions and restrictions on the camera usage, data retention and disposal, use of facial recognition technology, and more.

Peskin said the cooperative approach to new camera rules “is about ensuring an effective response to crime on our streets while safeguarding against the real threats of a surveillance state.”

BRIEFLY NOTED

The biennial “Point in Time” count of the city’s homeless population was released in mid-May, and it showed a 15 percent drop in unsheltered homelessness and a 3.5 percent decrease in overall homelessness. There was an 18 percent increase in people living in shelters and transitional housing, an 11 percent decrease in chronically homeless single adults, and a 6 percent decrease in unaccompanied youth . . . The city’s Office of Economic Workforce Development announced \$11.4 million for economic recovery of the city’s commercial corridors. According to the mayor’s office, “the investment will provide community organizations funding to recruit new businesses, train and establish new and existing entrepreneurs, develop new programming, organize festivals and events, and offer technical assistance to small businesses.” Applicants for funding should go to oewd.org/bid-opportunities/RFP-223 . . . No soup for you: **San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone** has banned Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi from receiving communion in the archdiocese due to her support for legal abortion.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Number 1: San Francisco became the first city in the nation to offer free diapers to all families on public benefits . . . **441:** Number of felony defendants as of May 6 whose cases had gone past the final date for trial, due to a backlog of cases in Superior Court, according to the *Examiner’s* Al Sarcevic . . . **June 1:** Date when parking fees increase in The Presidio . . . **170 years:** Age of Ghirardelli Chocolate Company, which just reopened its redesigned chocolate and ice cream parlor in the aptly named Ghirardelli Square.

Feedback: letters@marinatimes.com.

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Reynolds Rap
continued from cover

Boudin hasn't held a press conference to boast about prosecuting all those traffickers. So I reached out to some experts.

Lou Barberini, who spent more than a decade as an undercover narcotics officer for the San Francisco Police Department, said he never heard a single dealer claim to be there involuntarily. Four current Tenderloin narcotics officers, involved in more than 4,000 arrests collectively, responded that "they have never once heard a drug seller say he was trafficked."

Thomas Ostly, one of seven seasoned litigators fired by Boudin when he took office, reviewed hundreds of narcotics sales cases and said he never saw any evidence of dealers being involuntarily trafficked. "I reviewed dealers' social media, text messages, statements to law enforcement, and had countless conversations with affected community members. All evidence confirmed dealers were freely and enthusiastically engaging in the drug trade. One guy was making \$20,000 a month and sending \$6,000 home to Honduras," Ostly said.

I also pointed out that in the first five-and-one-half months of 2021, SFPD seized more than 19 kilos of narcotics in the Tenderloin alone. They also made 257 narcotics arrests from 2019 to the first quarter of 2021, where 89 drug dealers were apprehended between three and seven times for the same crime. Of those 89 most prolific dealers, only two were in custody at San Francisco County Jail at the time I wrote the column (both were released soon after). What does Boudin do with all those repeat offenders? He sends them to "Drug Court," a diversion program meant for users, meaning taxpayers fund a system where dealers wait for their hearings right next to their customers. How does Boudin get away with this? The same way he does with virtually every felony case — by having defendants plead to a lesser charge.

A recent *San Francisco Standard* article confirmed this through court records showing Boudin's office secured "just three total convictions for 'possession with intent to sell' drugs in 2021: two for methamphetamine and one for a case including heroin and cocaine." Even Boudin's progressive predecessor George Gascon (currently facing his own recall as Los Angeles district attorney) oversaw nearly 100 narcotics sales convictions just in 2018.

According to the *Standard*, 80 percent of cases where fentanyl dealing is charged conclude with defendants pleading guilty to "accessory after the fact," which means they simply "helped" another person sell drugs. Boudin also has other ways of

keeping dealers out of jail — in one case, a known dealer caught with "enough fentanyl to kill hundreds of people" pled guilty to misdemeanor loitering. Like most dealers, he headed right back to the same corner to resume selling drugs.

FENTANYL KILLED TWICE AS MANY PEOPLE AS FIREARMS

Another Boudin favorite is agreeing to release dealers on their own recognizance with a judge's "stay away" order. It should come as no surprise that it doesn't work.

In December 2020, nearly a year after Boudin took office, a drug dealer who repeatedly ignored a stay-away order in the Tenderloin was arrested for a fourth time in 90 days. According to police, the defendant had three open cases and was caught with heroin, fentanyl, cocaine, meth, and cash. Even after the fourth arrest, the dealer was released a short time later. While police didn't mention a name, the person was one of seven prolific fentanyl dealers, all members or extended members of the same family. Earlier that same week David Anderson, then U.S. attorney for the Northern District of California, announced charges against the seven, alleging that between July and December 2020, they routinely traveled to the Tenderloin from Oakland to sell fentanyl, heroin and other narcotics.

Emilson Jonathan Cruz Mayorquin, aka "Playboy" (Cruz), 23; Leydis Yaneth Cruz (Leydis), 42; Ivan Mauro Mayorquin, 35; Pamela Carrero aka "Nicole," aka "Kendra," 20; Ana Maldonado, 22; Adonis Torres, 33; and Mayer Benegas-Medina, 27, ran a successful family business, with Cruz and his mother, Leydis, as the kingpins. Cruz's significant other (Maldonado); Cruz's sister (Carrero) and her significant other (Torres); and another family member (Mayorquin) engaged in both street-level drug sales and sales to multiple resellers (an eighth defendant, Gustavo Ramos, was arrested for obtaining fentanyl from the family for resale).

The prosecution was part of the Federal Initiative in the Tenderloin, a response to fentanyl overdose deaths, which in 2021 killed more than twice as many people in the United States as firearms. In the two years since Boudin took office, more than 1,300 people have died of overdoses in San Francisco, mostly due to fentanyl. In April, 49 people died, bringing the total to 192 overdose deaths in the first four months of 2022.

"The Tenderloin drug trade is aided by the failure to prosecute drug crimes in the city," Anderson said when he announced the arrests back in 2020, a clear shot at the district attorney's office. Of course, Boudin criticized the program, which often results in dealers and their families

"losing a path to citizenship" due to felony drug convictions or being deported.

PLAYBOY'S MANSION IN HONDURAS

According to federal documents, Emilson Cruz-Mayorquin, or "Playboy" as he's known on the streets, was the go-to person for fentanyl in the Tenderloin. Despite being a mid-level dealer, Emilson continued selling smaller amounts. On Oct. 29, 2020, he sold two ounces of fentanyl to a customer for \$1,600. Later that day, agents intercepted a call to an unknown male about the sale, in which Emilson says he just finished a "two-ounce deal with a new dude," and that the gram customers refer other customers who purchase larger amounts. In other words, the drug addicts of the Tenderloin became a referral service, and it was very profitable.

During a call intercepted over his mother Leydis's phone line, she speaks with a family member about the house Emilson is constructing in Honduras. "Life is a little stressed because Emilson has a lot of customers," Leydis says. "He's removing the ceramic from the house, he's going to put in porcelain — how can I say no to him ... That house is not going to look like a house, it's going to look like a mansion," the relative responds. "My god, Emilson doesn't stop spending, right?" Leydis asks rhetorically. "God permit ... So there's a mansion and a half." Exhibit photos display Playboy's mansion in Honduras, replete with marbled bathroom walls and a porch held up by Roman-style pillars.

In December 2021, four months after pleading guilty to conspiracy to distribute fentanyl, Emilson "Playboy" Cruz-Mayorquin was sentenced to four years and three months in federal prison. In the sentencing memo, his public defender wrote that Emilson had "reflected on his conduct, noting how it was sad to see people on the street dealing with addiction." After finishing his sentence, she said Emilson will face the "ultimate punishment of banishment" through deportation back to Honduras, where he plans to leave drug trafficking behind and work for his uncle as a roofer. Perhaps his uncle will help him finish that mansion.

'THIS IS SO HARD FOR US'

When the Drug Enforcement Administration arrested Jairo Noel Rodriguez in 2019, his girlfriend, Leydis Yaneth Cruz took over and became one the Bay Area's leading fentanyl suppliers. Her son (the aforementioned Emilson), her daughter Pamela Carrero, and her brother Ivan Cruz Mayorquin helped her run a thriving family business. Not only did Leydis sell drugs to customers, but she also supplied her family members.

In an August 29, 2020 call, Emilson asks his mother if she can get him an ounce of azul (blue fentanyl), to which Leydis replies she could provide an ounce but was saving another ounce for a client in San Francisco. In another call, Leydis and her brother Ivan discuss the fact customers in the Tenderloin are asking for the blue fentanyl. Ivan says he could sell a single gram for \$60. "Uh-huh, yea, because nobody has any, you can raise it up," Leydis tells him.

On two occasions, Leydis and her daughter Pamela Carerro sold powder fentanyl and counterfeit prescription pills containing fentanyl to undercover agents in the Tenderloin, a total of 123 grams of fentanyl for which they charged \$7,800. A few months later, Pamela sold 1,000 counterfeit pharmaceutical pills containing fentanyl to undercover officers. When officers asked for another 700 pills, Leydis arrived to make sure a courier was on the way. Shortly after the courier arrived, the mother-daughter duo sold the additional 700 pills to the undercover agent for \$5,000.

When Leydis was arrested in December 2020, agents seized nearly 1,423 gross grams of fentanyl, 153 gross grams of cocaine, and 276.5 gross grams of methamphetamine from the Oakland apartment Leydis shared with her 4-year-old daughter, older daughter Pamela, and Pamela's minor son.

On March 1, 2022, Pamela Carrero was sentenced to 19 months in federal prison. After serving her sentence, she will be deported.

A month later at her sentencing, attorneys for Leydis provided a handwritten letter to the judge. "In the name of the Lord Jesus: to beg that you please forgive my huge mistake," Leydis begins, pleading for another chance so she can "recover" her now 6-year-old daughter. Later she says the child "witnessed her arrest at the apartment and does not forget that awful experience." After again asking to be released, Leydis says her health is deteriorating in jail: "At this time I have pre-diabetes and high cholesterol. The truth is I also feel very depressed," she says. "This is all very hard for us."

The judge wasn't swayed, sentencing Leydis to three years and two months in prison, after which she will also be deported. If Boudin had his way, the entire family would still be selling drugs in the Tenderloin and adding final touches to that mansion in Honduras — all while on a path to United States citizenship.

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Giving up on free speech

They say ‘talk is cheap,’ but increasingly, it’ll cost you

BY JOHN ZIPPERER

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN ELON MUSK bullying Twitter into submission, the Biden administration launching a “misinformation board,” and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis bullying Disney and gays, the realization begins to sink in. We’re not doing very well with this free speech thing. Too bad it’s kind of critical for us doing other things well. Just ask Vlad.

Over in Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin simmers in his evil villain lair, absentmindedly stroking the head of his pet komodo dragon, thinking about his disastrous invasion of Ukraine. As numerous experts have pointed out, Putin sits atop a pyramid of liars and corrupt officials. His oligarchs lied about the materials they were supposed to supply to the Russian army, the military lied about how good the army is, and everyone lied about Ukraine’s people. The system is so corrupt it can’t be fixed by people within the system — they’re all too afraid of a *Downfall* harangue from Putin.

“[W]e see corruption coming back to bite Russia,” journalist David Volodzk told NPR in early May. As a result, “Putin may have gone in on bad intel, thinking that the Ukrainians were going to be waiting with flowers instead of . . . a Molotov cocktail — and going in with bad gear, thinking that he had the best and the latest. And so as much as we fell for this idea of Russia being much more powerful than they are, much more capable than they are, Putin fell for that himself.”

If people are afraid of telling their superiors and the public unwelcome news, you end up with debacles like Russia’s Ukraine war and Rudy Giuliani’s Four Seasons Landscaping press conference. As computer nerds say: garbage in, garbage out.

IT’S NOT JUST FOR DICTATORS ANYMORE

People censor others and themselves for a variety of reasons. To protect themselves. To manipulate others. To stifle opposition. It’s addictive, and it’s been around forever.

Book banning used to be relegated to the realm of neo-Nazi cosplayers and the occasional fundamentalist school teacher way down South. Now it’s all the rage, with Republican-led state governments looking to ban books that say anything about [CENSORED] or were written by a [CENSORED]. There’s even a congressional candidate in Virginia who’s seeking legal action against Barnes & Noble for selling books that make him feel icky. Heaven forbid anyone reads something that upsets them; but it’s even worse if you are so intellectually fragile that you can’t stand anyone else reading about [CENSORED TO PROTECT FRAGILE POLITICAL CANDIDATES’ FEELINGS].

But this isn’t just on the right wing of American politics. On the left, it has come in the form of framing entire conversations and issues in ways that exclude their opponents from the conversation. And it goes beyond politically correct language. Not too long ago, the ACLU, a Berkeley English professor and American indepen-

dent booksellers got involved in a controversy over an anti-trans book, but they weren’t defending the right for an author to make a controversial case, they were variously calling for its suppression and even its burning.

This general readiness to silence others has even affected this very newspaper in this very liberal city, with a group of San Francisco supervisors who were so [CENSORED TO PROTECT FRAGILE POWERFUL PEOPLE] that they tried to punish the *Marina Times* financially because of some negative tweets.

IT WAS FUN WHILE IT LASTED

I guess I’m from a generation that reveled more in the diversity of opinions and ideas. Some of them are loopy, yes, but the democratic conversation is better off being wide-ranging rather than narrow.

In college in the late 1980s, both student dailies on my campus opposed the school administration’s attempts to impose a speech code. That’s one conservative-leaning paper and one very lefty paper, both opposed to it. Now, you have left-wing students demanding censorship, refusing to let opposing speakers on campus. Between Republican legislators passing laws restricting speech and students demanding other speech be forbidden, classrooms are going to be silent.


Sometimes education is about being upset. If learning the truth about something upsets you, it’s your job to adjust to reality, not to deny reality. (And sometimes reality is simply acknowledging that there are people with very different and sometimes irreconcilable views than what you believe.) If you believe fervently in God, and a teacher assigns an atheist author, should you get an apology because you learned [CENSORED TO PROTECT GOD’S FEELINGS]?

On the political right, they talk a lot about free speech these days, but they’re mostly talking about defending Internet trolls. When it comes to actual free speech and exposure to ideas they don’t like, they’re eagerly banning books and telling teachers what to say in class. Imagine you’re a teacher, maybe you’ve got a masters degree and 15 years of teaching experience, you regularly attend conferences to learn new teaching methods, and you stay up-to-date on your chosen subject — and you have to kowtow to some political party that thinks Marjorie Taylor Green and Louie Gohmert are worthy solons. It’s enough to make you [BLEEPING CENSORED], and that doesn’t help the students. Meanwhile, on the left, they have resurrected those speech codes from the 1980s with gusto. The measure of a statement’s worthiness is no longer its truth but how it makes its audience feel.

But if I can’t occasionally upset people, if I can’t talk about anything that matters, what’s left to write about? “Hey, the Kardashians have a new series.” Son of a [CENSORED]!

Feedback: letters@marinatimes.com;
author email: john@marinatimes.com

The measure of a statement's worthiness is no longer its truth but how it makes its audience feel.




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JUNE 2022 : 5

JUNE EVENTS

NOT TO MISS THIS MONTH

Editor's note: Covid protocols vary by event; visit individual websites for up-to-date information.

MAJOR EVENTS

Sara Shelton Mann | 7 Excavations / at the edge of the shore and the edge of the world
Monday, June 6; Wed.–Thu., June 8–9; Sun.–Thu., June 12–16; & Tuesday, June 21

Fort Mason Center
Collaborating with a company of artists, dancers, musicians, and filmmakers, Mann's multiday activations include free artist workshops, public Chi cultivation sessions, art installations, open rehearsals, and culminates with a summer solstice performance June 21 (8 p.m., Space 308). Free, 415-345-7500, fortmason.org

Broadway S.F. | Hadestown
Tue.–Sun., June 7–July 3
Orpheum Theatre (1192 Market St.)
This multiple Tony award-winning musical and Grammy Award winner for Best Musical Theater Album intertwines two mythic tales: young dreamers Orpheus and Eurydice, and King Hades and his wife, Persephone, as it invites you on a hell-raising journey to the underworld and back. \$56–\$256, 888-746-1799, broadwaysf.com

38th Annual Bouquets to Art
Daily, June 7–12
de Young Museum
Experience more than 100 floral displays, designed by the Bay Area's most innovative and sought-after floral designers, in conversation with works from the museum's permanent collection. \$35, 415-750-3600, famsf.org

39th S.F. Jazz Festival
Daily, June 8–19
S.F. Jazz (201 Franklin St.)
This year's festival features 44 concerts and includes performances by Gregory Porter, Christian McBride, Dianne Reeves, Chucho Valdés & Joe Lovano, Rhiannon Giddens & Francesco Turrisi, Jane Monheit, Con Brio, Kim Nalley, Lavay Smith, and others. \$25–\$95, 866-920-5299, sfjazz.org

85th Annual Stern Grove Festival
Sundays, June 12–Aug. 14, 2 p.m.
19th Ave. at Sloat
Tower of Power opens the festival and Phil Lesh & Friends closes, with Taj Mahal, Lee Ann Rimes, Liz Phair, Old Crow Medicine Show, the S.F. Symphony, and others in between. Reservations required. Free, 415-252-6252, sterngrove.org

Frameline 46
Most days, June 16–26
Various Bay Area locations & online streaming
The S.F. International LGBTQ+ Film Festival is the longest running-event of its kind. This year's event features over 80 films available for in-person and encore streaming. Visit website for schedule, venues, and ticketing. 415-703-8650, frameline.org



52nd Annual S.F. Pride Celebration & Parade

Sat.–Sun., June 25–26
Civic Center Plaza & Market St.
This year's festivities will include a two-day celebration, rally, and parade (10:30 a.m. Sunday). 415-703-8650, sfpride.org
PHOTO: THOMAS HAWK; FLICKR.COM/THOMASHAWK

FUN FOR DAD

Father's Day Afternoon Sail on S.F. Bay
Sat.–Sun., June 18–19, 3:15–6 p.m.
Schooner Freda B (Slip 465, Sausalito Yacht Harbor, 100 Bay St., Sausalito)
Celebrate Dad on this relaxing sail on the 80-foot gaff-rigged coastal schooner Freda B. \$125, 415-331-0444, schoonerfredab.com, eventbrite.com

Father's Day Brunch Cruise
Sunday, June 19, noon–2 p.m.
California Hornblower, Pier 3 (Embarcadero at Washington St.)
Gather the family to celebrate Dad with chef-inspired plated entrees, champagne, beer, live music, and great views. \$95, 888-459-8105, cityexperiences.com

COMMUNITY CORNER

Fillmore Summer Fest Kick-Off: Grillin' in the Mo
Saturday, June 4, 1–6 p.m.
Hamilton Recreation Center (1900 Geary Blvd.)
Celebrate the start of The Village Project youth summer programs with a blues concert, barbeque, dancing, and youth activities. Free, 415-424-2980 thevillageprojectsf.org

GALAS & BENEFITS

9th Annual Ploughshares Fund Chain Reaction: Action Now
Wednesday, June 8, 5–6:30 p.m.
Livestream & Commonwealth Club (110 Embarcadero)
The global peace and security foundation's annual fundraiser will focus on the momentum to position people, not nuclear weapons, at the forefront of our national security and budget priorities. Free (virtual)–\$250 (watch party at the Commonwealth Club), donations encouraged, 415-668-2244, 415-597-6705, ploughshares.org



Breaking Down Walls: Celebrating Our Shared Humanity Through The Arts

Saturday, June 11, 7 p.m.
Cowell Theatre, Fort Mason Center
This benefit for Ukraine features diverse artists performing music, dance, theatre, poetry, and animation in an eclectic expression to remind us how connected we all are and to recognize and celebrate our shared humanity. \$25, eventbrite.com
PHOTO: SAN FRANCISCO COMMEDIAN DHAYA LASKHMINA-RAYANAN COURTESY ARTIST; METROFILMANDARTS.ORG

ARTS & CULTURE

Thursday Nights: Asian Improv aRts' 35th Anniversary Festival of Music and Dance
Thursday, June 30, 6–7 p.m. & 7:30–8:30 p.m.
Samsung Hall, Asian Art Museum
Enjoy two unique programs of music, dance, and film that bring together a national lineup representing multiple generations of Asian improv artists. \$10, 415-581-3500, asianart.org

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

SFMOMA | Outward Sight and Inner Vision: Paul Klee and Lee Mullican
Thu.–Mon. through June 26
151 Third St.
Blending earthly and celestial imagery, this focused presentation brings together the meditative works by Klee and early paintings by Mullican. Free (first Thursdays 4–8 p.m. for Bay Area residents)–\$25, 415-357-4000, sfmoma.org

Contemporary Jewish Museum | The Jim Henson Exhibition: Imagination Unlimited
Thu.–Sun. through Aug. 14, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.
736 Mission St.
This exhibition celebrates the legacy of Jim Henson, and features more than 150 objects drawn from the beloved worlds of *Sesame Street*, *Fraggle Rock*, *The Dark Crystal*, *Labyrinth*, and more. Free (first Fridays)–\$16, 415-655-7800, thecjm.org

MOAD | Elegies: Still Lives in Contemporary Art
Wed.–Sun. through Aug. 21
685 Mission St.
This thematic group exhibition presents two parallel narratives: one is an art historical examination of still lifes and the other is how that history is connected to Black figuration and is presented in various mediums, including painting, photography, sculpture, printmaking, performance, and installation. \$12, 415-318-7152, moadsf.org

THEATER

S.F. Playhouse | The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin
Tue.–Sun. through June 10
Kensington Park Hotel (450 Post St.)
Based on a true story during the Chinese Exclusion Act, Harry Chin entered the U.S. by buying forged documentation and lived the rest of his life keeping secrets. Through dreamlike leaps of time and space and with the assistance of ghosts, the story of the Chin family reveals the personal and political repercussions of making a group of people "illegal." \$30–\$100, 415-677-9596, sfplayhouse.org

DANCE

ODC | State of Play Festival
Thu.–Sat., June 2–6 & 8–11
ODC Theater (3153 17th St.)
This festival invites you to join the creative process through a curated artistic exchange, presenting nine premieres and seven works in progress from artists across the Bay Area and the U.S. paired with engagement activities designed to bring audience and artist closer together. Visit website for ticketing, 415-920-9181, odc.dance

Siudy Garrido Flamenco Company | Flamenco Intimo
Sunday, June 5, 6 p.m.
Blue Shield of California Theater, YBCA
This Flamenco suite features acclaimed choreography work and flamenco solos and explores a range of colors and emotions of traditional flamenco styles. \$55–\$95, 415-978-2700, ybca.org

MUSIC: CLASSICAL

S.F. Symphony | Stravinsky's Oedipus Rex
Fri.–Sun., June 10–12
Davies Symphony Hall
Esa-Pekka Salonen leads a new staged production of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and *Symphony of Psalms* in collaboration with acclaimed theater director Peter Sellars. \$35–\$165, 415-864-6000, sfsymphony.org

S.F. Chamber Orchestra | Main Stage II: Beethoven Four Plus Four
Friday, June 24, 7:30–9:30 p.m.
Herbst Theatre (401 Van Ness Ave.)
The program begins with Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's Overture in C Major, followed by Beethoven's Symphony No. 4, then pianist Hilda Huang's performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4. Free, 415-463-6710, thesfco.org

MUSIC: CONTEMPORARY

35th Annual Bay Area Harmony A Cappella Festival
Saturday, June 4, 9 p.m.
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre
The annual national competition draws from hundreds of vocal groups across the country with regional competitions in eight cities; the winner will then perform at the National Finals. \$35–\$60, harmony-sweepstakes.com

FILMS & LECTURES

Who Killed Jane Stanford?
Thursday, June 16, 5:30 p.m.
Commonwealth Club (110 Embarcadero)
Penetrating the fog of the coverup surrounding the murder of Stanford University's cofounder, historian Richard White sifts through the evidence and reconstructs the full story, revealing that, although several suspects had both motive and opportunity, only one had the means. \$10, 415-597-6705, commonwealthclub.org

NIGHTLIFE

Well Strung
Thursday, June 16 8 p.m.
Feinstein's at the Nikko (222 Mason St.)
The critically acclaimed all-male, classically trained quartet, which has performed for President Obama, Hillary Clinton, and the Vatican, among many others, will perform recognized classical pieces while singing pop music hits from the likes of Taylor Swift, Rihanna, Kelly Clarkson, and other pop stars for a uniquely engaging experience. \$65, 866-663-1063, feinsteinsf.com

SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

Cosmic Catastrophes: Transient Phenomena and the Renaissance of Astrophysics
Monday, June 6, 7:30 p.m.
California Academy of Sciences
Astronomical transients are events that appear and disappear in the sky and are signs of catastrophic events in space, including the most extreme stellar (star) deaths and interactions between stars and supermassive black holes. Professor Raffaella Margutti of U.C. Berkeley will share how new capabilities to study the night sky have led to recent discoveries. \$15, 415-379-8000, calacademy.org

POTABLES & EDIBLES

6th Annual Rose & Bouquet
Sunday, June 26, 11:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
Wayfare Tavern (558 Sacramento St.)
Enjoy a buffet brunch followed by a floral workshop, photo booth, small bites, craft cocktails, California Rosé, and more. \$125, 415-772-9060, wayfaretavern.com

HEALTH & WELLNESS

An Expert's Guide to Sleep
Friday, June 10, 7:30 p.m.
Sydney Goldstein Theater (275 Hayes St.)
Join Matt Walker, professor of neuroscience and psychology at U.C. Berkeley and the director of the Center for Human Sleep Science in conversation with Indre Viskontas, a cognitive neuroscientist at UCSF on the science of sleep and how we can improve it for better health. \$36, 415-392-4400, cityarts.net

For additional calendar events, visit marinatimes.com
E-mail: calendar@marinatimes.com

ART WORLD : Bringing meaning to public spaces

Public art in San Francisco: Preserving the past and paving the way toward the future

BY SHARON ANDERSON

SAN FRANCISCO, SINCE ITS EARLY days as a major seaport, has become a global arts and entertainment capital in part because of its long-term commitment to the arts. Walking through San Francisco tells the story of a city committed to art in public spaces. On the Embarcadero, a 70-foot partial bow and piece of an arrow — *Cupid's Span* by Claus Oldenburg — is a whimsical pop art monument to a weapon of love. At Broadway and Columbus Avenue in North Beach, books hover in the air mimicking birds in motion in Brian Goggin and Dorka Keehn's *Language of the Birds*. Passersby will notice on the plaza floor words are embedded that appear to have fallen from the pages above. Along the Bay Area Ridge Trail, hikers can witness a 100-foot collection of cypress tree trunks fastened together, titled *Spire* by environmental artist Andrew Goldsworthy.

PERMANENT PUBLIC ART

San Francisco's earliest art policies date to 1932 when the Arts Commission was established, providing it jurisdiction over all the city-owned art and its preservation. Later, The Art Enrichment Ordinance was established in 1969 to provide a guaranteed funding mechanism for the acquisition of art for new public facilities and

civic spaces. The ordinance ensures that 2 percent of gross construction cost of civic buildings, transportation improvement projects, new parks, and other above-ground structures be allocated for public art. Public art on private property is required to be generally accessible to the public.

The city also has a "1 percent for art program" requiring large construction projects to provide public art that equals at least 1 percent of the total construction cost. Some projects may choose to dedicate a portion of their 1 percent to the city's Public Art Trust, which can be used for various purposes, including restoring artworks in the Civic Art Collection (kiosk.sfartscommission.org), which includes more than 4,000 historic monuments, memorials, and gifts to the city, valued at over \$90 million.

PRESERVING SAN FRANCISCO'S CULTURAL HISTORY

Most recently, the San Francisco Art Institute received a \$200,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation to support its monumental Diego Rivera fresco, *The Making of a Fresco Showing the Building of a City*. Commissioned by SFAI and later painted in 1931 during the artist's first visit to the United States, Rivera's mural is one of San Francisco's most enduring and beloved cultural assets. The fresco occu-

pies the north wall of the Diego Rivera Gallery on SFAI's landmark campus at 800 Chestnut Street and is open to the public free of charge Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

INTEGRATING ART INTO DAILY LIFE

San Francisco continues its journey to integrate and preserve public artwork into the fabric of daily life to promote a diverse and stimulating cultural environment.

Yerba Buena Gardens, two blocks of public parks situated between Third, Fourth, Mission, and Folsom streets (and currently hosting free entertainment through Oct. 2; ybgfestival.org), contains many public art installations. Among these are the impressive *Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial and Fountain*, flanked by the *Memorial Silver Walls* designed by Dutch artist Lin Utzon in fissured granite, which reflect changes in the weather and sky; the *Sister Cities Garden*, with plants representing each of San Francisco's sister cities along with a beautiful view of the downtown skyline; the *Glass Green Ship*, an 18-foot sculpture by John Roloff with portholes

providing a glimpse into Moscone Center below; Brendon Monroe's *Roll*, a mural inspired by water and air and resembling fog rolling over the city's mountains; Keith Haring's *Three Dancing Figures* | *Untitled*, an enamel on aluminum and concrete primary color sculpture on the corner of Howard and Third streets; and many more, including a tribute to the Ohlone American Indians whose tribes inhabited

the Northern California coast. The art in the gardens is accessible daily, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Perhaps the most visible public art is one on display daily from dusk to midnight: Leo Vil-

larel's, *The Bay Lights*. This spectacular light sculpture and generative art installation on the Bay Bridge consists of 25,000 individual white LED lights on the suspension cables and stretching the entire western span of the bridge, reminding us daily that San Francisco is a city that knows how to provide its residents and visitors with an enhanced environment.

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

'The Bay Lights' is perhaps the most visible public art, and it's on display daily.

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MICHAEL SNYDER ON ... FILM

Biopics: Blithe and biting

Prestige productions tell human stories worth your time

BY MICHAEL SNYDER

TWO 20TH-CENTURY SONS of England, separated by class and circumstance, make for two wildly different new movies. The contrast between the lives of Maurice Flitcroft and Siegfried Sassoon is reflected in the nature and tone of the biopics that tell their respective tales — one warm and comedic, the other dark and tragic. But both men are admirable in their way, trying to be true to themselves in the face of outside pressure, and both movies are prestige productions that deserve to be seen by appreciative audiences.

‘THE PHANTOM OF THE OPEN’

In a refreshing twist on the standard underdog sports story, *The Phantom of the Open* isn’t an inspiring drama about an athlete who overcomes the odds to emerge a winner in the crucial final scene. Instead, it’s the droll, mostly true account of Maurice Flitcroft, a kind-hearted working-class crane operator from the Northwest of England who is facing unemployment in mid-1970s due to company cutbacks. So he decides, on a whim, to embark upon a new career as a golfer. Through a series of mishaps, he’s permitted to play in the 1976 British Open Golf Championship despite minimal skill on the fairways. In fact, he had never played a full round of golf prior to the Open — and it shows. He’s pretty bad at it and doesn’t seem likely to get any better. Still, he persists.

The Phantom of the Open primarily focuses on how Flitcroft gets to the Open and what transpires afterward, while the heart of it is the man’s relationship to his family and to the

friends in his corner. It could have been a lowbrow comedy relying on cheap shots, particularly when it depicts Flitcroft’s interactions with befuddled tournament officials, top-shelf professional golfers, and amateur country club players. But it takes Flitcroft’s passion and good intentions seriously, as does the cast led by the superb Mark Rylance. In the crucial role of the relentlessly cheerful, up-for-anything Flitcroft, Rylance carries much of the load throughout the movie. He’s perfectly matched up with Sally Hawkins, whose adept performance as Flitcroft’s devoted and determined wife, Jean, combines toughness and tenderness in equal measure. These award-winning actors — supported by the likes of Rhys Ifans as Flitcroft’s primary nemesis, a snooty Open administrator — bring depth and nuance to what is more than a simple crowd-pleaser.

Craig Roberts, sure of hand, directed Simon Farnaby’s wry, tidy script, which was based on the biography *The Phantom of the Open: Maurice Flitcroft, The World’s Worst Golfer* by Farnaby and Scott Murray. If the book’s title seems cruel and may be accurate, the screen adaptation presents Flitcroft as more role model than lovable loser: a caring husband to Jean, and a doting dad to their fun-loving twin boys and her more serious-minded son from a previous relationship. Rather than simply coming off as foolish in his fruitless campaign to be a successful golfer, Flitcroft — with his dogged refusal to give up on his dream despite his lack of athletic skill — ends up inadvertently inspiring people who also struggle with their limitations. And that is something laudable.



Mark Rylance in *The Phantom of the Open*. PHOTO CREDIT NICK WALL. COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES CLASSICS.

The Phantom of the Open opens in select theaters on June 3.

‘BENEDICTION’

A decorated British Army veteran of World War I, Siegfried Sassoon was nearly shattered by the mutilation and death he witnessed on the battlefield. He subsequently embraced a resolute antiwar stance that, in combination with his PTSD, landed him in a sanitarium and effectively ended his career as a soldier. But the poetry he wrote that reflected his wartime experiences and pacifist beliefs earned him respect in aristocratic and literary circles, where he also could also indulge in what was then known as “the love that dare not speak its name.” Heartbreak and the harsh realities of societal condemnation would force him to seek another path.

Sassoon’s harrowing personal journey is depicted in *Benediction*, the latest narrative from the accomplished Liverpool-born filmmaker Terence Davies, whose period dramas such as his memoir-infused *The Long Day Closes* and *Distant Voices, Still Lives* have earned plaudits for their depth and sensitivity. Davies’s expert direc-

tion and thoughtful script bring a murky, sometimes suffocating quality to *Benediction* that is in line with its protagonist’s life, which was not an easy ride. Even if Sassoon was respected for his war poems, spent some time in the rarified upper echelon of British society, and had affairs with a handful of men he fancied, he was tormented by the horrors of his military service and burdened by his homosexuality. Eventually, he buried his feelings, married a woman who admired him, had a son, and embraced religion, desperate to find peace, yet seemingly embittered by his choices.

Jack Lowden, recently one of the leads in the slyly amusing Amazon Prime espionage series *Slow Horses*, is thoroughly compelling as the noble, tormented young Sassoon. And Peter Capaldi, best known as the Twelfth Doctor on the long-running BBC sci-fi hit *Doctor Who*, does exemplary work as the elder, brooding Sassoon. Along with Lowden, Capaldi and a coterie of solid supporting players amid vivid settings, Davies mixes in archival footage from the trenches, vintage music and, most crucially, excerpts from Sassoon’s poems in voice-over. The impact is almost overwhelming. In today’s world, where war rages on and human rights are continually threatened, the words Sassoon wrote decades ago continue to resonate, and *Benediction* offers them in tragic and memorable context.

Benediction opens in select theaters on June 3.

‘EMERGENCY’

And now for something completely different, contemporary, and definitely not British: *Emergency*, a canny and potent blend of collegiate high jinks and social commentary that doesn’t flinch when addressing the issue of ongoing racism in modern-day America. To be fair, *Emergency* is a movie that, like *The Phantom of the Open* and *Benediction*, concerns characters accepting who they are, despite the perceptions and expectations of others. That’s where the simi-

larities end. When we join the action in *Emergency*, a couple of black seniors at a conventional liberal arts college are ready to hit a bunch of campus parties to kick off spring break. The guys are Kunle, a studious grind with grad school aspirations, and Sean, a slacker and stoner. Regardless of their differences and Sean’s tendency to be a questionable influence on Kunle, they are obviously best friends.

Excited at the promise of the night ahead, Kunle and Sean first make a pit stop at the house they share with their nerdy Hispanic gamer pal Carlos. But to their shock, they discover a drunk white young woman in the living room. Even worse, she’s fading in and out of consciousness. They have to do something, but the question instantly becomes *how would cops or EMTs react to the sight of three brown males with an unconscious white female?*

In a panic-driven frenzy, the trio decides to drag her into their van while they frantically argue how to get her somewhere safe. Kunle suggests the nearest hospital, but Sean, whose inner-city background has made him more — shall we say — cautious, wants to ditch her as soon as possible, like at the party where she probably got hammered. The odyssey that results is funny, nerve-wracking and thought-provoking. Carey Williams directed a savvy script from KD Davila in sharp and nimble fashion, juggling disparate elements that could have crashed and burned in lesser hands. But the heavy lifting was done by Donald Elise Watkins as Kunle, RJ Cyler as Sean, and Sebastian Chacon as Carlos — three up-and-coming actors who really make this trek roll.

Emergency is in theaters and available for streaming on demand.

Michael Snyder is a print and broadcast journalist who covers pop culture on KGO Radio’s Mark Thompson Show and on Michael Snyder’s Culture Blast, via GAB-Net.net, Roku, iTunes, and YouTube. You can follow Michael on Twitter: @cultureblaster



Kate Phillips and Jack Lowden in *Benediction*. PHOTO: LAURENCE CENDROWICZ; ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

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MomSense : Milestones



Times of change can bring happiness and anxiety for some.. PHOTO: MONKEYBUSINESSIMAGES

Learning from transitions

How to support children making school changes

BY LIZ FARRELL

THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR comes with many emotions for both kids and parents. There is excitement for summer and a break from schoolwork, but also there can be some stress and anxiousness about what's ahead. This is especially true if you have a child transitioning to a new school, middle school, high school, or even college. Graduations are a wonderful time to celebrate change and new beginnings, but they can also be an emotional roller-coaster. As a parent, you may find yourself trying to instill all the last-minute advice you can, while reminiscing about how fast the time goes. But no matter the stage, don't forget to tell your child these three things:

YOU ARE LOVED

It can be easy to get caught up in the business and stress of everyday life, and we may forget the most important and easiest thing to tell our children — that we love them. Research suggests that when kids feel loved they develop positive self-esteem and feel more safe and secure. This is important especially during big transitions.

Besides simply saying “I love you,” there are other words we can express and many ways we can show our children they are loved. We can tell them we are proud of them, we can thank them, and we can tell them they did a great job. We can also make them feel loved by showing affection. For younger kids this could be a cuddle or a hug and kiss. Older children may want a high five, but don’t underestimate the power of a hug no matter what age. However you choose to show or tell them they are loved, just make sure to do it, and do it often.

BE YOU

A few years ago, musician John Legend gave a graduation speech at the University of Pennsylvania, and he said, “You can’t be happy with yourself if you’re not even being yourself.” Heading off to a new school can be scary, and sometimes our kids think they need to be or act a certain way to fit in. I often

tell my children that people are going to want to be around you if you are comfortable with who you are and like yourself. However your children define themselves ultimately, we just want to make sure they are happy and kind. Sounds simple, right? Technology and social media have added a whole other layer to this important lesson for our kids: Don't pretend to be something you aren't, don't pretend life is always a perfect Instagram post, and use these platforms for good.

WE ARE HERE

Whether you are watching your oldest head off to college or your youngest venture to kindergarten, remind your kids you will always be there for them. They

will make mistakes, do dumb things, maybe even get in a little trouble (with any luck, not too much), but this is part of growing up. Remind them that no matter what happens, you will

always love them and be there for them. This foundation will help keep them grounded and can be very centering when so much else around them is new.

It is our job to prepare them, to give them their wings, and then watch them fly. If they stumble — and they will — let them know they can always come to you for help. With each new beginning they will grow and change. As parents there is no better gift than to watch your child blossom into a smart, kind, and independent person.

With every milestone our children have conquered, we as parents have had to make changes. When they learned to walk, started school, and learned to drive, we had to make changes in how we parented. These are exciting times and although they will face challenges, try to listen more and lecture less. And tell them often they are loved.

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



The pricier the home, the happier its sellers might be as the market softens. PHOTO: GAREY DE MARTINI

Buyer caution versus pent-up demand

BY GAREY DE MARTINI

AFTER AN INCREDIBLY HOT EARLY spring start, San Francisco's real estate market may be cooling off a bit. But just a bit.

"Anecdotally, we are hearing that some buyers are stepping out of their search due to a combination of rate hikes and exhaustion of competing for properties and losing out," said Annie Williams with Sotheby's International Realty.

"In addition, some tech folks have lost up to a third of their stock portfolio's value this year. Along with other buyers who have down payments invested in stocks, they are certainly more wary than they had been previously," according to Williams.

MARKET STATUS

The median sale price for all property types in San Francisco hit an all-time high of \$1.6 million in April, driven by a drop in available inventory compared to March.

According to the San Francisco Association of Realtors, in April condos shot up to an all-time median high of \$1.38 million. Single-family home median prices peaked in March at \$2.2 million, but were still at \$2.1 million in April.

The average ratio of sale price to list price for single-family homes was at an all-time high of 123.7 percent in April. The number of available single-family homes continued a decline that started in November 2020, reaching a low point for the past four years of about 300 homes on the market in April.

Both March and April of this year recorded the lowest-ever average days on market — just 15 days. The median was low but not a record low, suggesting that some of the properties that had been sitting on the market for a long time were finally sold.

Clearly, the market was incredibly hot in March and April. Nevertheless, Ashley Fahey with the *Business Times* wrote in the middle of May that with mortgage rates rising and home-price appreciation continuing, there may finally be enough forces to slow the nation's pandemic-fueled booming housing market.

She says Jeff Tucker, senior economist at Zillow, believes by fall or winter, it's possible buyers will start to see some bargains. He thinks pricey West Coast markets like Seattle, San Francisco, and San Jose, as well as Mountain West markets like Boise and Coeur d'Alene in Idaho, could be the first markets to see a slowdown.

Pent-up demand is still present in the market, of course, but buyers do seem

to be more cautious these days. This is especially true at the lower end of the market. In contrast, those shopping in the \$2 million and over range may not be as sensitive to rising interest rates.

According to the *Business Times*'s Ted Andersen, there were no sales of \$10 million-plus homes in San Francisco in January and February. And then just like that, there were eight sales of such homes in March.

The story is a bit different for lower priced homes, where demand seems to be softening. Buyers in this category tend to be more price-conscious. Fluctuations in the market and rates have a greater impact.

BARGAIN TIME?

Consider this: less than half of the homes sold in the United States are affordable for middle-class Americans. Just 48.7 percent of homes sold could be characterized as being within the financial reach of middle-class families, according to realtor.com, citing the National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo Housing Opportunity Index as its source.

That figure is likely even lower today; it was calculated using home prices from the first quarter of the year and mortgage rates from the end of April. Both have since increased, and mortgage rates are expected to continue to climb.

The country's most expensive housing markets, both large and small, are based in California. The state is notoriously expensive, with a median home list price of \$750,000. In the realtor.com survey, San Francisco was ranked the third least affordable market in the state and country, behind Los Angeles and Anaheim. For context, Stockton was ranked the fifth least affordable market in this survey.

It's no wonder then that people who are not uber wealthy are a bit more wary when buying a home.

This can be devastating to sellers of course, who hear it's a hot market — who expect multiple offers with over-asking bids in no time at all — and find they are unable to sell their homes.

It happens, according to Janet Siroto in a realtor.com piece entitled "The Secret Shame of Owning a Home That Just Won't Sell." "Denial, anger, embarrassment — all these emotions and more fill a home seller's long days as they wait for their real estate agent to text or call with good news," Siroto writes.

Turns out selling a home can sometimes be just as emotionally draining as buying one.

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