

NOPNA News

nopna.org

A Publication of the North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

Spring 2023



UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS

by Ryan Booth *IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD*

Homelessness is a complex and pressing issue that affects many cities across the United States, including San Francisco. NOPNA has met with many officials and hosted several neighborhood meetings to discuss homelessness in our community.

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) is the central resource for public assistance in San Francisco. It promotes well-being and self-sufficiency among individuals, families, and communities. The Street Crisis Response Team is affiliated with HSH and responds to people in crisis without involving the police.

At recent NOPNA meetings, HSH representatives shared key data about San Francisco's homeless population.

For instance, there are currently 7,700 people experiencing homelessness on any given night in San Francisco, with 4,000 of them unsheltered. More housing is needed to meet the total need. On average, only 30 extra beds are available per night in shelters, but the total number can vary.

Also, while the city saw a 3.5% decrease in homelessness from 2019 to 2022, our neighborhood saw a 92% increase from 363 to 697. The city decrease seems directly tied to increased city spending on homelessness. The lack of sufficient housing and shelter means sweeps force unhoused people to relocate from one neighborhood to another.

(continued on page 3)

FROM THE BOARD

WE'RE BACK!

North of the Panhandle Neighborhood Association (NOPNA) came alive last year! We brought back all our regular events. We celebrated summertime with a Summer Block Party (which brought awesome local bands to the neighborhood), got spooky with a four-block neighborhood Halloween trick or treat party (with a special performance by the University of San Francisco Dons band and cheerleaders), and made San Francisco's Phoenix Day a tradition (in partnership with Christine at NOPA Corner Market)! We rounded off the year with a thank you celebration for our hard-working volunteers and sponsors at Club Waziema. Without them, literally none of these events would've been possible.

However, 2022 was not all parties and music. From October through December the people of NOPA, Alamo Square, and Lower Haight banded together to help over 50 people and businesses displaced by three fires in the neighborhood.

All this to say, we're eager to continue to come together. NOPNA continues to gain experience and new members with the goal of keeping the good stuff going and possibly bringing some new events to the neighborhood.

Community Events

Our main focus at NOPNA is building community and bringing people together. We're committed to continuing to host all our best events this year — this includes providing support for Art Walks and Sunday Streets in our neighborhood.

Volunteering

We need YOU to help us keep things going and ensure our events run smoothly and safely throughout the year. We also want to encourage you to attend our bi-monthly neighborhood meetings where you can learn more about volunteering opportunities. If you don't want to wait, email board@nopna.org.

Community Health

NOPA is a wonderful neighborhood, a gem in the heart of the city. We're a community that cares about the people around us, and in 2022 it really showed.

NOPNA will continue to support those in need in the coming year. Several grassroots movements have started within our borders to fight for San Francisco and provide needed services, including permanent supportive housing to those unhoused in our community. We'll continue to promote and support RefuseRefuse, a volunteer-led group for trash pickup along our corridors, and work with the city, supervisors, and businesses to reduce the impact of graffiti on our community.

We look forward to coming together throughout the year and working with you.



Martin Almaraz
NOPNA President



**North of
Panhandle
Neighborhood
Association**

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, and 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.

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

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



**Sign up for our
email newsletter!**

Martin is a lifelong cyclist and avid film photographer. You can always find him in the Panhandle or lost at Ocean Beach!

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UNDERSTANDING HOMELESSNESS



The *San Francisco Chronicle's* "SF Index: Key Facts About Homelessness in San Francisco" shows over 70% of San Francisco's homeless lived in the city when they lost their housing. The most common reason for losing housing is losing a job. For people without savings of any kind, even a brief gap in employment can lead to living on the streets. Some populations are more vulnerable — homelessness disproportionately impacts people of color, specifically indigenous and Black individuals, respectively 5% and 37% of San Francisco's homeless population. Age is another factor, with over 57% of people experiencing homelessness being over the age of 40, suggesting that years of living and working in San Francisco can make it difficult to create a safety net.

In their University of California Press book, *Homelessness is a Housing Problem*, authors Clayton Page Aldern and Gregg Colburn assert a lack of affordable housing is the number

one cause of homelessness. They say not enough housing is available at costs that would enable everyone to be housed. The vast majority of people with substance abuse issues or behavioral health challenges are housed and these characteristics aren't what's causing homelessness, even if they do add to the difficulties of someone experiencing homelessness.

One area of concern for NOPA residents is the lack of public bathrooms. There are currently only 33 public bathrooms citywide, and none in our neighborhood. Officials encourage residents to contact Public Works and the Crisis Response and Homeless Outreach Teams to request more public restrooms in our area.

Regarding encampments, the city has focused on clearing large encampments of six or more tents as shelter becomes available. However, recent and long-standing court rulings and laws restrict anti-camping policies when there's nowhere for a person to go. These rulings remain in place as long as the number of people experiencing homelessness exceeds the number of available shelter beds.

Practically, this means the city can:

- Offer shelter and services to unhoused people;
- Ask unhoused people to move temporarily for cleaning and to address health and safety issues; or
- Ask unhoused people to move out of the public right-of-way to the extent they're unlawfully obstructing the sidewalk or street.

People without housing who refuse services or shelter may be asked to move temporarily for cleaning activities, but otherwise, the city must allow them to remain in place provided they're not obstructing the public right-of-way.

NOPNA continues to communicate with city leaders and departments on homelessness. The desire is to gain a deeper understanding of the issue's complexity, ensure neighborhood residents are housed, and understand how to be involved in the city's plans for addressing homelessness.

NOPNA encourages neighbors to stay involved, attend general meetings, and ask questions to help facilitate a broader understanding of this profound and pressing issue.

How to Help

Residents can call 311 or use the SF311 app to report trash or sidewalk issues. City resources are allocated, and the Homeless Outreach Teams (HOT) do daily outreach, based on these reports.

Getting involved as active community members and calling 911 when in doubt is essential. Calling 911 is not calling the police — a dispatcher will route the call to the direct department, including the Street Crisis Response Team, police, fire, or medical.

For more information about how to express a concern, see <https://hsh.sfgov.org/services/public-guidance/>.

CONTINUED FROM *NOPNA NEWS SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL 2022*

EDUCATE TO LIBERATE: LESSONS IN COMMUNITY

by Em Minor



In the early 2000s, almost 30 years after the commissioning of “Our History is No Mystery” (1976) and 20 years after the commissioning of “Educate to Liberate” (1988), the mural at City College of San Francisco’s (CCSF) John Adams Campus on the corner of Hayes and Masonic — colloquially dubbed “The People’s Wall” — had once again accumulated so much vandalism that it was beyond repair.

Linda Squire Grohe, dean of CCSF at the time, faced pressure to remove the 2,900 square foot mural completely if it couldn’t be restored; a feat that would require a significant investment of time, talent, and funds. What

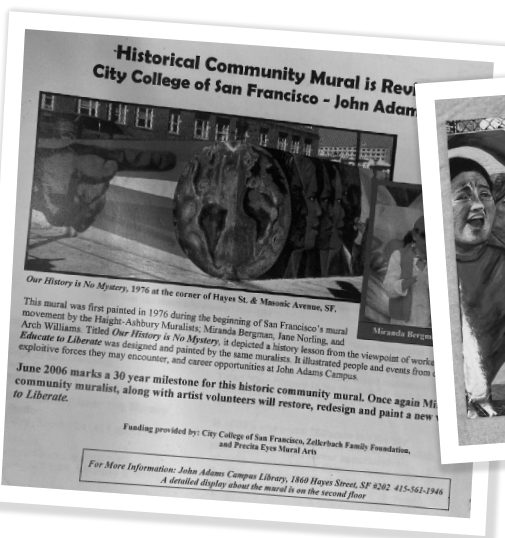
could this resource-strapped administrator do to keep this beloved neighborhood and City College landmark alive?

Linda turned to Precita Eyes — the go-to resource for community murals in San Francisco — for a much-needed assist. It proved to be a fortuitous connection. Susan Cervantes, founding director of Precita Eyes, took decisive action by launching a campaign to raise emergency funds to repaint the mural, looping in Haight Ashbury Muralist Miranda Bergman, one of the original artists, to once again coordinate the massive project.

With support from CCSF, Zellerbach Family Foundation, and Precita Eyes, Miranda led a 50+ person team of volunteers to complete the new, third installment of the epic mural, “Educate to Liberate: Lessons in Community.” Mary Marsh, a former CCSF librarian and mural volunteer, issued a press release to commemorate the occasion:

The new mural begins on Hayes Street by referencing the original landscape and native people of the area. Back again from the 1976 mural are the huge Siqueros inspired hand pointing to the planet on the corner, and the large iconic faces on Masonic. The mural is filled with people engaged in different community events, with a focus on the career and life-long learning opportunities at John Adams Campus. Portraits of peace advocates from around the world, John Adams teachers and employees, and the muralists themselves, enrich the mural with stories...

This version of the mural lives on today. I touched base with Mary Marsh to reminisce about her experience



Join us in Celebration!
Historical Community Mural at John Adams is Revitalized



Mural Festivities!
Wednesday, October 11th 2006
12:00-2:00 pm
John Adams Campus Gymnasium
 Meet the Artists
 Mural Commentary
 by Tim Drescher, Mural Historian
 Light Refreshments provided by
 John Adams Associated Student Council

Educate to Liberate: Lessons in Community - corner of Hayes St. & Masonic Avenue

Educate to Liberate: Lessons in Community, was completed at John Adams Campus on the corner of Hayes and Masonic in July 2006. Miranda Bergman, community muralist, coordinated over 50 artists, students and neighbor volunteers to paint and restore this historic mural.

This mural continues the 30-year legacy that began with *Our History is No Mystery* in 1976 and *Educate to Liberate* in 1988, painted on the same wall by Miranda Bergman, Jane Norling, Arch Williams and others. The new design, created by Miranda Bergman, incorporates parts of the two previous murals with entirely new scenes.



Miranda Bergman, 2006

This public art project was funded by City College of San Francisco, Zellerbach Family Foundation, and Precito Eyes Mural Arts

CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO
JOHN ADAMS CAMPUS
 1500 Hayes St.
 San Francisco, CA 94115

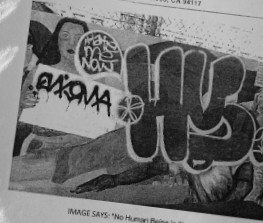


IMAGE SAYS: "No Human Being is Illegal"

Neighbors(s):

We know that the Western Addition community is a beautiful place to live and we want to keep it this way. Unfortunately we have experienced graffiti and the painting of furniture and other unwanted materials on our campus. The mural on Masonic and Hayes has been damaged. Students and staff have worked to maintain this mural over the years. Some of the images on the mural may be controversial, yet no art should be destroyed. We are asking you to help keep our campus graffiti and litter free. If you see someone damaging our campus, please

Assembly
 California Legislature
 MARK LENO

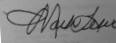
August 14, 2008

Miranda Bergman
 Precito Eyes Mural Arts
 205 24th Street
 San Francisco, CA 94110

Dear Ms. Bergman:

I would like to congratulate you and send my warmest thank you for your ongoing efforts to beautify and restore the "Educate to Liberate" mural in San Francisco. Your tireless efforts restore not only the mural's original artistic beauty but it's message to our community as well. The City is fortunate to benefit from your creative artistry.

I look forward to hearing of your continued success. If I can ever be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (415) 557-3013.

Sincerely,

 MARK LENO
 Assemblyman, 13th District

representing CCSF to bring the mural to life. She spoke with fond memories of working with the CCSF Associated Student Council to recruit volunteers, interacting with the neighborhood to generate public support, and grappling with the difficult task of painting detailed scenes on an unwieldy concrete wall.

I was surprised and saddened when Mary shared that the mural continued to experience vandalism in the ensuing years, particularly a scene depicting a group of multicultural people holding a sign stating in seven languages, "No Human Being is Illegal." The vandalism coincided with national movements tied to immigration reform (e.g. Arizona SB 1070) and it was Mary herself who took to the street to remove the graffiti from the mural.

Mary has since retired from CCSF, which left me with an uncomfortable sense the wall was once again vulnerable. Who's its guardian now, and will the anti-graffiti varnish be enough to continue to keep it preserved?

From time to time, I hear a ruckus outside my living room window, situated across the street from the John Adams Campus. Upon

investigation, I generally find a group of school kids with clipboards buzzing around the mural, studying its many scenes, taking notes, and playfully horsing around with each other. I wish the muralists could witness the scene — this is what it's all about!

What a wonderful legacy they've left to our neighborhood.



Em Minor is incredibly thankful for the opportunity to meet the artists, community leaders, CCSF representatives, and neighbors who brought *The People's Wall* to life, and to share their stories. To learn more, a scene-by-scene depiction of the mural is available via the CCSF Library on the 2nd Floor of the John Adams Campus.

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A GREENER NOPA

by Jason Cauthen

Spring is here and you might've noticed San Francisco is in bloom, with pink blossoms on cherry trees and other flowering trees bursting with color. You might've also noticed some new trees and greenery replacing portions of concrete sidewalk on many blocks in the neighborhood.

The seed of this initiative to bring more green space to our streets was planted in the early days of COVID when a neighbor planted a bed of veggies on the Golden Gate Slow Street at Broderick. With some help from Farming for Hope, the non-profit located on Divisadero who donated

the plants, neighbors came together to add some pedestrian-friendly greenery to the Slow Street.

Fennel Doyle — a neighbor who's a self-described "solarpunk" and voice for "birds, bees, and butterflies" — helped the idea germinate and developed a proposal in coordination with Friends of the Urban Forest (FUF) to convert 177 sq ft (about 20 sidewalk squares) of our neighborhood sidewalks from concrete to green space for plants and trees. Together they won the support of the local residents who were happy to have new trees in front of their homes.



Jennifer
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Things really took root as FUF and Fennel won an additional grant from the San Francisco Parks Alliance. They were able to expand the reach across the neighborhood, increasing the total new green space to 1,000 square feet (a total of 110 sidewalk squares).

On a sunny day in December, dozens of volunteers of all ages turned out to plant and cultivate the new green space. And right on cue, rains came in late December to help ensure these new saplings and plants got all the water they needed to start things off right.

While we all get to enjoy the fruits of these volunteers' labor, Fennel is already thinking about the next step to help these new lives thrive. According to Fennel, "We need to put some worms in now!"

Jason Cauthen is a San Francisco native who has lived in NOPA for the past decade with his wife and two boys. He can be found throwing a football with his kid on Lyon Slow Street.



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're always looking for more support.

WRITING AND PHOTOGRAPHY -

We're always looking for volunteers who can write articles, interview neighbors, and take photos. Help us bring the stories of our neighborhood to life.

COPY EDITING - If you're good with words, have an eye for detail, and like early sneak peaks, we'd love your help getting the articles from submission to print.

LAYOUT AND DESIGN - If you have InDesign skills (or would like to learn), help us pull together each issue. Our designers are responsible for the clean, professional, and stylish look and feel of each issue.

DELIVERY - Join the small army of volunteers who deliver the four-thousand copies each quarter. The time commitment is minimal and flexible, and it's a great opportunity to get to know your neighbors.

If any of these positions sound interesting to you, or you'd like to get involved in other ways, email chrissy@nopna.org.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY by Genna Gores



This juxtaposition of street design creates a dangerous combination for those moving around NOPA.

I work in transportation and am hyper-aware of how people interact with the road. I'm also a multi-modal traveler: I take the bus, walk, drive, and bike. I experience travel from all angles and believe our streets are getting more dangerous. I'm not alone in this belief. Jeffrey Tumlin, director of SFMTA, agrees the pandemic changed driver behavior for the worse.² However, there are some easy and proven solutions that can help improve roadway safety.

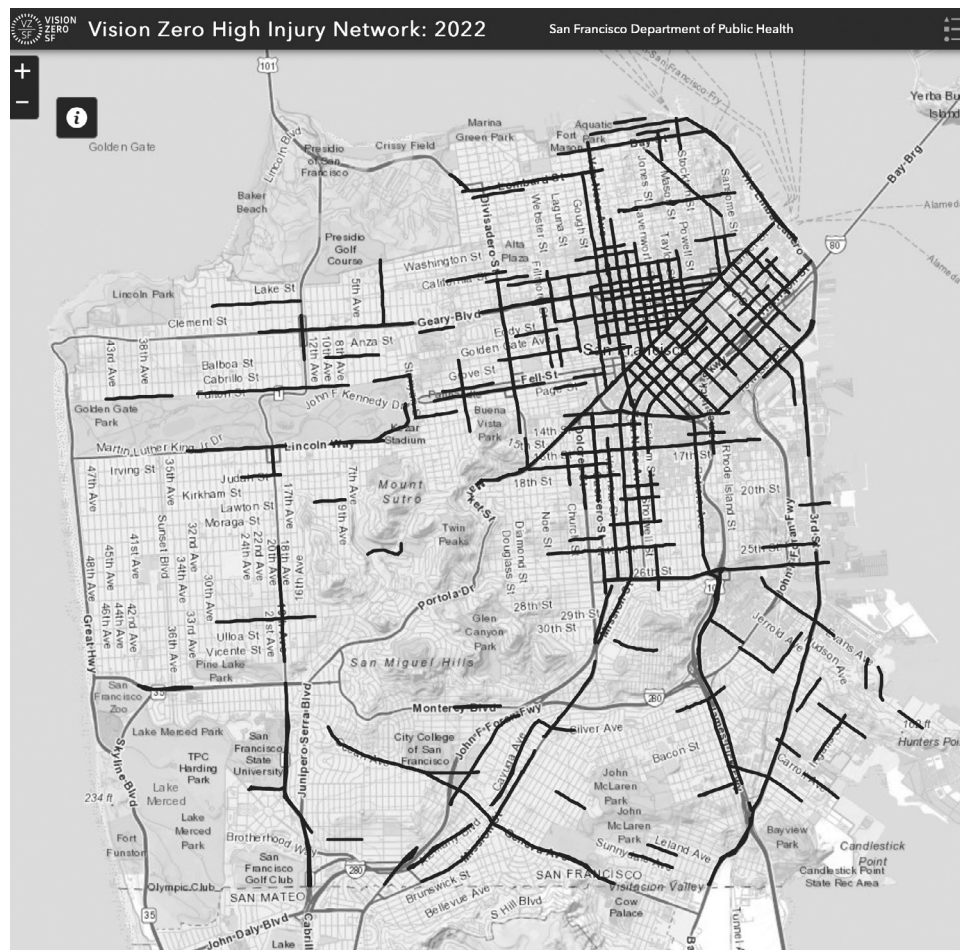
Reducing Speed Limits

According to the Urban Institute at Rice University, "there's a 10% risk of death if a person is hit by a vehicle going 23 mph . . . 25% at 32 mph, 50% at 42 mph, and 75% at 50 mph."³ This study also says deadly traffic incidents decrease by 17% when speed is reduced by 1 MPH.⁴ The speed limit on Fell and Oak Streets is 30 MPH, and car-centric roadway design makes it easy to go faster.

This past year, California passed AB43, making it easier for San Francisco to reduce speed limits. The city already reduced speed in

Last year, San Francisco experienced 37 traffic fatalities and 54% of them were pedestrians. In 2014, our city committed to zero traffic fatalities by 2024, but 2022 was the most dangerous year on the road since San Francisco began Vision Zero. To put that in perspective, someone gets killed every 10 days from traffic violence and every 18 days for pedestrians.

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) has created a map of our most dangerous streets in San Francisco (see below). In 2022, many of these streets were in NOPA (Fell, Oak, Stanyan, Haight, and Divisadero). Most of the High-Injury Network are car-centric arteries, and many are adjacent to multi-modal thoroughfares like the Panhandle, or commercial corridors like Divisadero and Haight Streets.



Vision Zero High-Injury Network Map for 2022.

the Tenderloin and on parts of Divisadero and Haight Streets to 20 MPH. Lowering the speed limit on Fell and Oak Streets could dramatically reduce severe and fatal traffic collisions.

Banning Right on Red

We could also ban right-hand turns on red. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety says, “permitting rights on red increases pedestrian crashes by 60 percent and

bike crashes by 100 percent.”⁵ Not allowing right on red could dramatically increase safety on streets that turn onto Fell and Oak.

Similar to speed limit reductions, San Francisco banned right on red on certain streets in the Tenderloin and saw decreases in “vehicle-pedestrian close call.”⁶ San Francisco could force drivers to stop and wait for their right of way and reduce dangerous close calls.

I encourage the people of NOPA

to advocate for safer streets with our Supervisors, SFMTA, and Mayor London Breed. Lowering speed limits and banning right turns on red would make a dramatic impact. We live in a wonderfully multi-modal community, so let’s make it safe for all to move around!

Genna Gores is a native San Franciscan who works in public transit technology and is passionate about the transportation field.

¹<https://sfgov.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b2743a3fc0b14dd9814cf6668fc34773>
²<https://www.sfchronicle.com/sf/bayarea/heatherknight/article/S-F-streets-are-as-dangerous-as-ever-Voters-17242148.php>
³<https://kinder.rice.edu/urbanedge/unflashy-effective-ways-slow-traffic-and-save-lives#:~:text=The%20Highway%20Safety%20Manual%20has,to%2034%25%20fewer%20fatal%20crashes.>
⁴<https://kinder.rice.edu/urbanedge/unflashy-effective-ways-slow-traffic-and-save-lives#:~:text=The%20Highway%20Safety%20Manual%20has,to%2034%25%20fewer%20fatal%20crashes.>
⁵<https://usa.streetsblog.org/2018/05/15/its-time-for-cities-to-rethink-right-turns-on-red/>
⁶<https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/berkeley-looks-to-ban-right-turn-on-red-17564714.php>

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YOU HAVE RENTERS INSURANCE, RIGHT?

by Anita Beshirs



Is It Enough?

Determining if we have enough insurance for every situation is overwhelming. Renters insurance is affordable, customizable, and a benefit for smaller incidents and devastating

Three devastating fires took place between August 2022 and January 2023, displacing 52 individuals and three businesses from the Divisadero Corridor. My close friends were among the victims, and you may also know someone who lost everything in these disasters.

One of the first questions most people ask my friends is, "You had renters insurance, right?"

They didn't have renters insurance, and they're not alone. You also may be among the fifty percent of renters nationwide without renters' insurance.

I purchased renters' insurance over 20 years ago, yet discovered I was not prepared to make a claim for stolen or damaged property. Below is helpful information I learned about renters insurance that I thought others would find helpful.

How Much Does Renters Insurance Cost?

The price varies with the value of assets to insure, location, and other factors. For example, my basic

package is \$150 annually. After a \$500 deductible, it provides \$6,000 in personal Property coverage, \$100,000 in Liability coverage, \$1,000 in Medical coverage, and Loss of Use.

What's NOT Covered

Damage from an earthquake requires a separate policy. My carrier doesn't offer policies for flooding, mudslides, and landslides in San Francisco.

Proof of Ownership

Personal property coverage can only replace what's documented with proof of ownership. So grab your phone and fill it with photos and videos of your possessions. Itemize valuable possessions (price, make model, serial numbers, year purchased) and include receipts.

Buy Before You Need It

You can't gain coverage for what you lost after the fact. More importantly, you may be temporarily uninsurable after a major disaster even if it's not your fault.

catastrophes. And if that's not enough, not having to repeat, "No, I did not have renters insurance" hundreds of times may be worth the cost alone.

Definitions

- **Personal Property** is for property inside your rental unit and inside your automobile.
- **Liability** is for when you're responsible for the damage (e.g. if you forgot that pot on the stove).
- **Medical** is when someone else is injured inside your home.
- **Loss of Use** is for displacement costs when your rental unit is uninhabitable due to damage (as in a fire), often calculated as 70% of personal property.

Anita Beshirs, a 28-year neighborhood renter and local artist/curator, co-organized a raffle and bar hop fundraiser with Erin Kehoe and arranged support from NOPNA, DMA, ASNA, and LOHaMNA for victims of the two August Divisadero Fires. You can reach her at anitaceshirs@gmail.com or on IG @anitasparklebeshirs.

MEET THE BOARD

We're excited to welcome a few new members to the NOPNA board for 2023. Each new member has demonstrated their commitment to making our neighborhood a better place and brings a range of experience and expertise. So, without further ado, join us in welcoming the new members of NOPNA's board!



Sarah Bashford Sarah has lived in San Francisco since 2001 and moved to the NOPA neighborhood with her husband, two boys, and dog in 2021. She loves creating community by getting to know her neighbors and working together to see improvements to the neighborhood. She can usually be found in her garage with an old piece of furniture and power tools.



Chrissy Loader Chrissy is a writer, filmmaker, and music and food lover. She moved to the neighborhood in 2005 and recently became a board member and the managing editor of the NOPNA News to get to know her neighbors better and support the community. If you're interested in being a newsletter contributor, email chrissy@nopna.org.



TREASURER Caitlin Stanton Caitlin is a native New Yorker who fell in love with the NOPA neighborhood after moving here in 2021. She's excited to help her new community by applying her prior experience as nonprofit treasurer to NOPNA. You can find Caitlin training for her next race in the Panhandle, walking her dog Jeepers, and reading in the park.



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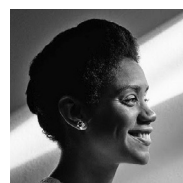
Tim Hickey



Apoorv Narang



Meg Rahner



Shakirah Simley

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 20** — NOPNA General Meeting
- May 21** — Bay to Breakers
- June 3** — NOPNA Block Party
- June 15** — NOPNA General Meeting
- June 17** — Juneteenth
- August 17** — NOPNA General Meeting
- September 17** — Sunday Streets
- October 15** — Phoenix Day
- October 19** — NOPNA General Meeting
- October 31** — NOPA Halloween Block Party
- November 16** — NOPNA General Meeting

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, and get details and updates by signing up for emails at www.nopna.org!

Recurring Events:

- Neighborhood Clean Ups with Refuse/Refuse** — See refuserefusesf.org/cleanups
- Farmer's Market** — DMV Parking Lot, Broderick@Fell, Sundays, 10 am–2pm
- Art Walks** — More info coming soon!

Email us to get involved:
board@nopna.org



North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association

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This top floor, Victorian condo beams with rich architectural details, 11 ft ceilings, and an open-style floor plan, showcasing its large recently remodeled kitchen, with entry onto a private deck. 3 Beds / 1 Bath / 1-Car Pkg
Offered @ \$1,499,000



PENDING:
REPRESENTING BUYER
2139 Grove Street

This dynamic two level unit has been remodeled to-the-studs, and features an incredibly unique lower level, spilling out onto an exclusive use yard.
3 Beds / 3 Baths / 1-Car Pkg
Offered @ \$2,680,000



JUST SOLD:
REPRESENTING BUYER
709 Lyon St. #1

Designers left no stone unturned with this stellar new modern condo featuring 2 levels of upscale finishes, an exclusive use yard, and spa-like built-in sauna.
3 Beds / 3 Baths / 1-Car Pkg
Sold for \$2,800,000

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