



**NEWSLETTER**  
**DECEMBER 2023**

By Phil Faroudja

**UNION STREET NEWS:** I'm sure you have noticed the former "Sur La Table" location at 2224 Union remains unoccupied. Well, that soon may change: SF store "Dogpatch Games" is very interested in the space. It specializes in board games such as Dungeons & Dragons and has tables for group play, and cards, books and figurines for sale. Here on Union Street, proprietors plan to include a coffee shop too, as visitors sometimes stay for hours. These games have developed over the last ten years to way beyond what they used to be, and are wildly popular. Owners have signed a letter of intent to move in ... New businesses continue to arrive. Nikoniko Gifts at 2181 Union features unique, all-Asian goods from Japan, Korea and other nations. Nikoniko also offers a specialty gift-wrapping service, and you can buy a box and reusable fabric and they will bundle the item ... Neon at 1974 Union opened over the summer. It combines the elements of a cafe and co-working place, and boasts a terrific interior design. It can host group events if you're interested.

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**CITY NEWS:** Your GGVNA has been working on several issues. Of particular concern is the city's proposed "Small Business Permitting Improvement" bill. Union Street is a special use district, and there are rules about what kinds of businesses can be located on each block, and caps on the number of restaurants, bars and retail shops. These were established years ago by Diane Feinstein when she was supervisor, as well as by GGVNA and others. This new bill would void everything. But we feel the guidelines work, and the street has enjoyed non-stop success. The idea behind the legislation is to encourage more businesses; we do not have many empty storefronts so oppose it ... The city is also contemplating raising

the height limit on Chestnut, Lombard, Union and Fillmore streets. The plan is for more housing, but few are intended to be affordable, and we worry some high buildings here and there will unbalance the look. They would also replace distinctive, hundred-year old structures and Victorians. We will let you know what develops.

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*"Someone needs to cancel Christmas, Jeff -- I've been shopping 5 nights in a row."*

**SHOWBIZ BY THE BAY:** If you are looking for an evening's entertainment, don't walk, run to "Guys and Dolls" at the SF Playhouse near Union Square. It's outstanding and plays through January ... My g.f. wanted to see Wagner's "Lohengrin" at the SF Opera. Aware of the 3-hour running time, I was hesitant, but it was great. The story flies by ... Closer to home, the Presidio theater on Chestnut has been screening cinema classics such as "Casablanca" and "To Catch A Thief." Upcoming for Christmas will be "It's A Wonderful Life" (of course) ... And speaking of wonderful, GGVNA will present its annual dinner at the end of January, with a distinguished guest list. We hope you can make it. Have a terrific holiday season everybody, and Merry Christmas!

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