

Lower Haight Local

October 2025



Inside:

- pg 1. Note from the Editor // Second Summit Feature
- pg 2. Poem: "The People I See"
- pg 3. A Spooky Neighborhood Story
- pg 4. Column: "Haight of Flavor"
- pg 5. Poem: "One Block on the Wiggle" // October Events
- pg 6. Local Feature: Daniel Bondi
- back. Puzzles by Cozy Cubs Puzzle Club

Note from the Editor

by Joel Reske

Hello neighbor!

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

- This month, our monthly art night had 20 people come by to make art (next one will be mid-October)
- We now have a small leadership team, and some more defined ways to get involved
- We have a *newspaper box!* We'll be decorating it and placing it in the neighborhood. Keep your eyes peeled...

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

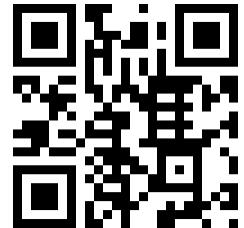
To stay up to date, follow us on Instagram @lowerhaightlocal

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

- Joel



Homepage, lowerhaightlocal.com

In Progress: Second Summit

by Joel Reske

As Jeff Conocenti guides me around his unfinished space, his vision and energy are infectious. He points at a small vertical panel, part of the ramp he built to make the space ADA compliant. "This is going to be where people can test their climbing shoes!" he says, acting out testing the toe grip. He points at another large wall where he plans to put a coffee bar. "This is going to be the conSIGNment wall" [emphasis added]. "Anyone who consigns a piece of gear can sign it - I can't wait to watch it grow."

His vision is clear: to build a community space in Lower Haight for outdoor enthusiasts to gather and trade, as a clear alternative to big box stores like REI and Sports Basement.

All gear in the store will either be hyper-local brands (like a neighbor who makes energy bars out of her garage) or high quality consignment. Soon, anyone will be able to bring in extra outdoors gear (ski, climbing, backpacking, etc), have it added to the inventory. When it's sold, the store and

the gear owner will split the sale price. By creating a space for neighbors to give their gear a second life, and a place for people to buy high quality gear for a reasonable price, Jeff is building community around sustainable enjoyment of the outdoors.

In these weeks leading up to a soft opening, "building" is very literal. When Jeff moved into the space, it had been vacant for years, and was a mess. Jeff has spent months replacing the ceiling, framing, painting, and flooring. Later in October, Jeff will be occasionally opening the unfinished space at 583 Haight Street to community events, with a full launch happening in Spring of 2026. To follow along with his building progress and learn more, follow @secondsummit_sf on Instagram.



Photo by Joel Reske

The People I See

by Evelyn McSpirit

It was from my desk where I first fell in love with this city. In my mind, there was only one option for its location when I was first moving in: nestled between my bay windows, giving me a 180 degree view of the streets below. A sturdy desk in an empty room, standing alone and inviting me to sit in its perch.

I live down the street from Alamo Square and as my people-watching continued day by day, I began to notice recurring characters taking their dogs to the park in their daily routine. Some folks walking up to the park, others walking back from it, and me, stagnant, living in the median of their climb and descent. After a year of working from my desk, I started to feel a connection to these neighbors, though we don't know each other's names, each other's stories. I feel as though I formed something like a parasocial relationship except instead of through a phone screen, it's through a window screen.

Here are my a few of the ones I've seen the most:

A cool flip flop-wearing gentleman with a seemingly older Collie
Steadily striding to Alamo, the Collie always a few paces behind.

There used to be two Collies striding along with this man and the day I realized I may not see the other one again, I shed a few tears, but I now choose to believe the other one has just been resting up for an upcoming match, Air Bud style.



A bike-avid mother, her baby situated snug between her handle bars, and their extremely loyal dog always running behind.

This little family was my favorite, but I believe they have since moved away and are now probably making other neighbors happy with their heartwarming dynamic.



An extremely stylish neighbor with a shaggy, but equally chic pup in toe, making a crosswalk look like a catwalk on their casual daily strolls.

In the cliche of dogs looking like their owners, these ones feel like each other: emanating the same 'coolness' as their steps sync down the street.



With this, I can't help but to think, "Who am I in someone's story?". Is there a window-watcher absent mindingly following me with their eyes as I meander for my morning coffee, making up a story about where I'm coming from and where I'm going. I think that's just part of being human: curious, observant, and always finding little bits of poetry in the ordinary. Here in San Francisco, in the Lower Haight, we're all quietly romanticizing each other's lives.

Cover art:
Sonia Beckstrom

Edits and other help:
Siena Applebaum
Lucy Segraves
Molly Hayden
Annalise Wulf

Illustrations by Evelyn
McSpirit

Spooky Neighborhood Story

MY CEILING IS THE SHAPE OF A COFFIN AND OTHER WRITINGS ON THE WALL

by Tessa

warning: this piece discusses a murder in the 80s

“I must be an angel,” I said to my landlady. It immediately occurred to me that the very woman I was speaking to was indeed one such person who I imagined would object to this statement of my virtuosity, not to mention my parents, my best friend I hadn’t texted back in two weeks and at least one ex. My landlady laughed. “And you must be a comedian,” she responded. I shrugged.

She had just finished telling me about the time in 1981 when the water heater broke in my building. My landlady, carrying her then-baby on her hip and accompanied by the PG&E guy, walked to the downstairs unit and found her tenant rolled up in a rug, stabbed to death.

Sure, while she was telling me this, I was splayed out on the shared stoop stairs blocking her doorway while soaking up some sun in my pajamas and a full leg brace, but I am very much alive and still paying rent on time. Ergo, angel. You agree now, too, don’t you? Because a dead tenant is a nightmare and something rather satanic had been occupying the house.

The nightmare continued. The apartment was destroyed and eerie paintings smeared the walls. She called the police and they arrived, guns blazing at the news of a possible homicide. She was still holding her baby.

“Put your guns down,” she barked at them.

At this point in her storytelling, I wanted to ask if she was traumatized by all this, but good journalists don’t waste their questions on ones they know the answer to. (I’m not a journalist and it’s actually really important to ask questions you think you know the answer to.)

The tenant at the time was a 23-year-old named Karen, the unfortunate first known victim of serial killers Michael Bear Carson and Suzan Carson, also known as the “San Francisco Witch Killers.”

I live right above where she was murdered. And my landlady lives right above me. In a moment of ennui (there are many), I once looked up at my ceiling (her floor) and realized it was the shape of a coffin. (Were we next?)

It was the Haight in the ‘80s and the city was coming down from the counter culty acid trip of the 70s, but not everyone made it out of the drug induced haze alive.

This article continues online. Scan the QR code see the full article.

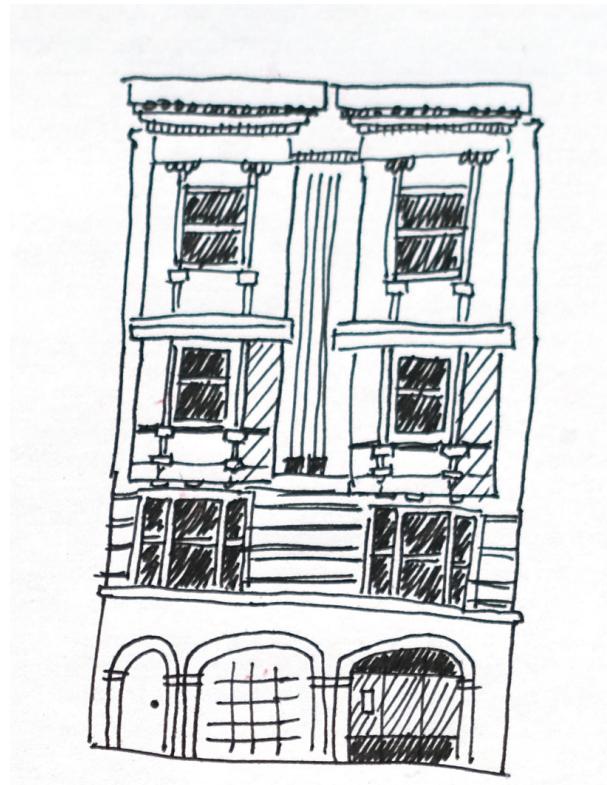
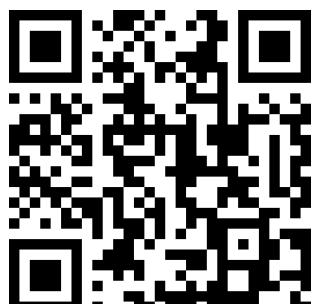


Illustration by Charlie Smith
@charliesmith.design on IG



Haight of Flavor October

Tamara Kakhale

We have officially entered the amazing world of fall produce! While summer really takes the cake for all of its bounty, the fall is filled with so much goodness as well. Enjoy spooky season with these delights!

(Divis Farmer's Market: Sundays, 9am - 1pm, DMV parking lot, Fell/Oak)

Cabbage

Best in the late fall, this veggie is so tasty as a side dish or main event. Kimchi is an absolutely classic (and delicious) way to use a lot of cabbage, but it also thrives as a dumpling base or with some miso tofu.

Dates

A staple in many cultures, this fruit can be used as a low-glycemic sweetener in baking or just delightfully snacked on. They are harvested mostly by hand, so next time you buy them, show some extra appreciation.

Eggplant

This fruit (yes, fruit - they grow from a flower and have seeds!) is ripest when it's heavy for its size and has smooth and shiny skin that bounces back when you press it. Salting eggplant before cooking can help draw out any bitterness.



Illustration by Mel Halem, @melaniehalem on Instagram

Ratatouille

Instructions:

1. Heat oven to 375°F.
2. Cook diced onion, bell pepper, and garlic in oil in a 10-inch oven safe skillet until softened (9-ish minutes)
3. Cut zucchini, squash, eggplant, and tomatoes into rounds of about the same thickness, then put aside.
4. Add crushed tomato and seasonings, and simmer for 15 minutes until the sauce thickens. Taste and adjust seasonings, then remove sauce from heat.
5. Arrange the sliced veggies on top of the sauce in a concentric circle: Start at the outer edge of the skillet and spiral inward, alternating and overlapping the slices. Drizzle olive oil and salt on top.
6. Cover with foil and bake for about 40 minutes, then uncover and finish baking until the veggies are fully tender, but not browned (another 10ish min, max). Remove from the oven, and let cool for a few minutes before serving.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium zucchini (rounds, 2 cups)
- 1 medium yellow squash (rounds, 2 cups)
- 1 small eggplant (rounds, 2 cups)
- 2 medium Roma tomato (rounds, 1.5 cups)
- 1 small onion, diced (yellow or white)
- 1 red bell pepper, diced (yellow/orange also work)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 14 oz crushed tomato
- Thyme, basil, salt, pepper to taste



Illustration by Tamara Kakhale

Poem

One Block on the Wiggle

by Emma Conroy

There is a richness you can taste in the air. Cars may earn permission to pass through, bikes are welcome travelers, and the walkers are invited to stay. The greatest status is reserved for the gazers, the coffee sippers, and the wanderers, and is granted by the trees. The slender branches above you hold the weight of every secret shared here, every baby's first step taken over their roots. They still hold scars from decades past, and their roots remember. They do not need to meet you to know who you are. Before the dawn, their arms reach open to stir on the early birds. As the light streams across the sidewalk, so too do the crowds of the day. Some are searching, some are seeing, and some simply have no reason to leave. Dappled shade over tables forgives errant leaves fallen in half-drunk lattes as the sun reaches its solitary mountaintop. Wheels purr and tourists buzz over pavement, held together by the human desire to be both outside and in, both far from home and yet still within reach, both individual and yet not alone. As evening falls, and the humans huddle across small tables, the outside air sharpens all that is in it. The stray passers by do not notice until they reach the trees and soft gold from a street light draws them in. You look up for the first time tonight. The gold illuminates green among shades of navy and gray. The light flutters once, twice, as the wind speaks. You shiver. Unsettled, you look forward to the windows below, to the warmth and chatter waiting for you inside, and you walk in.



Illustration by Molly Hayden
@cargobikemolly on Instagram

Events

October

DM @lowerhaightlocal to get your event featured! Go to lowerhaightlocal.com/events for full up-to-date event listings.

October 4 - Lower Haight Block Party - Waller between Webster & Buchanan

October 5, 12, 19, 26 - Lower Haight Weekly Clean Up - 10am Waller & Fillmore

October 5 - Duboce Triangle Clean Up - 12pm at Duboce & Steiner

October 5 - Castro Art Walk

October 5 - Castro Street Fair

October 5-13 - SF Fleet Week

October 9 - Castro Wine Walk

October 10 - Quinn (neighbor) is hosting an open-to-the-public birthday party. Stop by to mingle with fellow Lower Haight residents and wish-they-were Lower Haight residents, eat cupcakes, and dance to late-2000s throwbacks. 7:30-11pm at The Faight

October 16 - Lower Haight Social - follow @lowerhaightsf for details

October 19 - Wiggle Fest from 12-4pm - Steiner between Duboce & Waller

Fun activities; chalk art, games, bike & skateboarding lessons, music & more! Pot-luck lunch/park picnic. Help us build community, discuss pedestrian & bike safety. Volunteers can email: SFWiggleFest@gmail.com

October 31 - Waller Halloween starting at 5pm (Waller between Steiner & Scott)

Halloween returns to Waller Street! This year, for Trick-or-Treating fun, we are opening Waller from Scott to Steiner, including the dead ended blocks at the park and Pierce to Haight. Costumes, carnival games, and spooky surprises! 5pm until the ghosts come out...



Illustrations by Charlie Smith
@charliesmith.design on Instagram

Feature

Daniel Bondi

by Erika

Back in 2022, you could find a lot of things on Craigslist: free furniture, a car for sale, and the commercial space that would become home to The Faight. At least, the latter is what Daniel Bondi found within six months of moving to San Francisco from Southern California. Although Daniel initially relocated because of a new job in software sales, he sensed an underlying energy and excitement in the city that was just waiting to be harnessed. This inspiration, combined with the lack of third spaces (outside of restaurants and bars) and a Craigslist listing was all Daniel needed to commit to bringing the idea of The Faight to fruition.

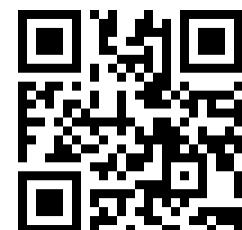


Now almost three years later, The Faight has cemented its place as a gem of Lower Haight. Guided by a mission of “giving musicians and artists a platform to grow,” it strives to create a space that welcomes all types of artists. The Faight tosses out the notion that being an artist is confined to only the traditional mediums. Instead, Daniel and team plan and produce events that allow both hobbyist and career artists to freely express their creativity and inspire one another. As Daniel says: “we have the space, really the walls are the limit.”

Naturally, we were curious to know: What is Daniel's favorite event?

He was quick to answer “Literally Underground”. This event aims to highlight local underground artists by allowing them to perform on stage which is... literally underground. While Daniel has never performed a scheduled set at The Faight (he is a guitarist and vocalist himself), we'll hold out hope for serendipity to strike on a Tuesday Open Mic night. If we're lucky, we might hear him cover “Grandma's Hands” by Bill Withers, a personal favorite of his. But even if he's not onstage, Daniel's impact on The Faight's culture is apparent.

In fact, creativity, joy, and impact are three of Daniel's admitted core values. These values are woven into every event, every interaction, and every corner of The Faight. So I echo Daniel's message: “There's a renaissance in music and art happening right now [in San Francisco]. And we're living it and breathing it. And it's happening, you just have to [...] get out into the streets and get out into your local spaces, and restaurants, and third spaces, and The Faights of the world to experience it.”



Scan for events happening at the Faight!

October Sponsors

This paper is only possible because neighbors have given to make it happen. Like the issue? Help the next one get printed with a small donation! Head to <https://lowerhaightlocal/sponsor> to have your organization featured!

\$500 one-off donation from a random donor!

This month, we received an amazing donation from a neighbor, JM, which helped pay for the cost to print this issue. Be this neighbor next month (at any amount)! Head to lowerhaightlocal.com/donate

Cozy Cubs Puzzle Club

BUBBLE TEASE

agar · boba · brown sugar · brulee · cheese
 foam · coffee · cream · fresh · fruit · grass jelly ·
 green · guava · high mountain · honey · infused ·
 jade · jasmine · latte · lemon · less ice · little ·
 sweet · lychee · mango · matcha · milk · oolong ·
 osmamanthus · passion · peach · pomelo ·
 popping · roasted · rose · sago · snow ·
 strawberry · taro · tiger · wintermelon · yakult



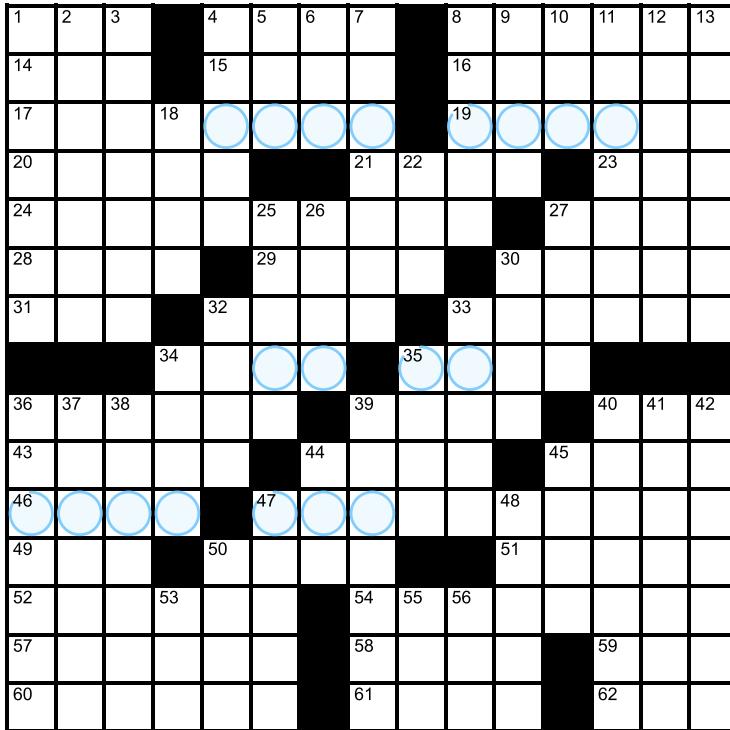
G R A S S J E L L Y L G Q U X K B C K S L
 A P O P P I N G R X J R K O C L R L R Q I
 K G F M Y N N P A S A E L S O I U E I E T
 A N A A A P O M E L O S E G M F M L S N T T
 A K U R L I F A M R M N F A F R E S F P L
 O B W O D S A C F O I S R M E D E I U C E
 E R O E E S H H N A N N U A E T G C S R S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

THE WHOLE PACKAGE

Across

- "__ City" (computer game)
- One whose pants are on fire, allegedly
- Bubbly occasions?
- "Pulp Fiction" star Thurman
- '70s tennis star Arthur
- Wicker furniture material
- Chase vehicle in Kung Fu Panda 2
- Spanish fleet
- Value system
- Sluggers' stats
- D&D, for one
- Rescuing, financially
- March through mud
- Volcano on Sicily
- Breaks a fast
- Neighbor of Peru
- Golf ball pedestal
- Magazine with a red border
- On the agenda
- Private function?
- Word after bed or leg
- Vegan protein option
- Bug
- Outdoorsy co-op
- Soothing succulents
- La __ Tar Pits
- "Good Luck, Babe!" singer Chappell
- "Hamilton" narrator
- Words from someone who knew all along
- "Surfin' __" (Beach

Boys song)
 50. Give the cold shoulder
 51. Pompeo of "Grey's Anatomy"
 52. In-group dialects
 54. Agreement with extractive terms
 57. Fly
 58. "That's a __!" - and a clue to what are packed within the bubbles of this puzzle
 59. Appreciate or investigate
 60. Put up a fight
 61. Relay segments
 62. "Music for Airports" composer Brian



Down

- No-lose proposition
- Pretend to be
- Rage Against the __
- Yogurt drink that could be salty (but most prefer mango)
- "...I mean, kinda"
- "Caught you red-handed!"
- Composed again
- Distinctive quality
- They row row row your boat
- Contraption
- that needs a PIN
- Like a romantic night sky
- Future frog
- Obtained hastily
- Soda pop nut
- The B in USB
- Horse's dissent?
- Tasting like venison
- Con job
- Stop the bleeding
- ¿Cuántas leches?
- "That's unfortunate"
- Letters on the 0 button of old phones
- "Sell Out" singers __ Big Fish
- Arranged in columns
- Not easily caught
- Rick of "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids"
- Game for NFL all-stars
- Meat roll-up
- Enters cautiously
- Without a break, say
- HVAC
- measure
- Part in a play
- Little map on a big map
- Puppies' cries
- Drunks
- Khao Man __ (Chicken Fat Rice, Thai style)
- Fury
- Fall behind

Answers and more

✉ www.cozycubs.club
 ✉ sage@cozycubs.club
 ☰ [@cozycubspuzzleclub](https://www.instagram.com/cozycubspuzzleclub)



 **thin air**
 change one letter with each step

B L O W
 begin a bubble

_____ amorphous shape

_____ messy one

_____ generous slice

_____ q-tip tip

_____ freebies

_____ gulp

_____ baby branch

_____ two-bar treat

_____ "silly rabbit" cereal

_____ journey

_____ type of door

_____ cafeteria carrier

_____ Helen's home

_____ less than gallop

_____ horn output

_____ pointless

_____ cow sounds

_____ wipes the floor

_____ bursts a bubble