

The Society Page

By Gene Mahoney

Russian Hill Upholstery & Décor is still located in Nob Hill, not Russian Hill.

Rouge, the 20 year old nightclub and restaurant at Broadway and Polk (*now THAT'S Russian Hill*) has closed. Also, Lefty O'Doul's, a San Francisco institution, moved from Union Square to Fisherman's Wharf – in 2017. I never noticed that until now. Yeesh, and I publish a newsletter for this town. Also, the Gold Dust Lounge, another Union Square legend, moved to the Wharf in 2019 and now it's gone, too. I just noticed that, too. Oh, and after 97 years, Alioto's Restaurant is no more.

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The most famous person to emerge from the Libertarian movement would be author Ayn Rand.

But it turns out that Rose Wilder Lane, daughter of Laura Ingalls Wilder who wrote those *Little House on the Prairie* books that became a television show, was also influential in the movement. (It's possible she ghost wrote her mother's books. Also, she hated living on the prairie so much that when she got older she moved to the city.) And both Rand and Lane claimed to be influenced by Isabel Paterson, a journalist and literary critic, whom didn't share Rand's fame.

Even though I used to be a bleeding heart liberal in my youth, and now I'm a middle-aged heartless colonialist, the Libertarian movement is a bit too hardcore cold for me. Though with all this runaway government spending, I can certainly see their point.

Ayn Rand grew up in the Soviet Union and saw how socialism emasculated men.

Yes, it was *socialism*, as in the U.S.S.R. – Union of Soviet *Socialist* Republics. Lenin said that socialism was a stepping stone to communism. Meaning it's a euphemism to sucker people in to giving closet Marxists power. If you're a socialist it means you believe the state owns the means of production. There's an actual definition to it. It isn't that vibe we grew up with where, like, Jane is a socialist because she's sensitive and listens to folk music and her boyfriend is a bisexual art student.



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Also, those Scandinavian countries are capitalist. An economic system is based on how revenue is created, not where it's allocated. Anyway, guys, if you're reading this and you can't afford to live in the San Francisco Bay Area, the most expensive place in the country to live in – move.

Or live in a van, shower at the gym, and go to work. Don't take any of this subsidized housing if you're able bodied. My grandparents would've jumped out a window than have done that. I'll bet yours would have, too. The more the government gives you, the more of yourself you have to give up.

It's better to be a small man than a big wuss.



Normally I think that graffiti artists should have their hands chopped off, like what they do to thieves in much of the Islamic world. But I think this is a thoughtful message in front of the Wyndham Hotel on Sutter Street in Nob Hill.

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Herald logo by James Dylan.

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Hope you had some happy holidays.

Whatever Happened to James Dylan?

By James Dylan

Hello, guys. It's been a long 20 years since I last wrote anything for the SF Herald. Let me catch you up with what's been going on in my life... (*cue the whimsical harp music.*)

Let me bring you back to a simpler time, to the year 2000 in San Francisco. The dot.com bubble had burst, the tech bros hadn't yet taken over the city, and there were still many weird and fun people left in the town to make it fun and interesting. I had just graduated with a totally worthless BA degree in "Digital Media" from a local real estate empire...er... I mean "art school."

Whatever work I could get was piecemeal gig stuff; no one wanted to hire a full-time graphics guy. They instead just reached out for small jobs that took a few days, and then ignored requests for payment. I ended up at a local copy shop downtown, and then took a job at a law firm as a file clerk which kept me occupied while plotting my next move. I was living a nightmare version of Armistead Maupin's "Tales of the City", in which all the roommates were psychos. (Read "Roommates of My Life: The Old Man of Noe Valley" by me in the February 2020 issue of the Herald at sanfranciscoherald.net.)

Then, one morning in September, my alarm clock went off and all I heard was "both towers of the World Trade Center have been destroyed, and Manhattan is coated in a thick cloud of dust." I lay in bed a few seconds thinking "WTF" before I got up and turned on the TV and saw the event that would change the course of my life forever, which would ultimately lead me to living in Hawaii and owning a coconut plantation in the Philippines.

Since my life in San Francisco hadn't seemed to be going anywhere, and I had calluses on my wrists from the restraints at Power Exchange, and finally wanting to break up with the girl I was currently living with (but didn't know how), I went down to the local

military recruiter and reenlisted into the Army.

While I enjoyed writing for the SF Herald, and was gathering a bit of a fan base, my editor and friend Gene Mahoney had evidently leaped off the deep end and had started publishing articles about how AIDS/HIV was a hoax, etc. - not the best look for a newspaper in San Francisco. Also, the paper was in a rut, and Gene kept putting Terri Nunn from the 1980s new wave band Berlin on the cover month after month.

It looked like the SF Herald era was ending, so it was a good time to leave. (Oddly enough, both the SF Bay Guardian and the SF Weekly are gone now, and like a pesky ass rash that just won't go away, Gene and the SF Herald are still around, bothering merchants for ad space.)

For you younger people, the SF Herald was a great, independent newspaper (*not a newsletter like it is today*) from 1998 to 2008, and even won a coveted SF Weekly "Best of the Bay" award back in May of 2000, a few months before the [dot.com](http://www.dot.com) bubble burst and everyone stopped buying ads.

Long story short, I joined the Army and was sent to Fort Gordon, Georgia to learn telecommunications, then went to Airborne School (*oldest guy in my class, at 35*), and was sent to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, which I affectionately refer to as the "Armpit of the South". I was there three years and had Michael Jordan's brother (James R. Jordan) as my Sergeant Major.

I guess I was honored when I was told to report to his office when I first arrived, as he had found out I wrote articles for the San Francisco Herald (military security background check, I assume). Then he gave me a preemptive ass-chewing, warning me not to write anything for that paper while I was serving.

I was in the Army four years; three in the US and one year in Iraq, on Balad Airbase. I won't get into the politics and my personal feelings about this; let's just say when I reenlisted, we were bombing Afghanistan, as we knew Bin Laden was there and the Taliban was hiding him. While Saddam Hussein was an asshole, I didn't join the Army to invade Iraq. I felt tricked by good ol' boy GW. How did I manage being in Iraq? Let's just say that I came from San Francisco and had lived with many insane roommates, so being in a combat zone for a year was a breeze. (Read "The Roommate from Hell" by me in the March, April, and May 2021 issues of the Herald at sanfranciscoherald.net.)

I was honorably discharged in 2006 as a Sergeant, and spent a few months hanging out on the beaches near Wilmington, North Carolina.

I was dating a Vietnamese woman I met at a yoga studio (she was an instructor!), and while the sex was mind-blowing (Yoga! Instructor!), she was getting clingy and hinting at marriage, and was into weird new age things like "cleansing me with crystals", so I was figuring out what to do next.

One day while walking her two small poodles (I was sporting a mohawk at the time, so the neighbors had something to talk about), I got a call from a fellow ex-soldier who had signed up to be a military contractor in Qatar. He said they needed guys like me (prior military, security clearance, trained in military telecom). The pay wasn't as great as many thought it was, only \$85,000 a year, but it was tax-free, so I signed up.

Thinking that since I was going back to work with the military, I lost the mohawk and bought some "sensible, conservative, button-up clothing" at Walmart and started to look like a young southern pastor at bible camp.

Little did I know, after flying to Doha, I was met at the airport by a guy who looked like Gregg Allman circa 1975, with hair down to his ass. I thought he may be a driver, but he turned out to be my new boss, who was actually named Greg. I was thus introduced to life as a military contractor.

August 2006:

Greg was indeed my new boss, and he drove me to my new home; a beautiful six-bedroom villa near downtown Doha, with a pool, car, and full-time Indian caretaker. Greg handed me over to Arjun, the caretaker, who showed me to my room. Arjun was a middle-aged man who had been hired 12 years previously by the owner of the villa, and had never been released from his contract and was now basically a slave. The owner took his passport and Arjun had no way to get back to India. He got paid every month (\$60) which he sent home to his family, although us contractors gave him tips and presents all the time, bought clothes and even a new phone for him. He slept in a very small box trailer thing behind the house. This was also my introduction to how immigrant workers were treated in the Middle East.

The next day, I met my fellow shift workers, who were all prior military, and piled into one of several SUVs which we drove to Al Udeid Airbase outside of Doha. I can't get into the details of what we did, but can say that we maintained a communication network for the US military in Iraq. We worked out of a trailer on the airbase, and did four 12-hour shifts a week. I was on night shift, which I preferred, because IT WAS SO F***ING HOT during the day! We ate at the military mess hall on base, for free, which was a great benefit. They also served pork ribs, which were not allowed off-base in Qatar.

So there I was... just 4 years earlier I was an unemployed graphic artist living in a \$750 rented room with three other flatmates, deep in school loan debt with a worthless degree, my future looking bleak... and now I was driving a company car to have brunch at the InterContinental Doha, before heading back to my rent-free room in the villa, hanging out by the pool, while thinking about my tax-free income. Thankfully, there were no more insane roommate stories to write about, as most of my co-workers were professional, mature people with security clearances

I met my current wife (Charito) in Doha; she was from the Philippines, and was forced to work in Doha (saleslady at Carrefour) in order to earn money for her 6 year-old son back home. I wasn't looking for a girlfriend at the time, but was charmed by Filipinas, especially her.

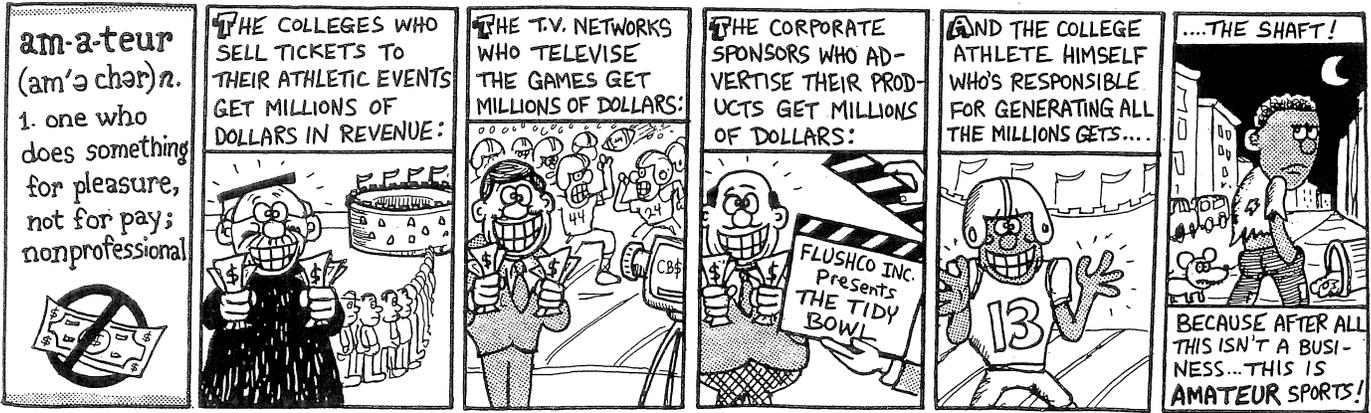
First, let me say that Doha, Qatar is probably one of the most boring places I've ever lived, in my life. There is very, very, little to do there. There are some bars and clubs at the larger hotels, but a single beer costs \$16. And the bars were flooded with Russian prostitutes, to the point that I couldn't even walk in without being mobbed, even if I was with my gal. I'm not a drinker, smoker or whoremonger, so we soon tired of the bar scene and just had pool parties at the villa, in which she would invite some of her female friends over, and I would walk around like a Jersey Shore version of Hugh Hefner, asking how everyone was, and making sure that their drinks were refreshed.

Oh, I didn't mention, certain foreigners were allowed to have an alcohol permit, which meant we could drive way out to a remote strip mall and buy overpriced booze at a state-sanctioned liquor store, which I did occasionally, for the parties. Also, pork was forbidden in Doha, and Filipinos love pork, so when the mess hall on base had pork ribs, I would load of a few to-go plates and bring them back to the villa. I would freeze them until I had an evening pool party, so there were free booze and pork ribs at a villa in Doha - across the street from a mosque.

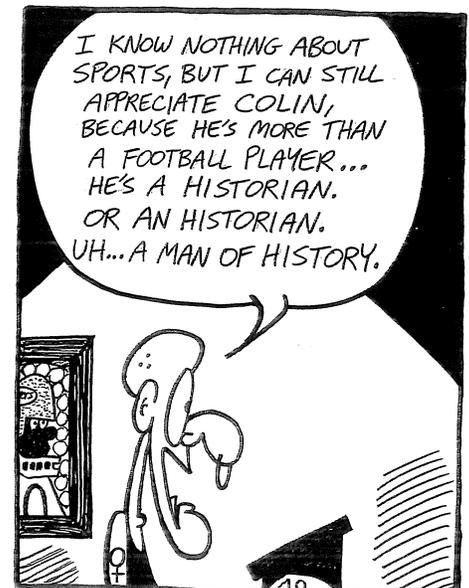
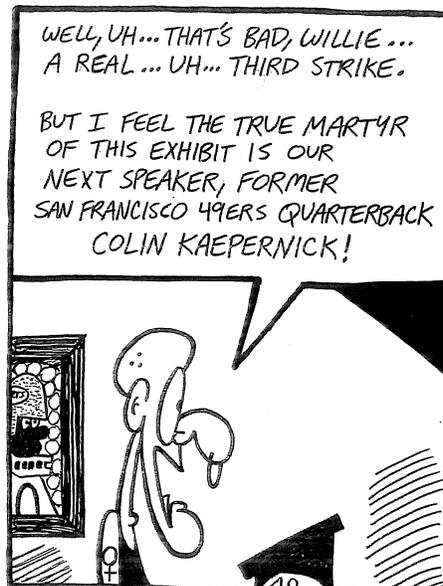
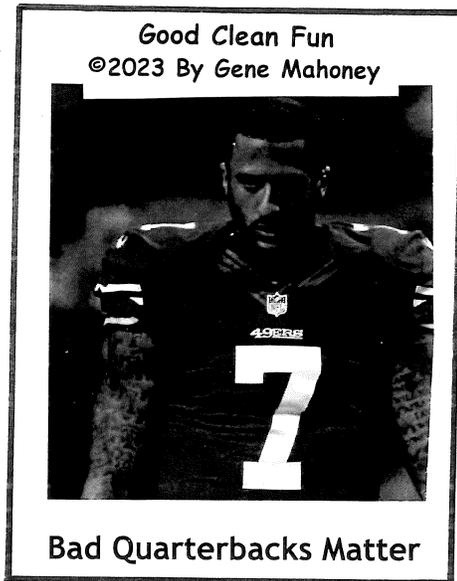
Later on, after everyone had left, I would float in the pool, look up at the stars, and think about how my life had changed so much in just 5 years. I had paid off all my student loans, and had savings in the double digits for the first time in my life. I took three week vacations and backpacked from Hanoi, to Hue, Hoi An, then Saigon. Then over to Cambodia where I messed around in Siem Reap and tried to avoid causing an international incident with a bunch of douchebag Korean tourists climbing on ancient statuary.

My second year's vacation was with Charito, to her place in the Philippines, which will be a different article.###

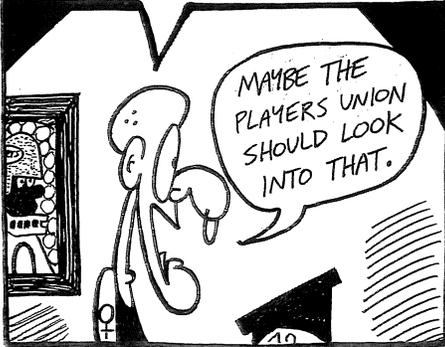
TWISTED IMAGE by Ace Backwords ©1990



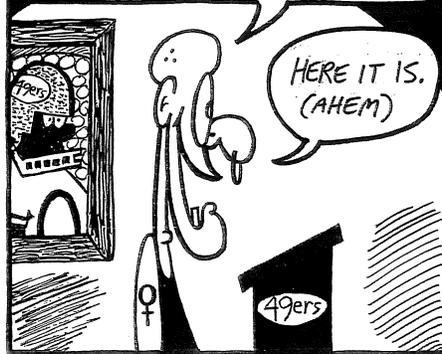
The Herald, 1998 to present, at SanFranciscoHerald.Net



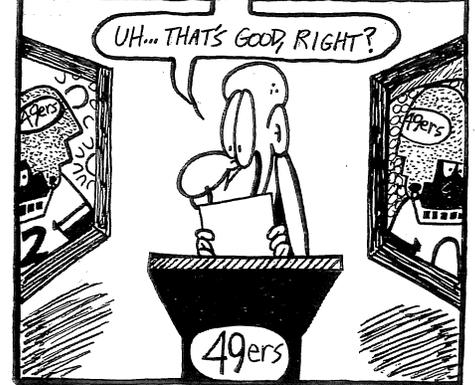
HE HAS EDUCATED ME...
LIKE WHEN HE SAID THAT NFL
PLAYERS WERE TREATED LIKE SLAVES.
I, FOR ONE, NEVER KNEW THAT
FOOTBALL PLAYERS WERE BROUGHT
HERE ON SHIPS AND HAD THEIR HANDS
AND FEET BOUND WITH CHAINS.



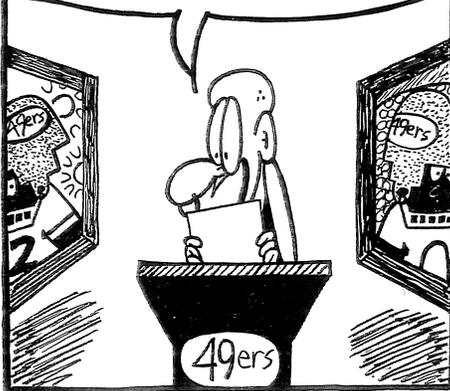
LIKE I SAID, I KNOW NOTHING
ABOUT SPORTS, BUT I SAW SOME
FOOTBALL PLAYERS TODAY (WHO HAD
BULGING BICEPS AND BULGING PANTS)
AND OVERHEARD THEM TALKING
ABOUT COLIN. I JOTTED DOWN
SOME OF THEIR PRAISE FOR HIM.



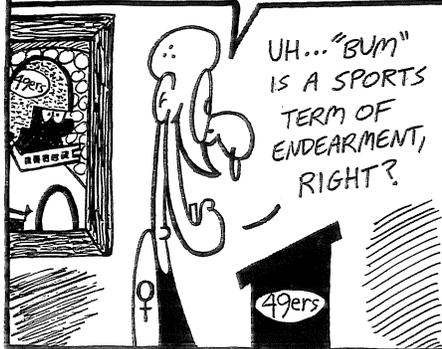
"CAN YOU BELIEVE KAEPERNICK
LOST 6 OF THE 8 GAMES HE PLAYED
AND POSTED ONLY 6 TOUCHDOWNS
AGAINST 5 INTERCEPTIONS IN
2015? I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY
KEPT HIM IN FOR 8 GAMES."



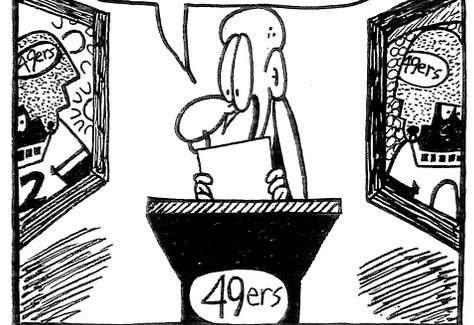
"IN 2016 KAEPERNICK GOES 1-10
AND GETS BENCHED IN FAVOR OF A BUM
LIKE BLAINE GABBERT. THEN HE BEGINS
PROTESTING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM
AND PEOPLE PAY ATTENTION TO HIM
AGAIN. SEE, WHAT A COINCIDENCE."



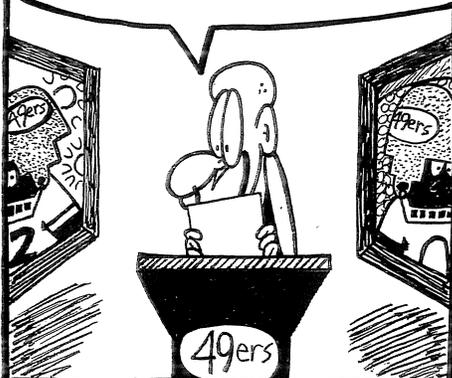
PERHAPS IT WAS ONE OF THOSE
MEANINGFUL COINCIDENCES THAT
PSYCHOLOGIST CARL JUNG CALLED
"SYNCHRONICITY." OH, I'VE HAD
JUNGIAN THERAPY, BY THE WAY.
ANYONE HERE CARE TO HEAR
ABOUT MY DREAMS? NO? OH...



"AFTER HE WASHED OUT OF THE NFL,
THE ALLIANCE OF AMERICAN FOOTBALL
LEAGUE OFFERED COLIN \$75,000
A YEAR TO PLAY—WHAT ALL THEIR
PLAYERS MADE. SO MR. SOCIAL JUSTICE
WARRIOR DEMANDED \$20 MILLION.
I GUESS SOME HAVE MORE
EQUITY THAN OTHERS."

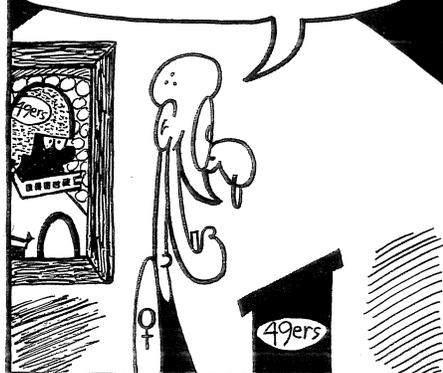


AND FINALLY, WE HAVE THIS...
"THIS GUY'S ON A NIKE COMMERCIAL?
JEEZ... HAS A FLASH-IN-THE-PAN
RUNNING QUARTERBACK EVER
GOTTEN THIS MUCH ATTENTION?
THE JETS WOULDN'T EVEN SIGN HIM!"



AND NOW, IT'S MY HONOR TO
PRESENT THE MOST "WOKE"
PLAYER EVER TO WEAR A
SPORTS JERSEY...

MR. COLIN KAEPERNICK!



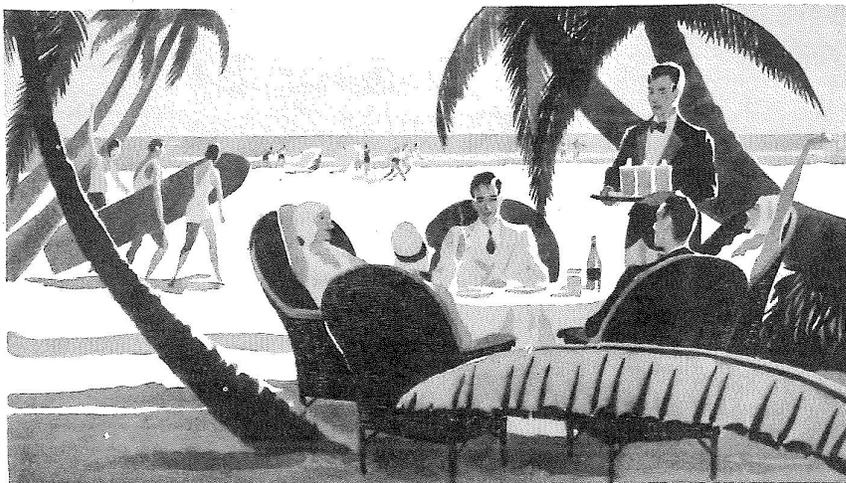
OOPS! IT SEEMS THAT
"COLIN HAS LEFT THE BUILDING!"

UH... I GUESS ALL THAT PRAISE
WAS TOO MUCH FOR A MODEST MAN.
PSYCHOLOGISTS HAVE SAID THAT
SOME PEOPLE CAN'T HANDLE PRAISE.

BUT IT'S OKAY. SELF-LOVE IS OKAY.



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Emperor Norton's BoozeLand, 510 Larkin at Turk, (415) 926-8118. Great local bar; large back patio, billiards, shuffleboard, Pliny on draft. Open every day at 1pm. Happy Hour Monday -Friday 1PM - 7PM.

Happy Hour Special, 3PM-6PM: Tecate \$3, Corona \$4, Modelo \$5, Bare Bottle \$6, Sangria \$8.
Chisme Cantina, 882 Sutter. (415) 370-7070. Catering available.

Good Old Fashioned Values. Wide selection of beer and wine. Groceries and general merchandise.
Discount Grocers, 1203 Polk (at Sutter). (415) 929-7385.

Sumac Istanbul Street Food, 1096 Union (at Leavenworth), www.sumacsf.com, (415) 307-6141.
Istanbul's favorite street flavors with the added twist of California's healthy food culture. Delivery or take-out.

Kennedy's Irish Pub & India Curry House, 1040 Columbus, (415) 441-8855. World class beer selection and Indian cuisine. Delivery available via GrubHub and Uber Eats.

Cozy café/laundromat combo. Artisan eats & espresso at integrated **Hideaway Café**, 850 Jones (at Bush). (925) 724-4464.

Pat's Café, 2330 Taylor (off Columbus). (415) 776-8735. Breakfast, lunch, & weekend brunch. Indoor & outdoor dining. 7:30 AM – 2 PM daily. Takeout, call directly or order online. PatsCafeSF.com.