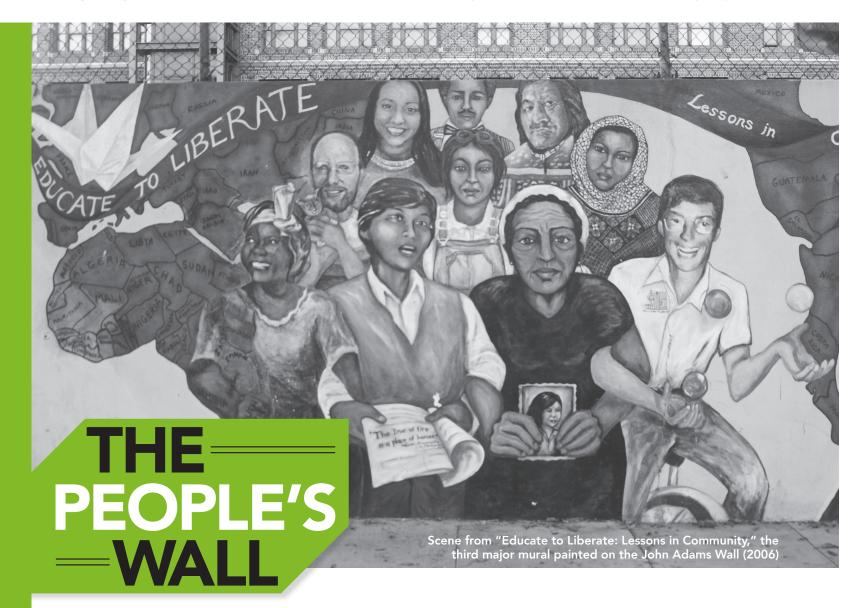
# NOPNANews

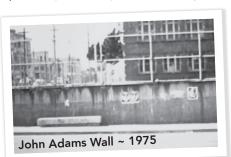
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A Publication of the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

Spring 2022



I've spent more hours than I can count over the last two years gazing out of my living room window. It's been my first line of defense combating digital fatigue, a tangible respite from a 9" x 12" virtual vortex. Did I really used to spend my weekdays in a bustling office with a gaggle of



Gen Z-ers whom I eventually learned to love? Quite the evolution for this self-identified Gen X-er.

In my endless hours perched by

the window, however, I made a new acquaintance. More understated and stoic than my Gen Z colleagues, yet every bit as radical: the John Adams mural. I live on Masonic and Hayes — the southwestern tip of our neighborhood – and our block enjoys box-seat views of this epic work of art hiding in plain sight.

Pre-COVID, I confess, I didn't really see the mural. It was just there. A backdrop in the rush of my morning commute. An urban landscape immaculately conceived.

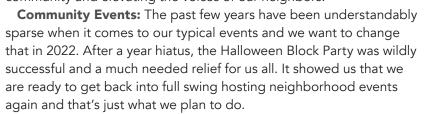
Post-COVID, though, I began to notice the new world at my window sill. Emerging from years of habituation, I grew deeply curious about why, how, and when the mural came into existence.

(continued on page 3)

### FROM THE BOARD

### **HELLO NEIGHBORS!**

We're now well into the New Year and, although it can sometimes look like more of the same, something just feels different about 2022 and I am excited to welcome it. Over the last 24 months, NOPNA has been hard at work to maintain our sense of community and togetherness through some of our toughest times. From Hopscotch President of NOPNA Your Block, to Phoenix Day, and of course, our Halloween Block Party, we could not have done it without all of our amazing neighbors and friends of NOPA. In 2022, we will be focusing on our goals and ensuring that we continue to do what NOPNA does best: bringing together our cherished community and elevating the voices of our neighbors.

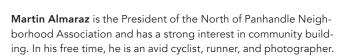


Volunteering: Behind every block party is an army of dedicated and hard working volunteers who help us do everything from decoration, to handing out candy, to keeping our children safe as they cross streets. Although our board is capable and willing, we cannot do what we do without our awesome volunteers. If you, or someone you know, wants to get more involved with the neighborhood, meet new people, all while having a great time, then reach out at board@nopna.org and we'll be happy to talk over some coffee - on us!

Vision Zero: As a bike/pedestrian-centric neighborhood located directly adjacent to, arguably, one of the best parks in the country, we want to continue to ensure that our neighbors can enjoy a safe stroll or bike ride through the park and streets. Slow Streets, a silver lining of the pandemic, has brought a rejuvenated interest in street safety from both city officials and the public. NOPNA will continue to be in-the-know with any pedestrian safety plans or issues and will work to ensure your voice is heard.

As a President of the Board, I will push for a community-first year, full of neighborhood events. I'm extremely excited and humbled to be part of such an amazing board, surrounded by many smart people, serving my favorite neighborhood in San Francisco. Together, we, as a community, will seize the day, and the year.

Best. Martin





**Martin Almaraz** 

Sign up for our email newsletter!



### 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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Image Printing, San Francisco

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. https://www.nopna.org/get-involved

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

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

### (continued from page 1)



Scenes from "The People's Wall" and the painting of "Our History is No Mystery" (1976)

After months of false starts and fruitless searches, I was directed to a historical documentary released in 1976 — posted online against all odds — entitled "The People's Wall."\* This remarkable short film captures the Vietnam-era, countercultural ethos embodied in the genesis of the first John Adams mural, "Our History is No Mystery."

I can't do the film or mural justice in a single article, but it's worth mentioning a few things that stand out.

The film brings to light themes that are so relevant in today's mainstream dialogue on critical social issues: "The People's Wall" emphasizes that history "is about the joy and power of all the cultures of all the peoples, and it's about all the struggles against oppression"\* — not just the Anglocentric, military-dominated narrative that we typically learn in school.

A monumental metamorphosis takes place: a rusted and crumbling retaining wall is transformed into a bright, two-thousand square foot canvas that depicts numerous untold stories of the various communities and cultures that built San Francisco.

Our neighborhood celebrates many of the same qualities that make it such a special place to live today: we embrace diversity; we take pride in our collective cultures; and we lend a helping hand when disaster strikes.

Ironically, "The People's Wall" left me with more questions. Who is the exuberant, young narrator opening the film and dropping sweeping words of wisdom throughout? What inspired the artists to take on this monumental feat? How did they pull it off on a public site (can you imagine the red tape)? Why was "Our History is No Mystery" eventually painted over?

To my good fortune, pursuing a few more leads resulted in an invitation from an esteemed Bay Area muralist to visit her personal archives to learn more. Sifting through decades-old files on a chilly January afternoon in a small but vibrant Oakland workshop, I found my answers.

### TO BE CONTINUED

\*Excerpt from "The People's Wall," produced by The Haight Ashbury Film Collective; view "The People's Wall" at



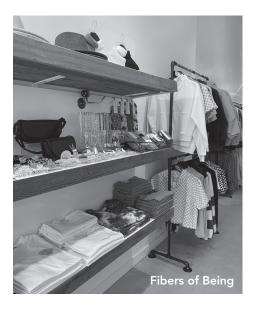
**Em Minor** has lived in NOPA since 2018 and enjoys strolling through the Panhandle in the evenings with her husband John.

## **NEW IN NOPA:** SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



For longtime residents, NOPA was once known for its influx of families and fairly quiet atmosphere. While that's still true, NOPA is one of the fastest growing commercial corridors where young locals and tourists alike come to eat, drink, and explore.

Whether you're in the mood for wood-fired smoked barbeque, seasonally driven house-made pizza, or eclectic cocktails from a lowkey vintage type tavern, NOPA has everything you could want or need and then some.



Not only is NOPA full of incredible eating and drinking establishments, but also retail shops that could have anything (and everything) you want. Of course, there are local favorites like Perdita, Rare Device, and Gamescape, but some new boutiques are emerging on the scene and making a big splash featuring indie clothing brands, lush plants, homewares, and more.

First up we have Fibers of Being, the brainchild of owner Elizabeth Stewart. This all-inclusive boutique opened up in mid-2021 and is home to stylish items across the whole genderspectrum—something incredibly important to Stewart. "Clothing is such a big way to show who you are to the world," Stewart says, "and I really wanted to create an environment that allowed for everyone to find."

When asked about her favorite things about NOPA, she brings up the supportive, small town feel the neighborhood has. "This community has been the absolute best these past few months and every time a local customer stops in to chat or show me that they have a Fibers of Being item on, I'm confident I picked the right place."

Next, tucked away ever so slightly a block away from Divisadero is the newly opened Sunday Market. This weekend shop touting goods and vibes is owned by friends and business owners Megan Petrilla (MAP Ceramics), Irayna Basta (Born to Roam Vintage), Isadora Alvarez (Back Beat Co).

Funny enough, their story started 10 years ago when they were friends from college, living in NOPA. Fast forward a decade and a few soulless corporate jobs later, they all built their own small, creative businesses, but realized they longed for a way to be in collaboration with other creative women. The answer? Opening Sunday Market as a cooperative space to sell their goods and to help promote other small local female owned brands.

Their favorite part about being in the neighborhood are the diverse mom & pop shops like The Perish Trust, Everlasting Tattoo, and Madrone Art Bar to name a few. "We love being tucked into the neighborhood, most of our foot traffic are folks that live just down the street. We love seeing this area hold so much of its roots and still develop into a creative's destination."

You can check out Fibers of Being, Tuesday through Sunday at 645 Divisadero Street and Sunday Market, Friday through Sunday at 1421 Fulton Street.



Aimee Rancer is on the NOPNA board and lives in the neighborhood with her husband and pit bull-husky, Bolt.

# **CERAMICS IN NOPA**



### During the nearly two years of this global pandemic—

the regular shelter in place orders, restaurant closures, and working from home — many in our communities found a little light: new joys, new perspectives, new connections, and new hobbies.

I recently attended a "Clay Play: Wheel" session at Wheelhouse Clay located at 327 Divisadero. It's a two hour class for anyone who wants to give the ceramics wheel a go. I was pleasantly surprised that every participant had zero experience and were all there to learn something new! Our instructor Alexis was incredibly patient. She gave us a demo with tips and tricks for how to handle the clay before letting us loose, flowing around the classroom and assisting, as needed.

Alden Enriquez opened Wheelhouse Clay in the summer of 2021 for two main reasons: to keep her hands in clay and create safe space for herself and others to join. She believes community is secondary to clay. Her number one priority during COVID is keeping her members and students safe. As soon as she can, she's looking

forward to expanding the educational piece of her studio. She loves to always be growing and learning new techniques, and teaching others. There are many different classes offered, check them out at wheelhouseclaysf.com.

If you've been out and about during any block parties, you may

have noticed Susan Gold selling her pottery in front of her home located at 1578 Grove St. Alden Enriquez, the co-owner of Wheelhouse Clay Studio on Divisadero, referred to Susan as the "mother of all ceramists in San Francisco." Susan believes the draw to ceramics is getting our hands on something concrete. If we work on computers all day, ceramics grounds us by reestablishing the mind-body connection. There's a focus that occurs when throwing a piece of clay on the wheel, an almost zen moment, where it's just you and the clay. Susan says, "rather than dealing with abstractions (like many in the tech industry), people who work with clay are in touch with the elements: earth, water, air, fire. It's a physical workout that culminates in a beautiful product. Tech is ephemeral; pottery is functional and endures for centuries."

Susan is currently teaching at Sharon Arts Studio in Golden Gate Park and has taught at Wheelhouse Clay, among other studios. She's been creating pottery since she was young in New York City where her mother was also a potter. She's lived in NOPA for 26 years with a basement full of her

creations. The pieces she loves and could never part with are in her home, while the hundreds of beautiful pieces in her basement she sells at various studios and galleries in the city - as well as from her garage whenever possible. She also welcomes her neighbors to visit. At my most recent visit, it was hard to pull myself away from her charm, her knowledge of the art, and the many techniques she utilizes that create something unique and beautiful. I told her I couldn't wait to come back to purchase a piece and she invited my friends for a pottery party! (COVID-safe, of course).

As my fellow students and I were finishing up our pieces during our Clay Play class, we all joked that our pieces weren't quite what we intended. Sometimes, the wheel chooses for us. Susan has created, recreated, and recreated the same piece to get exactly what she wants. Lucky for us, that means she has extra to sell. You can find her on her website susangoldceramics.com and her instagram @susangoldceramics.



**Michelle Petersen** moved to San Francisco 17 years ago and has lived in NoPa for 5 years with her husband, son, and 3 doggies.

# KEEP CALM AND GET A MANICURE

For fifteen years, Natural Salon has been a favorite among locals for a top-notch mani pedi. Near Fulton and Baker (tucked into the lot alongside the popular donut destination, Bob's) the lovely staff goes above and beyond to create a community. Tien Nguyen opened the shop in April 2007 and has been operating ever since. But on March 15, 2020, the pandemic completely upended the economy, and for the \$3-billion nail salon industry in California, statewide and local COVID restrictions forced business like Nguyen's to temporarily close.

In the early stages of the pandemic, service industry businesses like restaurants and bars could generate some sales through to-go options and, when possible, outdoor seating. However, for folks in the nail or hair salon industry, using

outdoor facilities like the city's Shared Spaces program was never an option. Though nail salons were among the group of businesses authorized to operate at reduced capacity according to the state's tiered COVID reopening plan in September 2020, Natural Salon chose to prioritize the health and safety of both customers and employees and remained closed throughout the pandemic.

There are some new elements, like the plastic sheeting separating the massage chairs and plexiglass barriers at manicure stations. But, the vibrancy and welcoming staff of Natural Salon are thankfully still there after reopening its doors to the community in September 2021 eighteen months since it first closed its doors due to the pandemic. Since reopening, Manager Cindy Nguyen noted that staff had been reduced from eight to four, and business is still operating at about 50-70% of prepandemic levels. But, if you talk to customers and read online reviews, the salon's welcoming environment makes it feel as though nothing has changed.

Like many small businesses throughout the city, the effort of getting back on their feet after the initial closures, PPE protocol, and

COVID-19 surges has been herculean, to say the least. For a business like Natural Salon, which suspended operations for a long period of time, there will no doubt be a transition period where their customer base becomes aware of the reopening. At a time when our local small businesses need our support more than ever, start the new year off by treating yourself — and even a friend — to a mani-pedi at Natural Salon with Cindy and the team. When you're done, ignore any new year's resolution and stop by Bob's next door.

Life's too short, get your nails done, and get the donut.

Tom Paulino is a 9-year resident of San Francisco and recently moved to NOPA in late-2020

https://www.sfchronicle.com/business/article/I-mso-scared-California-nail-salon-15579476.php

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### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **NOPNA Virtual General Meeting**

Third Thursday of Even months Next meeting: April 21, 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!

### Refuse Refuse Neighborhood Cleanup

Sunday, March 13th 2022 - 9am Meet in front of The Mill on Divisadero

### **Farmers Market**

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

#### Panhandle Stewards

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

### **VOLUNTEER FOR NOPNA NEWS**

NOPNA News is a volunteer-driven publication created by and for our neighbors. If you'd like to get involved we'd love for you to be a part of it, whether by contributing your skills, your voice, or your time.

There are several areas where we are always looking for more support.

**COPY EDITING** — if you are good with words, have an eye for detail, and like early sneak peaks we'd love your help with the process of getting the articles from submission to print.

**WRITING** — we can always use more folks who would like to write articles or deliver the news. It's a great way (or excuse) to get to know to the people in our community

**DELIVERY** — Time commitment is minimal and very flexible, and you will join the small army of volunteers who deliver the four-thousand copies each quarter.

**LAYOUT AND DESIGN** — if you have InDesign skills (or would like to learn), we can always use help pulling together each issue. Our designers are responsible for the clean, professional, and stylish look and feel of each issue.

**PHOTOGRAPHY**— do you have a great eye and a decent camera? We can always use volunteers who can capture the beauty and humanity of our neighborhood in photographs.

If any of these are interesting to you, or if you have other ideas for how you would like to be involved, I'd love to hear from you at jason@nopna.org.



### REFUSE REFUSE SAN FRANCISCO **CLEANING UP NOPA**



At the beginning of the pandemic, from March 15th, 2020, to June 15th, 2020, SFMTA halted street cleaning enforcement to allow residents to stay home without worrying about parking tickets.

Once the sweeping stopped, there was an immediate trashy impact on

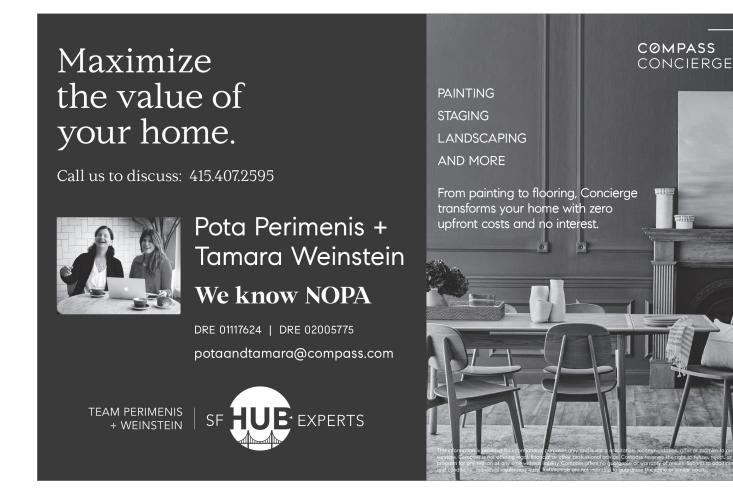
all neighborhoods of which some SF residents took notice, including Vince Yuen. Vince's journey started like many did in the DeTrash community, grabbing a picker and simply picking up the trash around the block during his walks.

Fast forward to the wildly successful RefuseRefuseSF (https://refuserefusesf. org/) initiative founded by Vince Yuen, which encourages civic responsibility, motivating fellow San Franciscans to take direct action to clean our streets, beautify our neighborhoods, and encourage others to join our cause. RefuseRefuseSF has helped run hundreds of local clean-ups to date

and has activated local groups to get involved with SFDPW's "Adopt a street program" to get cleaning locally.

I heard about RefuseRefuseSF from the online Reddit forum /r/DeTrash, and like Vince, I have taken an interest in cleaning up the local streets. So, in the mornings, when it's not raining, I'm out for around 30 min on Divisadero and crisscrossing the streets around NOPA with a trash picker and a smile.

I love picking up trash. It's got an immediate visceral impact. People are friendly when they see you picking up trash and you get to know what's happening on the streets. We did



a trial run of a neighborhood NOPA clean-up with RefuseRefuseSF last year, and it was a success. My plan is to build out a local team of like-minded street hygiene people, "The NOPA DeTrash Pandas" and host a monthly volunteer clean-up opportunity for anyone to get involved.

The NOPA DeTrash Pandas will be gathering on February 27th and March 13th outside The Mill at 9 am–11 am, rain or shine. We will bring the coffee, snacks, and supplies to clean up the streets. What we need are some hands to help with the pickings. So please consider joining us and get in touch by signing up under the events page on RefuseRefuseSF.org.

**Alex Moening** is a 12-year fog city resident of our fantastic NOPA neighborhood who loves picking up trash and helping out in the community!



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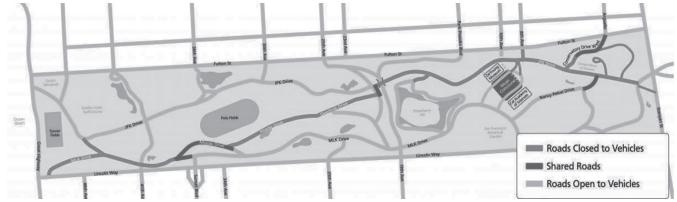
# **GOLDEN GATE PARK** ACCESS AND SAFETY PROGRAM UPDATE

### Soon after the pandemic hit,

SFMTA and San Francisco Recreation & Park Department (RPD) created a car-free route across Golden Gate Park, stretching from Stanyan Street to Ocean Beach. We are lucky to live nearby and have been taking advantage of this safer version of the

park since April 2020. This route is currently temporary; however, there is a proposal to make it, along with other safety/accessibility upgrades, permanent. To garner public opinion, the agencies held over 50 outreach events and solicited feedback via survey.

The results are in, with over 10,000 respondents. 72% of San Franciscans support keeping JFK Drive (from Stanyan to Transverse) permanently car-free. This 1.5 mile segment is known to park aficionados as the "JFK Promenade." In its previous form, it was one of SF's most dangerous streets, in terms of traffic collisions.



**Current roadway configuration in Golden Gate Park** 



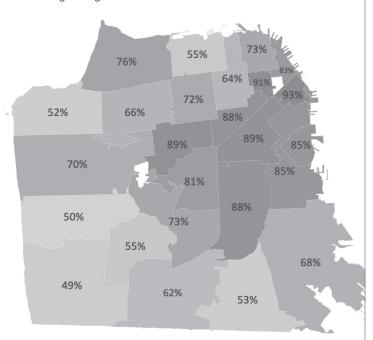
### Based on the SFMTA's survey responses and data supporting car-free JFK:

- All income groups are majority in support.
- Each race and ethnicity group with more than 25 respondents are majority in support.
- 85% of the 1,300 respondents who live in the 94117 and 94115 zip codes are in support.
- Total park visits increased by 36% and proportionally from all districts across the city.
- With no (legal) traffic, there have been zero traffic collisions on JFK.

The Board of Supervisors will soon consider this survey data, interest group inputs, and an equity study from the County Transportation Authority. Keep an eye out for their proposals in the next couple months.

Due to the support in the MTA survey responses, the NOPNA Board submitted an endorsement letter for a permanent JFK Promenade and other safety/ accessibility upgrades. We sent it to the Mayor, SFMTA staff and Board, RPD staff and Commission, and all Supervisors. Our letter also highlighted historic inequities from past government policies that are still being undone and it called on city agencies to integrate racial and social equity plus inclusion best practices into their outreach, planning, and implementation.

**Tim Hickey** and his wife, Leah, have lived in the neighborhood since 2010 and can be seen with their son, Liam, biking and walking through the area.



Support for JFK Promenade by zip code

>> Support for the JFK Promenade by zip code (https://kidsafesf.com/blog/jfk-survey-results)

### Email us to get involved: board@nopna.org



North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

# 911 SERVICE FOR STREET CRISIS RESPONSE

**One morning on the sidewalk,** perhaps you see an agitated person walking a meandering path behind the bus stop. They may be dressed unconventionally, muttering or gesturing in ways that are difficult to interpret.

If you are like me, on a good day, you may feel curiosity, compassion, and sorrow. Curiosity about an individual's back story. Compassion for a human suffering from untreated addiction or mental illness who deserves connection, self-respect, and dignity. Sorrow for a societal problem that doesn't lend itself to a simple solution.

On a different day, it might be fear, anger, frustration — or righteous indignation.

You also likely wonder what you can do to help someone facing troubles get some assistance. You have heard enough about encounters between police and the mentally ill to harbor concerns about calling the cops for someone who appears troubled but not threatening.

For over a year, San Francisco's 911 dispatch has been routing qualifying behavioral distress calls to the **Street Crisis Response Team**. SCRT provides fast (with a 15 minute average), non-police response for individuals in crisis on our city streets.

With this behavioral health approach, aiming to de-escalate situations and provide assistance, the SCRT connects individuals with resources that provide mental health support, substance abuse treatment, and shelter, without landing in either an ER or in the criminal justice system.

According to the latest available reports, the SCRT has handled about 800 calls each month, the vast majority of which are related to people experiencing homelessness. If you see someone who may benefit from some help — you may be able to get them the help they need by calling 911 and requesting the SCRT. If you'd like to learn more about the SCRT visit https://sf.gov/street-crisis-response-team.

**Crockett Dunn** has been a NOPA resident since 2018 and enjoys biking through the park with his wife Natalie and 10 year old son







Beaming with Victorian charm and wrapping the corner of the block allowing for light and views spanning from Alamo Square Park to downtown, this stellar home has a commanding presence among the famed row of Painted Ladies. A massive recent transition offers all of today's modern amenities while retaining its classic Victorian charm. 6 beds, 5.5 baths including a separate legal unit, a perfect retreat for guest use. www.722SteinerSt.com



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