# NOPNANews

nopna.org

A Publication of the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

Winter 2021











RISING TOGETHER.



October 17, 2021 marked the return of San Francisco's beloved Sunday Streets with dozens of neighborhood block parties throughout the city on what was called "Phoenix Day." Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, NOPA is emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic stronger and a more united community as evidenced by the epic Sunday Streets block party on Lyon Street between Fulton and Grove Streets.

Organized by Christine Han of NOPA Corner Market, the event featured free coffee and donuts from Bob Donut's to start off the day and catered lunch for all with two sessions of hot feasts from Kung Food. All of this was washed down with plenty of cold beverages for kids and adults. The

'icing on the cake,' so to speak, was served up by Lexie's Frozen Custard truck and brought smiles to young and old alike, with a flavorful scoop of one's choice or an Oreo cookie ice cream sandwich. And as if that weren't enough, Barrel Head Brewhouse served up frosty beverages for the festivities.

We are fortunate that several of the talented artists and artisans in our neighborhood also contributed their gifts to make it a truly special day. Todd Kurnat (featured in NOPNA News 2021:3) painted a new original mural on the side of NOPA Corner market that highlighted the theme of the day. Our neighborhood chalk artist Sasha (also profiled in this issue) contributed her beautiful and

### FROM THE BOARD

### A NEIGHBORHOOD RISING

### And just like that, 2021 is coming to a close.

Sometimes, we forget what a special place we live in surrounded by kind, smart, talented, funny, giving, creative, hard working, supportive, and down-to-earth neighbors. Social-distancing only made this worse as many of us now spend more time with screens than with one another IRL (in real life).



Jason Cauthen NOPNA News Editor

We were fortunate this fall to have three in-person events which served as great reminders of the magic of this community and the people around us, each in its own way. In September, The Celebration of Life to honor Curtis Bryant — "The Mayor of Divisadero" — drew hundreds of revelers to honor the legacy of a man who touched so many lives with class, grace, and humor. In October, the neighborhood celebrated our ability to rise with a Phoenix Day block party that welcomed all! It featured food, art, music, and fashion where many of the hidden (and less hidden) creative people in our community shined through. And, at the end of October, our Grove Street neighbors welcomed kids back to our annual Halloween Event (this year partnering with the "Alamo Scare"). The joy of unlimited candy was exceeded only by the realization that things are moving closer to "normalcy" one day at a time.

Events like these make it impossible to forget what this community is all about. They are the types of things that prompted me to get involved with the NOPNA Board several years ago and inspire me to stay involved today. Meeting the eclectic characters, local heroes, community-minded merchants, local leaders, and "regular people" who are anything but -- is one of the great joys of being in this neighborhood and volunteering for NOPNA.

Here's to the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022. We're looking forward to more opportunities to enjoy spending time with this amazing community and all the magic that everyone brings to it. Hope to see you all (IRL) in the coming year.

Best. Jason

Jason Cauthen is a native San Franciscan who has lived in this neighborhood for the past decade with his wife and two kids. When not editing the NOPNA News, he can sometimes be found attempting to play a ukulele (poorly) in the Panhandle.



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### North of **Panhandle** Neighborhood Association

The NOPNA News is published by the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association for the residents, businesses, and friends of our neighborhood, which is bounded by Masonic Avenue and Turk, Divisadero and Fell Streets.

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NOPNA's Mission: The purpose of this association shall be to establish neighborhood unity, maintain multi-ethnic and multi-cultural diversity, foster a sense of neighborhood pride, promote a safe and clean community, and improve the quality of life for all residents of the neighborhood.

Your financial support allows NOPNA to cover the costs of our newsletters, community building events like our block party and holiday party, public art projects in the neighborhood, and other activities that enrich our dynamic neighborhood. It also supports this site.

Make a difference on our streets and become a member today!

> Contact NOPNA board@nopna.org www.nopna.org

### (continued from page 1)











notos by: Mark Smolinski

whimsical chalk art to the sidewalks, inspiring several kids to add their own contributions. Rosie Dittman (featured News 2021:2) brought out her famous focaccia and jams. Yabette Swank of swanketyswank. com collaborated with Bertha Pearl of sizequeenclothing.com in support of "Big Babes Bazaar" organized by Saucye West at #fightforinclusivity. A bevy of beautiful models turned Lyon Street into a veritable catwalk, with beats and background music provided throughout the day by DJ Dillan (another local talent).

In addition, numerous neighbors pitched in to provide plenty of entertainment for the kids, including

giant bubble blowing, chalk art, Jenga, and an extremely popular activities wheel, where a spin might land on "tell a joke," "sing a song," or "do a little dance." Other activities included a bake sale, a lemonade stand, free library books, and a stroll through the Open Potter's Studio.

Thanks to the herculean effort and incredible generosity of Christine Han and Eric Dy, the proprietors of the NOPA Corner Market, and support from NOPNA, the large crowd of neighbors was satiated with free food, drinks, and plenty of activities to keep everyone busy and entertained throughout the day.

The NOPA Corner Market became a beacon of light for many of us during the pandemic, providing a safe place to shop for food and other essential items. Their generosity of spirit shone even brighter during their hosting of this tremendous block party. We neighbors of NOPA are sincerely grateful for all that the NOPA Corner Market has become. Please make sure to support our neighborhood treasure. Thank you, Christine and Eric!

Mark Smolinski is a medical epidemiologist and NOPA resident for over ten years. He is enduring the pandemic with his Bombay and Bengal rescue cats.

## LOCAL ARTIST CHALKS UP HER **WORK** TO A LESSON IN LETTING GO



It's a picture-perfect fall afternoon" as neighborhood volunteers begin gathering on Grove Street to prepare for the longstanding NOPA Halloween Trick or Treat event. A few blocks east, another group of volunteers are cheerfully setting up our sister event, Alamo Scare. To complete the park's festive mood, butterflies flutter among the foliage, boisterous puppies banter with new tail-wagging friends, and some of our beloved animated characters from NOPA stencil the sidewalks — in costume, of course: a snail dressed as a butterfly, a ladybug dressed as a bunny, and a bunny dressed as a witch.

Behind this whimsical and prolific sidewalk chalk art is a local artist. Sasha. She practices in a variety of media ranging from oil paints to copper sculptures. She also founded a unique tattoo studio that partners with the medical community to help patients reclaim their bodies following invasive surgery.

Sidewalk chalk art, however, did not enter the scene for Sasha until the onset of COVID when her cuddly creatures initially featured medical masks rather than the playful costume masks they donned on this sunny afternoon.

"I was off work because you obviously can't do tattooing in the middle of a pandemic," Sasha shares, down on all fours bringing to life yet another creature accompanied by the nostalgic sound of chalk scraping asphalt. "So I started going for walks and drawing almost every morning. It just kind of was a way to relieve stress and to encourage people by saying, 'Hey we're all in this together!'"

What passersby may not realize about Sasha, given her casual style and understated medium, is that her sculpture work has been featured in the de Young. What is it, one wonders, that has motivated an established artist to spend countless hours over the span of nearly two years to create a series of ephemeral sidewalk chalk creatures?

"I appreciate the whimsy of it," Sasha explains. "It's not serious, even though it takes time, and I also like that it's not permanent. Once I walk away, who knows what's going to happen?"

"Sometimes I would circle round to touch stuff up. I remember coming round to one piece that someone had drawn over and my first thought was, 'Oh, someone drew on it.' Then I thought, 'Oh, collaborative art!' Other times, I've had work completely washed away. There's a freeing feeling because it's just chalk. It's kind of a nice lesson in letting go."

Over time, Sasha has come to realize that her chalk creations have opened a form of dialogue with the neighborhood, in spite of the fact that they generally come to fruition in the still of the early morning.

"I do this work in a bubble, but I realize I'm having conversations with people without ever knowing who they are . . . or without them ever knowing who I am. It's just kind of fun."

On this Halloween afternoon, though, Sasha is very much not working in isolation. An anonymous fan adorned in a dramatic feather mask and dark hooded cloak approaches her and gushes: "Your drawings are so beautiful!"

Unphased and still on all fours, Sasha responds, "I'm so glad you're enjoying them." She eventually looks up and delighted by the elaborate costume exclaims, "You look fantastic!"

The fan continues, "Thank you! I'm trying to do something with your chalk, but it's not the same."

Sasha responds warmly as she gets back to work, "That's great, that's what it's there for. Just make a mark!"

Em Minor has lived in NOPA since 2018 and enjoys strolling through the Panhandle in the evenings with her husband John.







# CELEBRATING CB, THE MAYOR OF DIVISADERO

### "Keep doing big things."

"You're in it to win it." These are some of the many catchphrases you'd hear from Curtis "CB" Bryant, affectionately known as the Mayor of Divisadero, whose life was celebrated in September with a traditional second line parade through downtown Divisadero. Second line parades, commonly held in New Orleans, are led by a brass band (the first line) with a large following of members of the community dancing and singing following (the second line). On September 18, 2021, that's exactly what we, the neighbors of NOPA and Alamo Square and —along with CB's loved ones from around the country —did!

Organized by Leigh Ellison, hundreds of friends, family, and strangers all celebrated, danced, and marched in celebration of CB's life and legacy from Alamo Square park, past his home of 47 years on Grove Street, and down Divisadero Street. "The first thing you'd think when you saw

[CB], was that you were going to have a good time," said Leigh. "He was a class-act who celebrated each day." CB was never caught without a full suite of color and excitement and on many nights would be found in his "office," the Madrone Art Bar. "He was always dressed so immaculately and respectfully. The whole room would move away from him when he entered," Chuck Martin, a NOPA neighbor since 1985, remarked. "CB had a way with words. On more than one occasion, I would catch him flirting with my wife at Fly Bar and I would always treat it as a compliment," said Lester Raww, 27 year NOPA resident.

His legacy didn't go unnoticed either. Even London Breed, Mayor of San Francisco, knew him by name. "Pretty much every night if you wanted to hang out with somebody, Curtis was your man . . . . I loved hanging out with him and he always had a spot for me at the Fillmore Jazz Festival," she told SEGATE's Dan Gentile.



CB's memory knows no borders. With funds leftover from a GoFundMe campaign, Leigh was able to have a custom, seven foot tall headstone inscribed with "Dedicated by the City of San Francisco" made to mark his burial place next to his mother in his hometown of Centralia, Illinois.

Although CB is no longer with us, he remains so in spirit. His legacy is rooted all around us: from the mural on Madrone Art Bar to the stencils that can be found all through Divisadero's sidewalks, CB, The Mayor, continues to live within the neighborhood and our hearts. He will forever serve as an example of an unforgettable neighbor and friend who made a lasting impact on his community "Who's got it better than us? Nobody."—Curtis Bryant (01/26/1946-09/16/2020).



Martin Almaraz moved to the neighborhood in 2020 and is an avid cyclist, runner, and photographer.

## SKATING ON GOLDEN GATE





If Page Street is the Lizzo of the Slow Streets, then Golden Gate Avenue is the Caroline Polachek of the Slow Streets. (Outside Lands anyone?) She's newer and lesser known, but still a great time. As a NOPA resident, I used Page Street a lot in the early days of the pandemic. But I've been spending some time on Golden Gate Avenue and realized that those longer blocks are perfect for practicing my fledgling roller skating skills.

If anyone else has picked up roller skating during the pandemic, then you know that dreaded feeling of getting to a sidewalk corner and trying to navigate the detectable systems. Detectable systems are those yellow raised bumps at the corners that are necessary to ensure the safety of those who are visually impaired, but are a treacherous obstacle for those who are still getting the hang of stopping on eight wheels. So, a wide, slow street with

few cars is an ideal environment. A long street block, where you don't have to watch out for cross traffic as much, is even better.

I recommend the blocks between Broderick and Lyon Streets. After Central Avenue, it starts to look a bit hilly for my taste, but maybe I will be ready for it if and when the city extends the western boundary of the Slow Street out to Parker Avenue. According to the SFMTA survey, 66% of respondents are in favor of that expansion. If skating isn't your style, there's lots of other ways to enjoy slow streets. I hear there is even a weekly happy hour on Golden Gate Avenue on Fridays.

See you out there neighbors.

Candace has been a NOPA resident since 2009 and still misses the 99 cent store on Divis. When she's not roller skating, Candace likes to have a drink at Horsefeather's sunny patio.

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# **GETTING INVOLVED—**PANHANDLE STEWARDS

Early morning runs, afternoon strolls, weekend bike rides, work out classes, pickup basketball, Sunday picnics, and much more — the Panhandle is a place so many San Franciscans go to stretch their legs, get some fresh air, and enjoy our city. It is home to some of the largest Eucalyptus trees in the city and one of the city's most prominent native gardens. For more than ten years now, on the second Saturday of the Month, a group of volunteers have been coming out to help keep the Panhandle beautiful.

This group, the Panhandle Stewards, was formed by neighbors who are invested in the preservation of our

local outdoor spaces. After a hiatus, the Stewards are back taking care of our park. While the native plants in the Panhandle are hardy and well suited to the climate, they do have their share of struggles, including: invasive species, Eucalyptus bark (which is harmful to plants/insects), and heavy foot traffic. Each of these make the Panhandle a tough environment for our charming and delightful, native plants.

So, if you are ever in town on the second Saturday of a month, the Panhandle Stewards would love to see you. We work hard, but the best part is meeting new neighbors. You can follow us on Instagram or Twitter (@panhandlestewards) and follow the



calendar here: https://sfrpd.secure.force.com/SFRPDCalendar.

The next three second Saturdays are:

- December 11th
- January 8th
- February 13th

We meet at 10am by the Children's Playground in the Panhandle. See you there!



# FAMILY BUSINESS CLEANS UP THE NEIGHBORHOOD



When the pandemic started,

NOPA residents Kip Fuller and Rosie Hindes saw the many outdoor dining spaces and parklets going up all over San Francisco and were inspired to start an exterior cleaning and sanitizing service. Now after months of planning Essential Power Washing Services is open for business!

Kip is a community leader and entrepreneur who was born and raised in NOPA. You may know Kip from his more than ten years as an insurance business owner. You may recognize Rosie from her time as the original Shift Lead at Tartine Manufactory. They are excited to use their

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experience to build a family business and ready to help the reopening and recovery effort. As Kip put it, "NOPA needs help." He envisions exterior cleaning could bring a stunning improvement to the neighborhood.

**Essential Power Washing Services** is offering to clean up the sidewalks and storefronts along the Divisadero Corridor following a "pay what you can" business philosophy through December 31, 2021. They provide commercial cleaning services including graffiti removal. They also do residential house washing up to three stories, window washing, mobile car washings, and more! You can find Kip and Rosie at http://www.

sfpowerwashing.com/ —or by using the QR code below.

Look for Essential Power Washing Services to be cleaning up the neighborhood near you!



### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**NOPNA Virtual General Meeting** Third Thursday of Even months Next meeting: Feb 2022! Watch nopna.org for updates

Sign up for our email list and get all the details and updates at www.nopna.org! Or follow us on facebook, Instagram, or twitter!

### Farmers Market

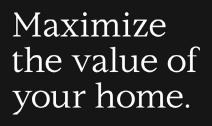
DMV Parking Lot - Broderick@Fell Sundays - 10am-2pm

#### Panhandle Stewards

Second Saturdays - 10am Meet near Childrens' Playground in the Panhandle



Steve Nuzzo, a fifteen-year resident of NOPA, has been restrained from traveling overseas for work this past year and a half, so you can find him more often now biking through the Panhandle, up and down the coast, or making photo portraits of people in the neighborhood



Call us to discuss: 415.407.2595



### Pota Perimenis + Tamara Weinstein We know NOPA

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**TEAM PERIMENIS** + WEINSTEIN





## HALLOWEEN 2021— THANK YOU!











**This year,** Alamo Square and North of Panhandle Neighborhood Associations teamed up to celebrate Halloween 2021. On Sunday, October 31st, 4pm to 6pm ASNA hosted "Alamo Scare" in the park and offered games, arts & craft activities, and a walk through a haunted forest for the little ones. At 6pm, a small parade of goblins, ghosts, princesses, and pirates marched down Grove Street, led by master of ceremonies Cynthia Chapman! Destination: 1500 & 1600 blocks of Grove where NOPNA cordoned off four blocks for safe trick-or-treating for the kids. The USF Band kicked off an active night of trick or treating by playing classics like "Thriller" and "Werewolves of London" to entertain families. It was another big night for young and old, but by 9pm

we had the streets cleaned up and looking spotless!

The NOPNA board extends a huge "thank you" to everyone who helped make the trick-or-treating a success. First and foremost, we couldn't have done it without the generous neighbors on Grove and Lyon Streets, who have hosted this wonderful tradition since 2006. We would also like to thank the many volunteers who helped monitor the barricades, drop off candy to houses running low, and help set up and break down the whole event. Finally, thank you to Maria Trefren and Recology for delivering and picking up recycle bins and to Alison Mickels and SFDPW for the barricades and set up support. You are all superstars who made this joyous event possible!

### **VOLUNTEERS:**

### Photography:

Steve Nuzzo and Katie Zhao

#### Music:

The USF Band

### The Haunted Garden:

Megan S

### **Candy Donations**

San Francisco Day School families

Pacific Primary families

Redemption

Church members

Fibers of Being -Elisabeth S - 645

Divisadero

Belann G

Caitlin S

Chris D

Jeff D

Kathy M

Kayle B

Leela G

Samantha C Shannon C

Tricia S

### Set Up, Clean Up and Traffic Monitors

Andv H

Cynthia C

David B

Em M

Ethan B

Fennel D

Garen C

Haruto P

Jason C

Jeff D

Larry G

Leela G

Liana R

Lila S

Martin A

Nathaniel S

Olivia W

Parker H

Ronan K

Sally W

Shakirah S

Tim H

Yifat A

# LEND A HELPING HAND THIS HOLIDAY



As the holidays near, there will be no shortage of opportunities to lend a helping hand to our neighbors. Whether your idea of volunteering involves packing food and distributing it to residents who need it most or contributing to toy drives that bring happiness to families in need, we wanted to share some ideas for you to volunteer your time (and money!) to have a direct impact on our community.

As always, when volunteering remember basic etiquette: Don't forget your mask, wear comfortable clothing, and don't show up if you are sick. Be prepared to show proof of vaccination and show up on time. At the end of the day, be flexible, kind, and self-sufficient to get the job done!

Know of an opportunity in NOPA that's not listed below or have interest in volunteering with one of the organizations below? Reach out to us via email at board@nopna.org.

### Royal Adah Arms Senior Housing & Western Addition Senior Center:

1390 1/2 Turk St.

San Francisco, CA 94115

Food Pantry Support and Distribution

Lead: Robin Bill

Contact: robin.bill@bhpmss.org

### The Village Project:

2097 Turk St.

San Francisco, CA 94115

**Event Support & Weekly Food Pantry** 

Lead: Adrian Williams

Contact: awilliamsassoc@yahoo.com

### Nia Soul Kitchen:

Weekly Community Meal Prep and Delivery & Distribution Support

Leads: Pia Harris

Contact: pia\_harris@yahoo.com

### Bethel AME Church:

916 Laguna St.

San Francisco, CA 94115

Weekly Food Pantry Support

and Distribution

Leads: Pastor Robert Ryland Shaw and Rev. Ann Champion Shaw Contact: bethelamecsf@gmail.com

### Kimochi Senior Center Community Dining and Kitchen for Home Delivered Meals

JCCCNC

Issei Memorial Hall, 1840 Sutter St., 1st Floor San Francisco, CA 94115

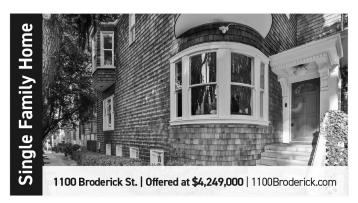
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