

By Phil Faroudja

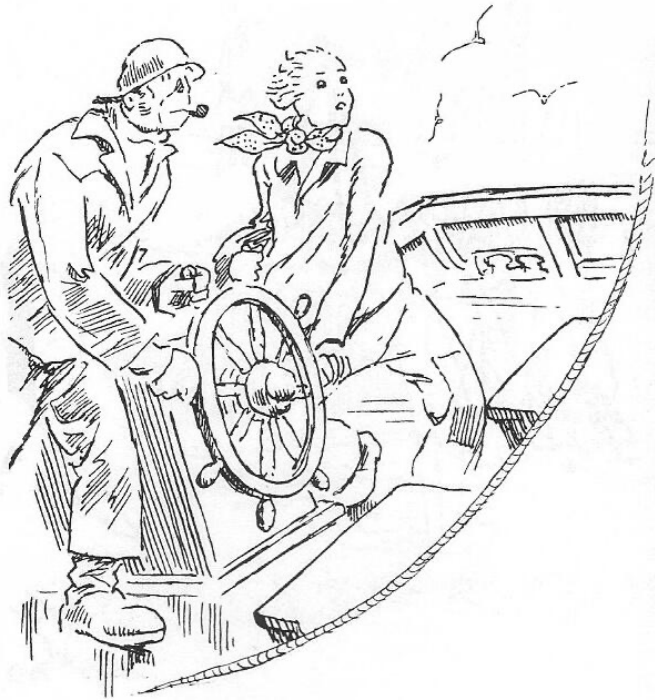
UNITED NATIONS BY THE BAY: A great thing about this neighborhood is there are many restaurants and shops from all over the country -- and the world. Take, for example, Caldero at 2149 Union. The new store specializes in Spanish goods such as imported cheeses, wines and preserves, along with local items like bags of coffee, seasonings and sauces. Products for the home include tableware and decorations. It's the only dedicated Spain import store I have ever seen ... Up the hill at the intersection of Jackson & Webster is Ales Unlimited, featuring German imports. The owner is from Munich, and you can buy foods such as sausages and knodels, which are German potato dumplings, or Mozart chocolates and assorted candies and crackers. The store also carries a wide variety of craft beers ... Lucca Delicatessen on Chestnut is still going strong and feels like a transplant from North Beach: It supplies Italian products and pastas, as well as cannoli and other pastries ... And if you've never been there, I recommend Hunan Empire at 2001 Union, which prepares great Chinese food. Dine-in and takeout are available. That kind of eatery is nice to have.

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LAW AND ORDER: In a recent conversation, Northern Station Police Captain Pat McCormick told me morale has improved significantly in the department, especially with the new mayor's strong support. He added, "We're also getting backing from you folks -- that is, voters and citizens"...

The police's Northern Station, which covers our district, had seen the numbers of officers decline over the past few years, but those are ticking back up ... McCormick called SFPD Ambassadors "the eyes and ears of our department" and said if you see a crime, report it. I'll do that ... Road safety remains a serious issue, but an assistant in Supervisor Sherrill's office informed me our neighborhood will soon get a traffic cop ... Incidentally, Captain McCormick pointed out Northern Station is open to the community the second Tuesday of every month at 5 pm, and all are welcome.

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"Steer the boat to the right, Harry. Otherwise we're going to hit Alcatraz."

ODDS & ENDS: Lori Brooke lost her bid to become district supervisor. She said she is proud of her campaign, and is considering another run in November ... Mel's Diner on Lombard is shuttered after a fire, as are Gio Gelati and Sushi Hakko on Union street following floods ... Interior remodeling has begun on the Clay Theater. A small balcony will be added ... The former Brick Yard bar on Union is now Greek restaurant Milos Taverna, and reviewers have noted the decor is classy and stylish -- like your correspondent ... And speaking of positive reviews, GGVNA had a successful dinner at Isa Restaurant in January. Thanks to all who attended ... Well, that's a wrap for this issue. Have a great summer, everybody!

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