



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2024

By Phil Faroudja

SHOP SHUFFLE: The end of 2023 meant some store leases were up, and a few tenants chose not to renew. Notable closures in the neighborhood include ice cream place Loving Cup, at Union and Fillmore; longtime boutique High Society, near The Blue Light; and Muesi Cafe, which was always packed with people pounding away on laptops ... Chestnut street saw the shuttering of both The Dorian and popular restaurant Squat and Gobble. A notice on a window states it was a difficult decision for Squat and Gobble, but one they had to make. Logic would indicate they were losing money, though another eatery has already applied for the space ... On the plus side, the Clay Theater on Fillmore has been purchased by a new proprietor, who plunked down \$11 million. As it was originally bought for \$6 million, this represents a substantial price upgrade. The owner remains unknown, but is believed to be in entertainment and intends to keep the theater operational. That is great to hear.

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CITY HALL NEWS: In late December, when the world was on vacation, the city passed its "Small Business Permitting Improvement" bill. We strenuously objected to this legislation. Union street is a special use district, and there are rules about what kinds of businesses are allowed, established decades ago by residents and then-supervisor Diane Feinstein. Those guidelines are now mostly voided. Flexible retail, for example, is authorized which means multiple businesses can occupy a single room. We remain concerned that Union street's winning formula will be altered ... In a recent advertisement, mayoral candidate Daniel Lurie indicated his "Plan for Change in the Marina" includes shutting down open-air drug markets. What drug markets? Mr. Lurie, you must be thinking about another part of town ... Former District 2 supervisor Mark Farrell, also running for mayor,

says public safety has declined. He would increase support for law enforcement ... The city is still considering raising height limits on Union, Chestnut, Fillmore and Lombard streets. This has alarmed many, and so a new group has formed. Called "Neighborhoods United SF" and comprised of over 40 community associations, it is committed to housing solutions that preserve the city's basic character. See www.neighborhoodsunitedsf.org for more info.

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"It's not jaywalking. It's getting to Casaro Osteria as quickly as possible!"

THE SOUND OF MUSIC: If you are looking for an evening's entertainment, you might want to try Chamber Music San Francisco. A few weeks ago the organization presented dazzling pianist Tiffany Poon, and I attended. Born in Hong Kong but trained at Julliard since age eight, she played selections ranging from Schumann to Debussy to Bach. She captured the pieces' emotions and was technically brilliant. Upcoming programs include cello and piano performances and a string group, all at the Herbst ... Once a month, Chestnut's Marina theater

features a live broadcast from New York's Metropolitan Opera. Unfortunately they are usually Saturday mornings at 10 AM ... The Golden Gate Valley Library on Green street recently hosted excellent string quartet Del Sol ... And that's a wrap for this issue. See you around!

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