



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021

By Phil Faroudja

A MORE PERFECT UNION: New businesses continue to sprout along Union Street and it is most encouraging. Examples: Mishka at 2163 Union Street sells pet supplies; Balanced Bites at 2181 Union brews frozen meals and spices; Lima Lemon boutique at 2266 Union features fine female fashions; once-empty 2265 Union is a plant shop; and See Eyewear has transformed into architectural design firm Collective Operations. All have opened in the last two months ... Some may be part of the city's economic support program. Donations for small merchants have been collected since April ... Outdoor dining was slated to resume January 9 but has been delayed ... Didja notice Luke's Grocery carries its own line? I've seen "Luke's Marinara Sauce," "Luke's Crushed Early Girl Sauce" and "Luke's Thanksgiving Gravy." A quick glance at the sauces' ingredients reveals few food industry favorites such as xanthan gum, monopotassium phosphate, sodium dicaseinate, etc. They instead contain tomatoes, olive oil, garlic powder and the like and are made locally.

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PARKS AND RECREATION: I am pleased to report the development of Francisco Park is coming along well. Where on earth is Francisco Park, you wonder? Well, behind Bay Street at Hyde was once a large, abandoned reservoir. Some years ago, Supervisor Mark Farrell figured it might make a nice recreational area and got funding. So a lawn will be installed, as well as a children's playground, community garden and view terraces. It is 75% complete and looks great ... Speaking of parks, you may have heard the Presidio Trust wanted to move its offices to the Officer's Club, and take out the Heritage Museum in back. After an outcry, the Trust has reconsidered. The agency will find new headquarters elsewhere.

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"Luke's Thanksgiving gravy has that certain Je ne sais quoi!"

BOOK OF THE MONTH: Still sheltering in place and vaccine-less near a packed bookshelf, I found "Misfits, Merchants and Mayhem" by Lee Bruno a good read. A comprehensive chronicle of old San Francisco, it covers such characters as Jasper O'Farrell, Lillie Coit, Alma Spreckels, and Giuseppe Coppa ... The latter I had never heard of before. "Papa Coppa" was an Italian immigrant who in 1900 started SF's first hipster café. Located where the Transamerica building now stands, its early patrons were Italian fishermen but it later became hugely popular among writers, artists and intellectual types. Noted for imaginative murals, the restaurant was dealt a serious blow by the 1906 earthquake ... But our monthly meetings continue, so join our Zoom Wednesday, January 20 at 7 pm. Happy New Year!

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