

Lower Haight Local

The Local Magazine of Lower Haight, SF

Issue 6 | February 2026



Scan to see this street in 1948!

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Note From The Editor

Joel Reske, Editor-in-Chief

Hello neighbor! You are holding the sixth issue of Lower Haight Local, a local newsletter / zine for all of the amazing people and things happening in Lower Haight. This magazine is the direct product of your neighbors' writing, doodling, and designing. Some fun updates:

- This month, 20 people came by our monthly art night, making all the art for the issue.
- We raised money for the magazine at our two sold-out dating events in Jan (see page 6)
- We are adding a few more members to our leadership team in March. Look for more from us!

As always, this is your paper. Get involved and help make it what you want!

To stay up to date, follow us on Instagram @lowerhaightlocal

To support us financially (we need it!), go to lowerhaightlocal.com/donate

To help write/edit/anything, go to lowerhaightlocal.com/help

Anything here you want to see in the zine / respond to? Email hi@lowerhaightlocal.com



lowerhaightlocal.com

Banana Bay Co.

Baked with Love in Lower Haight

by Carolyn Mock

Food fuels us – the energy stored in the organic matter is processed by the body to animate the physical functions necessary for life. But when someone tells me that a meal was “made with love,” I like to think there is an additional transfer of energy: one that stores the maker’s hard-work and creative fire in the food, and then warms the recipient as they indulge in it, the comfort and joy spilling out.

When I sat down with local baker Batool Fatima, she gifted me with her banana bread cookie. The result of thoughtful ingredients and hours of trial and error, the perfectly textured cookie has become a staple of Batool’s small-batch baked goods company Banana Bay Co., and a favorite of the Lower Haight pop-up scene.

The gift of the banana bread cookie felt personal. Like she wanted to vitalize my day with light and community. I could feel the time and creative decisions she had put into its baking, the kind of connection that is lost when I buy a sleeve of stagnant Chips Ahoy from the

supermarket. This had intention baked into it, served fresh.

Batool detailed to me that it was this very vigor that birthed her business. Back in 2019 while in graduate school for data analytics, she found herself under heavy stress the night before a challenging final exam.

“All I could think of was that I wanted to make a loaf of banana bread. And so I did. And I don’t even remember how my exam went, but I remember how good that loaf smelled. And how after the exam my friends and I sat around eating it and not worrying if we had passed the test.”

From that core memory, Batool traced how her friends agreed that it was such a relief to eat the delicious banana bread together, and how after rejoicing that “this was not a normal loaf,” they encouraged her to share it, saying, “we can’t be the only ones getting to enjoy this.”

Batool moved to San Francisco in 2020, and here she began experimenting. “Adding chocolate, more pecans, then caramelized pecans, or toasted. And it’s small-batch so I was putting so much love and

effort into each one,” she recalls. Through her time in graduate school, to her time in San Francisco with a full time job, this creative outlet has turned into her passion project and her preferred “love language” to bring her closer to her neighbors in the Lower Haight.

As she grew more established at Saturday market pop-ups, Batool expanded her recipes (and her knowledge of flour, cornstarch, chewiness-scale) to create her famous version of the banana bread cookie.

She remembers seeing a woman one recent Saturday “happy dance” to the first bite. She compares how “no one at my big tech job looks at my project dashboard and goes ‘wow that makes me feel so good,’ but I live for the moments where someone’s face lights up at a taste of what I’ve physically baked with all that time and love. This is so precious.”

Find Banana Bay Co. at local Saturday market pop-ups.

Follow @bananabayco

Pink Puffin Opens in Lower Haight

by Rachel Paul

Pink Puffin Bicycles recently relocated from Pacific Heights to Lower Haight, and I got to interview shop owner Philip Shain on their very first day open on Haight Street.

The new space is bright, welcoming, and inviting. Philip and I sat on the couch by the front window for the interview, where you can watch bicyclists ride along the Wiggle.



Pink Puffin Bicycles is nearly three years old and grew out of Philip's desire to share his joy for bicycles with others. The shop is service-focused, which sets it apart from other nearby bike shops. Pas Normal Studios, just across the street, leans more toward retail and coffee than repairs, leaving a gap that Pink Puffin aims to fill. I

also asked about e-bikes. The shop is a bit more selective with them, since they're often configured differently, but Philip told me, "If I can help, I will."

Additionally, Pink Puffin sells parts, accessories, custom bikes, demos, kids' bikes, and some consignment.

While the original Pacific Heights location was a great starting point, Philip explained that operating costs were challenging and space became a limitation as they grew. So, they began looking elsewhere. Lower Haight stood out because of its location along the Wiggle. Philip said he's also seen the neighborhood flourish, noting its friendly people, abundance of families, strong sense of community, and steady foot (and bike) traffic.

Midway through our conversation, a woman walked in with a broken chain. She was on her way to her polling place to vote in the local election for Prop 50, which felt like a very "bike shop on the Wiggle" moment, and so quintessentially Lower Haight. She had no idea it was Pink Puffin's first day open, and the interaction, to me, perfectly illustrated the real need the shop is meeting.

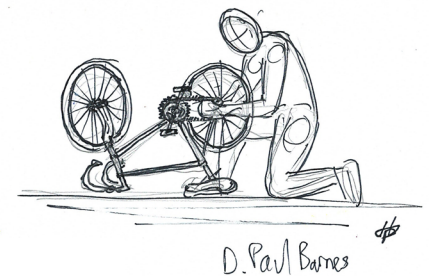
Philip hopes Pink Puffin will become a pillar in the commu-

nity: a hub for events, hangouts, and a place where bike lovers (and bike-curious neighbors) can connect.

The shop is open Thursday through Monday from 10am to 4pm, and closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays. These hours may shift as they learn the rhythms of the neighborhood and respond to community needs. You can find their current hours at pinkpuffinbicycles.com.

As for the name? Many obvious bike shop names were already taken, so Philip's wife suggested something completely unrelated. They're an animal-loving family (their 10-month-old son is named Wren), puffins are one of Philip's favorite birds, and pink felt warm and inclusive. Thus, Pink Puffin.

Stop by and say hi to Philip and team at 776 Haight Street! There's a backyard, a comfy couch, and plenty of space to park your bike. Welcome to the neighborhood, Pink Puffin, we're glad you're here!



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Walls That Talk

Article, watercolors, & photos by Joyce Chen

Lower Haight's walls have always had something to say. In the 60's, it was music and revolution. In the 80's, it was punk rock and grit. Now, there are ten-foot flowers, flying cranes, and cats delivering affirmations through laundromat windows. The vibe has evolved but the mission's the same: turn an everyday surface into something whimsical, fantastical, or motivational to make Lower Haight one of the most beautiful places to live in San Francisco!

Some murals to spot:

Wild Feathers & Painted Ladies at Wild Feather (Haight and Steiner)

Wild Feather, a women-owned festival clothing and accessories store, reached out to Ursula Young (@ursulaxyoung) and Amanda Lynn (@alynnpaint) to paint a mural that was bright, colorful and feminine, using the store as inspiration. The result was a stunning mural with two expressive women and oversized blooms, a burst of natural life flooding the concrete wall. The mural was a combination of the artists' styles, representing San Francisco, femininity, and beauty, sprinkled with feathers, flowers, and birds for good measure. Fun fact: Both Ursula and Amanda lived in the Lower Haight at the same time back in the late 90's, but didn't know each other. As they crossed paths later in life, the mural was a fond homecoming for both.



Spiritual Journey at YH Beijing (Haight and Fillmore)

Along the wall next to YH Beijing, there is a striking mural of soaring cranes against a golden mist and deep green background. The Chinese restaurant reached out to Riley Li (@rileyliart) and Iris Lin (@xirislinx) to create a piece to highlight Chinese culture and the two artists created a mural depicting

cranes finding their soulmates. The mural style is inspired by Chinese cloisonné, an ancient technique for decorating metalwork pieces where colored materials are partitioned by metal or gold outlines.



Cat-affirmations at Wishy Washy Laundromat (Page and Steiner)

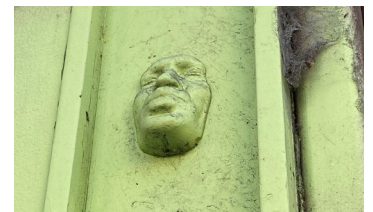
Last year, Wishy Washy wanted to add more color and joy to the neighborhood and reached out to @ian_the_meow to create some art. He was inspired by mental health and helping people feel less alone so he painted cats with inspirational quotes on 7 window panels at the corner laundromat. Based on his own cat, the cats became a symbol for comfort, softness, emotional honesty, and even humor!



These playful panels are simple reminders that you are enough, you matter, and you're not alone.

We're lucky to live in an outdoor gallery - there's art everywhere! The murals above connect our local businesses with culture, extending our values as a community. Murals make our community feel alive and spread beauty, creativity, and playfulness. On the next beautiful San Francisco day, walk outside and see what other murals you can find. Tell us your favorite one :)

Bonus scavenger hunt: See if you can find this hidden little guy in the Lower Haight area ;)



Wishy Washy: More Than Just a Laundromat

by Hannah Gonsalves

From the moment you see the colorful, cat-themed art adorning the windows of Wishy Washy, it's clear this is not your average laundromat. Step inside and you'll find the result of owner Heather Lynn Wilson's latest local collaboration, "The Washboard," a new interactive, laundromat-inspired crossword puzzle.

About a year ago when Heather saw the crossword puzzles in Lower Haight Local she became curious about the possibility of commissioning one for Wishy Washy. While she says she's not traditionally been a puzzle person herself, she acknowledges that doing laundry can be, well... boring. She thought a crossword could offer people something to do while completing what can otherwise be a mundane chore. She reached

out to Sage—creator of the puzzles and founder of Cozy Cubs Puzzle Club—to inquire about creating a puzzle for Wishy Washy.

When Sage met with Heather and saw how committed she is to creating a business that serves the community, he decided to create "The Washboard" with the goal that, "when people do it, they feel like it belongs there, and they belong there."

The Washboard is a dry-erase puzzle that can be erased and re-solved. As more puzzles are needed, Sage will create new laundry-themed clues and share them with Heather. It's approachable and open to the puzzle-curious; participants can add a word or even just a letter. The board was also designed with intentional



Ariel Feingold-Shaw

blank space for notes and drawings. Heather says she's already seen notes, drawings, and congratulatory messages, and she's really looking forward to seeing new faces interacting with the puzzle.

The Washboard puzzle is one of the latest steps Heather is taking to create a business that fosters a sense of belonging for the community. Wishy Washy's colorful window paintings feature rotating designs by artist ianthemeow, with messages centered on mental health that remind visitors and passersby, "Good things r always possible" and "Pizza cat loves you." In February, Wishy Washy plans to host a public art show with @ian_the_meow. Who knew a laundromat could have a resident artist?

Envision chatting over a puzzle clue with a stranger while folding your clothes or checking out an art show while you do your laundry. Can the place where you do your chores also be a cool place to hang out? One thing is clear: Wishy Washy is not just a laundromat. With an emphasis on fostering local talent, Heather is expanding the ways in which it can reflect its community. With such a multi-faceted community as the Lower Haight, the results will surely be something to pay attention to.



Haight of Flavor - February

by Tamara Kahhale

Welcome to the second month of the new year! Life has been very hard recently, and in times like these I am reminded that I am only as strong as my community, both hyperlocal and more broadly. Please make sure you are taking care of yourself and your loved ones. Food is medicine and love - a good meal can lighten a bad day.

(Divis Farmers Market: Sundays from 9am - 1pm in the DMV parking lot on Fell/Oak - open yearround!)

Fava Greens

While fava beans are the more famous part of this plant, the greens are just as tasty. Tender, sweet, and slightly nutty, treat them like you would spinach. They are sweeter earlier in the season (aka now) so be sure to give them a try - I just eat them raw!

Beets

Coming in a variety of colors, each with their own slightly distinct flavor, they pair so well with a yogurt or labneh sauce. The whole plant is edible too, stems and all. In fact, originally, only the stems and leaves were consumed!

Arugula

This one is a little cheat on my end since I really wanted an excuse to make a pizza recipe, and arugula is my favorite pizza topping. While I do believe we are still firmly in soup season, a pizza in the winter just works (and a hot oven can help keep the apartment nice and toasty!). Arugula can grow year round in the Bay, and does love the warm sun, but in general leafy greens do well in the colder months. The older the arugula leaves, the spicier they will be.



Pizza Recipe

Dough

This makes enough dough for 2 pizzas - for only 1, cut in half

- 320ml warm water
- 12g sugar
- 7g instant yeast (one standard packet)
- 470g flour
- 30ml olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Sprinkle of cornmeal for dusting the pan

Whisk warm water, sugar, and yeast together, then cover and let rest for 5 minutes. Add flour, olive oil, and salt, and mix the dough until it forms a ball that pulls away from the sides of the bowl (this should take about 3 minutes). Knead the dough on a lightly floured surface for about 5 minutes. If you find it getting too sticky, add a tablespoon of flour at a time, being careful not to add too much. After kneading, the dough should still feel soft, and bounce back after you poke it. Lightly grease a bowl and place the dough in a bowl, coating it in oil from all sides. Cover and let rise for 60 - 90 minutes, or until its doubled in size.

Sauce

Blend all of the following ingredients together:

- 1 28oz can San Marzano tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Pinch of salt
- 2 - 3 cloves of garlic

Assembly

- 240g of shredded mozzarella cheese per pizza

Preheat the oven to 475°F and let the oven heat up for a solid 20 minutes before cooking the pizza. Lightly grease a baking sheet, and sprinkle lightly with cornmeal (for crunch). When the dough is ready, punch it down. Divide in half (freeze the other half if not using) and begin to roll out dough into a disc. Place it on the prepared pan and stretch and flatten until about ½ inch thick. Pinch the edges to create a rim.

Top with sauce and cheese, and any other toppings that interest you (things like prosciutto, parmesan, spicy salami, or mushrooms go well!) and bake for 13 - 15 minutes.

Once pizza is out of the oven, feel free to top with parmesan, fresh basil, or balsamic glaze.



Date My Friend Recap

by Lucy Segraves

Date My Friend hosted two sold out events at the Faight in January, raising money to help fund the printing of the magazine. Both events showcased singles 30 & up, as requested by popular demand. With over 150 people at each event, there was bound to be some sparks flying!

The January events were particularly popular because of a post that went viral on Instagram. We had people from Vietnam, Dubai, London, and the Philippines asking when they could attend in their countries! People are excited about pitching their single friends all over the world.

Valentine's Day is right around the corner, and **Date My Friend** is collaborating with The California Academy of Sciences during their Night Life, Mix & Mingle special on Thursday, February 12th at 6-10pm. Same pitching format, bigger audience!

February Events

Full events listing at lowerhaightlocal.com/events

Lower Haight Trash Pick Up

When: Every Sunday

Time: 10am - 11am

Meeting spot: Tarragon Cafe, 200 Fillmore St.

Focus: Picking up trash from the sidewalks and median strips, free lunch is provided

More info/sign up:

<https://www.mobilize.us/civicjoyfund/event/756056/>

Lower Haight Local Art Night

When: TBD, Typically 3rd or 4th Wednesday

Time: 6:30pm - 9pm

Meeting spot: Near Scott & Page, will announce on Instagram and E-list and Website. DM for address!

Faight 3 Year Anniversary Party

When: Saturday, February 7th

Time: 6pm - 11pm

Where: The Faight!

Details: Go to <https://www.thefaight.com/events>

DJ 2nd and 4th Fridays

When: Friday, February 13th

Time: 5pm - 10pm

Where: Wave Collective



Duboce Triangle Cleanup

When: Every 1st Sunday

Time: 12pm - 1pm

Meeting Spot: Duboce Park

Focus: picking up trash around the neighborhood

More info/sign up:

<https://www.mobilize.us/civicjoyfund/event/756121/>

Alamo Square Park Greening

When: Every 1st Saturday

Time: 10am - 12pm

Meeting spot: Meet at the Hayes and Steiner Tennis Courts near the restrooms

Focus: Help with planting, weeding, and general park maintenance

More info/sign up:

<https://sfrpd.my.salesforce-sites.com/SFRPDCalendar>

Buena Vista Park Greening

When: Every 3rd Saturday

Time: 9am - 12pm

Meeting spot: Children's playground at Buena Vista West and Waller St.

Focus: Help with planting, weeding, and maintenance projects throughout the park

More info/sign up:

<https://bvna.org/work-days/>

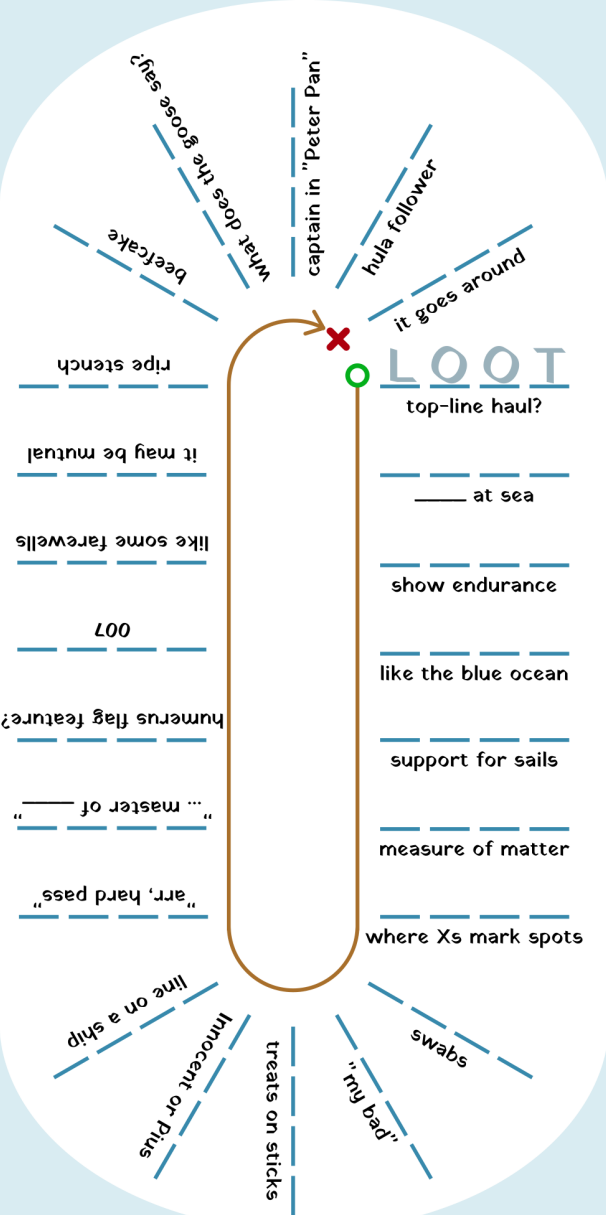
Cozy Cubs Puzzle Club™

"Casual Games for Consenting Adults"™

In this episode, the Cozy Pirates are summoned to an AN ALL HANDS ON DECK. We sneak in just as the next speaker strides on stage...

PLUNDER+ Matt, Chief Revenue Officer

What what?! Where my business people at?! When I say PaaS you say ARR! That's right! One-and-done raids are a thing of the past. The sound of our future is ARR: Annually-Recurring Revenue. Today we are excited to announce Plunder+, the world's first piracy-as-a-service subscription. Change one letter at a time to see how it works!



Remember the way to ARR with this simple formula:
 ○ + ✕ =

companion playlist
 COZYCUBS.club/allhands


NAVIGATING BENEFITS Mira from HRrrr

Benefits are never straightforward, so we put together this helpful resource. While each benefit name is rather twisted, they never cross over. Every letter is used exactly once.

G O L D C M P A S P Y
 B O R A P G L N G U
 O T P O R O E A L O B
 B Y A W S O C S D B L
 M U R N F N T H S L E
 P R O L E M A I N D
 T O A T D D H C T A P
 C E M I A Y F O G P A
 A E L S V I R G P S
 R S U B E H O O K U S



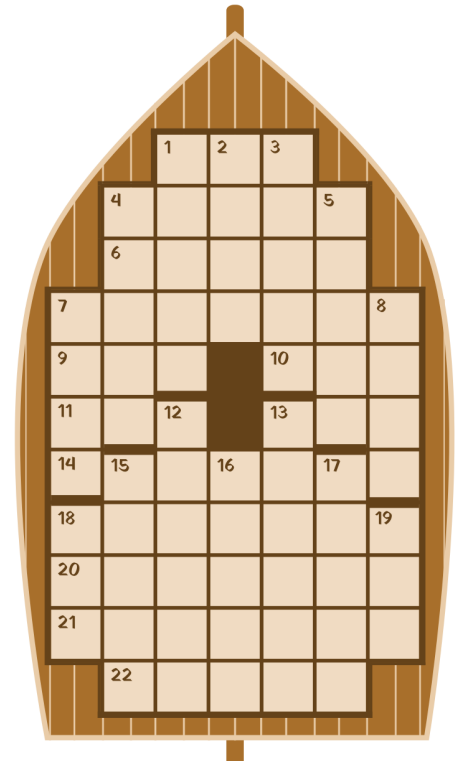
What is the hidden benefit that provides a week of PTO if Bearnard gets stranded on an island?

- GOLDCROWNS**
Full dental coverage 
- PARROTCARE**
Pet insurance for feathered friends
- FLOATDAYS**
Flexible time away from the ship
- GROGPASS**
Healthy hydration stipend
- PEGPLAN**
Lower limb replacement program
- HOOKUP**
Annual allowance for prosthetics
- SUBLIME**
Subsidized citrus for deployed crew
- SPYGLASS**
Retirement planning assistance
- BOOTYBUMP**
Bonus treasure for high performers
- PATCHMATCH**
Partial coverage for eye issues
- DOUBLEBLIND**
No deductible for a second patch

RETURN TO OCEAN Todd from Operations

RTO is more than an acronym—it's a mandate. Cross-deck engagement has never been stronger, and hot-bunking isn't nearly as bad as it seems.

- **ABEAM**
1. What remains after a firing
 4. Feels the burn
 6. Once in a _____
 7. Workers who make barrels
 9. "Golden Age" rival to MGM
 10. Minor issue
 11. _____ Lingus (Irish airline)
 13. Airport with a BART stop
 14. Polish one's skills
 18. One keeping the minutes?
 20. Option for a '57 Chevy
 21. Vessels that may come all the way from China?
 22. Some good ones cook all day
- ⚓ **AFT**
1. Sneezer's sound
 2. Sloop or schooner
 3. Greek who launched many a 2-down with her face
 4. Got up
 5. What a sans font forsakes
 7. Sideways-crawling creature
 8. "Avast!"
 12. Little kid, slangily
 13. It's seen on a sundial
 15. Singer LeAnn or lyric poems, "Ancient Mariner"-style
 16. Square or circle
 17. Knots and fathoms
 18. Fly-by-night creature
 19. Uno y uno



Read 2D+16D to learn the alternate name of this puzzle:

Scan for the full Pirates issue, answers, and a stash of more free puzzles by Sage.

🌐 www.cozycubs.club

✉ sage@cozycubs.club

📱 [cozycubspuzzleclub](https://www.instagram.com/cozycubspuzzleclub)

