



NEWSLETTER

June 2020

By Phil Faroudja

STATE OF THE UNION: Even with city protests, not much is happening along Union Street these days, but that may be a positive. As Grandma Irma used to say, "No news is good news." Most stores hang in there and are waiting to reopen. By contrast, Chestnut street has seen several shops shutter permanently, such as Williams Sonoma, Lucky Brand Jeans, and The Humidor (after 26 years) ... I continue to get takeout here and it has not been unpleasant. The other day I noticed no line at the Shake Shack, and quick wittedly, ordered lunch. I had a mushroom burger and vanilla shake and have to say, they were excellent. Pane E Vino, near Gough, also has outstanding food you can pick up; it's their regular menu. White Rabbit on Fillmore supplies exceptional popcorn and libations ... In other events, your GGVNA with the SF Office of Economic Development are working to bring back Juicy News, the first-rate newsstand that shut down. The owner is amenable and eyeing several locations.

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JUNE GLOOM: Lately in the Presidio, 20% of tenants have not paid rent, a significant drop of income for the park. In response, the Trust reduced staff by 20%. Explained Presidio President Jean Fraser: "Unlike most other federal government agencies, the Trust receives no taxpayer funding. We need now save the Presidio for the second time." Among those let go were the head Presidio archaeologist, the chief historian as well as events director Brad Rosenstein. He told me, "... the Trust will no longer produce original events. They are pivoting to a 'park as platform' approach, helping to serve as a conduit for self-produced community events in spaces throughout the park." ... Meanwhile, nearby, the

Palace of Fine Arts was being considered as a homeless shelter, which you may have heard about. Supervisor Stefani did much behind the scenes -- calling friends and pleading favors -- to prevent this. The neighborhood would have been affected long-term. Great job ... I earlier mentioned Lori Brooke, Cow Hollow Association president, is assembling coalition "Rescue SF" to combat homelessness and property crime. She already has the support of neighborhood associations in 10 districts, an impressive start.

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City Character Emperor Norton with Dogs Bummer & Lazarus, by Edward Jump

GOOD READ: With more time on my hands, I found "Mark Twain's San Francisco," with stories by Twain and illustrations by Edward Jump, an enjoyable book. When the Civil War began, Twain and his brothers enlisted with the Confederates. Quickly realizing this was a lost cause and they might get hurt, they decided to skip the war and go West. One brother arrived in Nevada and the others decamped to various locales in California, with Twain settling in San Francisco. It was here his writing career started ... From earthquakes, police scandals, and silver mine bonanzas to elegant ladies blowing their noses in "exquisitely modulated

tones" and seals "writhing and squirming like exaggerated maggots" below the Cliff House, Twain's portrait is often humorous ... But we will be extremely serious at our next meeting, so join our conference call on Wednesday, June 17 at 7 pm. Continue in good health, everybody!

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