



NEWSLETTER

MAY 2020

By Phil Faroudja

THE FORCE IS WITH LUKE'S GROCERY: Luke's Local is coming to Union Street, but some worry the current epidemic might delay the opening. Well, fear not: as it turns out, the grocery is actually an "essential business" and so is being fast-tracked by the city. I spoke this week to the proprietor, Luke Chappell, and he is procuring the required permits and remains psyched about the progress. So are we. His design of the space may include black and white paintings of neighborhood grocers from decades ago ... A friend pointed out that Luke's will greatly increase foot traffic, and should benefit businesses along Union Street ... Covid 19 has certainly closed stores. Some hang in there, hoping to reopen in a few weeks. But others have packed up and taken all their merchandise, never to return. Still, Luke's as well as the Shake Shack, bode well for attracting the public to our neck of the woods when normalcy returns.

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ABOUT TOWN: Our good friend Lori Brooke, president of the Cow Hollow Association, is forming a coalition of neighborhood groups to forcefully advocate for better treatment of mental health, drug addiction and other issues plaguing those without homes. Called "Rescue SF," the organization will attack the problem from all angles and also support law enforcement. More info: www.rescuesf.org ... My g.f. and I visited 24th street in Noe Valley (with gloves and masks, of course). It has become a model: sidewalks are spotless, dilapidated buildings have been repaired, play parks have been put up on each block, and the interesting businesses there are closed but not gone. Incidentally we stumbled upon an antique store, "Shelter in Place." Is this where the term comes from? ... The Hearst Foundation donated \$500,000 to SF Ballet to keep paying dancers and staff. This should last months ... Governor Newsom was able to get Californians \$600 in unemployment

insurance *per week* from the Feds, in addition to what people already receive from the state. This is substantial and hopefully will help many stay afloat ... The Presidio is entirely closed, including athletic fields. Security is patrolling all areas and asking those playing sports to leave. Museums and the theater could resume in June, possibly.

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"Oh, I love to zoom. Shall I zoom you, or do you want to zoom me?"

SHELTERING SCENE: I sometimes attend the Vogue theater on Sacramento street, but it is shuttered. Not to worry: catch all your local arthouse films virtually at www.cinemasf.com ... With more time on my hands, I found the book "Leland Stanford: Man of Many Careers" by Norman Tutorow a good read. I knew Stanford completed a transcontinental railroad, but had no idea he was a governor, US senator, and helped win the Civil War by sending Abraham Lincoln men and money ... Our next meeting will be Wednesday, May 20 at 7pm. This again will be a conference call, so let us know if you want to participate. Stay healthy, everybody!

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