



By Phil Faroudja

NEW IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD: Things are definitely picking up in the city, with greater activity everywhere, it seems, even downtown at places like Union Square. Our neighborhood is bustling, and several new businesses have opened that are nice-looking and hip -- like your correspondent. For example, on Fillmore near Union Street is Harper 67, which bills itself as a vintage and modern resale boutique. It stocks clothing from different eras, many stylish & unique, and carries accessories as well ... Bar Darling on Chestnut Street now replaces the former Squat and Gobble eatery and has been modeled in a beautiful light wood style, complete with a pool table in back. Cocktails, snacks and sliders are served. Bar Darling is an instant hit and always packed, even on, say, Tuesday nights ... Izzy's Steakhouse at 3345 Steiner has been redone with great care, and presently has a 1930s, Prohibition-era feel. The window curtains are always drawn for some reason, but the interior is gorgeous. The outstanding menu features classic American food -- imagine that -- like steaks and pork chops, and the wine list is inventive. Bring your fedora when you stop by, and don't play the sap for nobody, as Sam Spade used to say.

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CLAY THEATER UPDATE: A few months ago, Supervisor Sherrill gave some GGVNA board members a tour of the Clay Theater. The new owner is renovating it and said it will still be a cinema, but with around 150 plush seats instead of over 300 it had previously. A film programming expert from LA will be brought in, and an early 2026 opening is anticipated. Sherrill is watching the progress. This is terrific news ... Also from Sherrill's office: the Allyn Park restoration is scheduled to be completed by summer's end. The recent collapse of

the Parks Alliance will not affect this ... Sherrill has further been working with the Office of Small Business to find a replacement for the former Sur La Table, and it looks like we may finally have one, something similar to a Williams-Sonoma store ... And Supervisor Sherrill is focusing on traffic safety, a major city issue. Recently he convinced the SFMTA to change traffic light timing on Lombard, and this has reduced accidents, I am told.

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MODERN MONSTROSITY: I went by Amoeba Records on Haight the other day, and a new building has sprung up next door. Before on the property was a parking lot, and prior to that, a McDonald's. The current structure resembles a cross between a Cupertino office building and the Death Star. It does not fit in the neighborhood at all, which everybody knows features old Victorians along Haight Street. Is this what the future holds for our city? Let's hope not.

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"You know, Jeff, this working from home is not too bad!"

OVERHEARD IN THE 'HOOD: "Provence was stressful. There were 10 of us guys in one house in France. It was too much!" "Next week I'm doing a whole East Coast tour thing. I fly to Chicago, then Atlantic City, and then to New York. I can maybe meet you in LA." "I never go anywhere, never get away. I sometimes see people's luggage with stickers on them such as the Colosseum of Rome, the Alps of Switzerland, the Eiffel Tower in Paris. My luggage has one sticker: Guido's Clam Bar, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk."

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