

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020



GGMG | GOLDEN GATE
MOTHERS GROUP®

Celebrations

magazine





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Letter from the Editor: Letting the Light In

By Sonya Abrams



Sonya is an editor and mom to three little ghouls and goblins in Cole Valley.

An extrovert and a huge fan of hosting, I require only the most tenuous pretense for a celebration—I once threw a 12-guest adoption party for my kittens. Celebrations energize me, harness my need to please others, and provide motivation to get through the everyday slog and mark achievements big and small. But when I met my husband, he informed

visited kitschy Christmas venues like the Tom and Jerry house and the Fairmont Gingerbread house, lit the menorah each night, and wore matching holiday pajamas. The rituals helped, the celebrations kept some flickering spark alive. In the ensuing months, through grief and a pandemic, I've found that other celebrations, big and small, carry my family through and remind us that we can create light amid the darkness.

From Friday night sundae parties celebrating another completed week of shelter in place to tiny Labor Day barbecues, my family is constantly finding new ways to promote resilience through celebration. In this issue, writer Clare Deignan shows how celebrations are good for the body, soul, and mind, and explains the psychological benefits of even small acts. Having some trouble thinking of reasons to celebrate? Writer Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss presents a list of 50 reasons to celebrate our City by the Bay, from an excellent COVID response to some of the quirks—pandemic drag queen shows, anyone?—that you'll only find here. And we celebrate the achievements of GGMG's own Misa Perron-Burdick, who has helped keep our city's most vulnerable populations fed and safe throughout the COVID crisis.

"I've still found many small reasons to celebrate, even if the reasons may not seem obvious."

In the face of COVID, fires, the blinding glow from the dumpster fire that is national politics, it

frequently feels like there's not much to celebrate these days. The pandemic has thwarted traditional gatherings, from weddings to funerals, and altered the tone of the ones still proceeding. But from my personal experience, I've still found many small reasons to celebrate, even if the reasons may not seem obvious. As we embark upon a very different holiday season than any of us have ever experienced, we at GGMG raise a glass to each and every one of us.

Letter from the Board: Coming Together While Staying Apart

By Virginia Green

Late September kicks off what my kids fondly refer to as "celebration season" in our household. Within the first few weeks of "celebration season" are the birthdays of three of the four members of our family, as well as our wedding anniversary, followed in the blink of an eye by Halloween, Thanksgiving, and the winter holidays. Normally, we would observe these occasions with lots of family, friends, and way too much cake.

Of course, nothing is normal about this year. The cake can stay, but we're deep into this pandemic, and celebrations still look very different than they did in the Before Times. Yet whether it's birthdays, anniversaries, or other major milestones or holidays, the importance of celebrating hasn't changed. These occasions make us feel loved and connected to those around us, even if the people with whom we're celebrating are on the other side of a computer screen or outdoors and six feet away. As many of us have learned, social distancing does not have to mean social isolation.

The same is true in GGMG. We have spent the last seven months reimagining how to come together in new and

While I wish I could raise a glass and toast these amazing volunteers in person, it doesn't change how thankful I am for the valuable time and energy they have dedicated to GGMG.

My term as chair of the GGMG Board of Directors will come to an end not long after this fall's Volunteer Appreciation Event. I have been a GGMG volunteer for almost seven years and a member of the board for four of them. It is bittersweet to begin tying up loose ends before saying goodbye, but it feels celebratory as well. I have witnessed incredible growth and change within GGMG during that time, and while there are still areas of improvement and work to be done, our organization is in good, forward-thinking hands as it approaches its 25th year as a mothers group. This has been a time of flexibility and change for all of us in so many different ways. "Celebration season" will look very different for my family this year (except for the copious amounts of cake consumed), but I am grateful that my family is happy and healthy and that I am here to recognize those milestones with them, just as I am so grateful that I have been able to be a part of GGMG and volunteer alongside so many incredible moms for so long. That is certainly worth celebrating.



Virginia, her husband, and their two daughters live north of the Panhandle. She has been practicing her made-from-scratch cake recipes in advance of this year's "celebration season," to the utter delight of her sugar-loving children.

"Whether it's birthdays, anniversaries, or other major milestones or holidays, the importance of celebrating hasn't changed."

different ways. One of the many events being reimagined virtually this year is our annual Volunteer Appreciation Event, where the hard work and accomplishments of the moms who make this organization run are acknowledged and celebrated.

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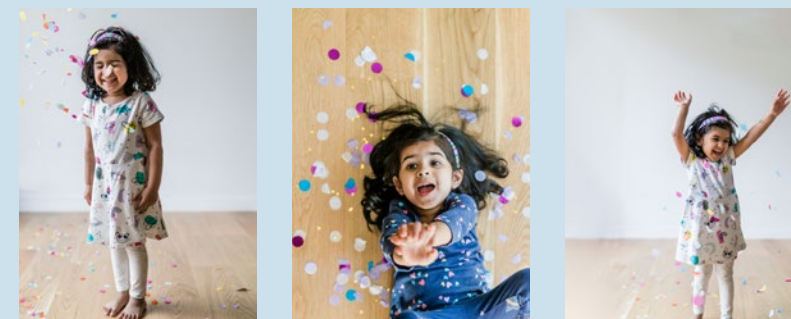
NEXT ISSUE: Finding Your Sweet Spot

Have an idea for an issue theme or article? Please email editor@ggm.org.

THIS ISSUE MADE POSSIBLE BY: Losing the battle of my kids' Minecraft addiction; Upgrading all of our camping equipment; Virtual playdates

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: Nurture ourselves, our children, our partners, and our community; create an environment of support, information sharing, and connection; learn, teach, create, have fun, and provide balance in our lives and in the lives of our growing families.

Cover Outtakes



Only one shot can make it to the cover. Here are some of our other favorites.

Cover photo by Bhavya Thyagarajan Photography
Cover model: Maya (3)



Places to Visit That Have Reopened

By Christine Chen



Photo by Beyond My Ken

ticketing, with the SFMOMA running free community days through October 18. The **California Academy of Sciences** will be reopening to members and donors on October 13 and the public on October 23 with advance ticketing (up to 3 weeks in advance) in 30 minute intervals at 25 percent of capacity. **Bay Area Discovery Museum** has reopened outdoor spaces at 15 percent capacity and indoor spaces will gradually be opening with limited capacity and timed ticketing as well. **Bill's Backyard at the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose** is open on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays with a morning and afternoon session. In San Mateo, **CuriOdyssey's** outdoor zoo and Illusions exhibit are open with one-way paths and no hands-on exhibits.



Photo by Allie Caulfield



Photo by Rhaessner

Popular places to visit with kids are gradually opening with mask requirements, new social distancing measures, capacity limitations, and modified access to keep visitors safe. Most places require advanced ticketing for specific time windows and have flow control (meaning you have to follow the designated path, not go backwards). Both the **San Francisco and Oakland Zoos** are now open for visitors, and the animals, who had been lonely when the zoo was closed, are excited to see people again. Though buildings remain closed, **Alcatraz Day Tours** are open and the outdoor areas and views are worth the ferry trip, where distancing and masks are required. **Pier 39** has outside dining areas, magnificent views, shopping and sea lions who love to entertain visitors. The **Japanese Tea Garden** has re-opened with a limited capacity of 100 guests and one-way routes, though pedestrian bridges and bathrooms remain closed. Many museums in San Francisco are now open: The **DeYoung and Legion of Honor** both opened September 25 at 25 percent capacity with advance timed ticketing and flow control. Visitors have a 90-minute window both before and after their ticketed time to enter and a 60-minute window for the Frida Kahlo exhibit. **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art** and the **Asian Art Museum** both opened the first week of October at 25 percent capacity and advanced time

Christine is mother to a 6-year-old boy and 4-year-old girl, who enjoy running in museums more than viewing the art, despite learning about the artists at preschool.

Puppy Love: Bringing a Fur Baby Into the Family

By Emily Beaven

“**H**ow many sleeps until we get Milo?,” my son asked this morning. “24,” I answered. We, like many families, have chosen to get a puppy. We have decided to celebrate our familial time together at home and do all the things we’ve always wanted to do—and this includes getting a family dog. The main reason we chose this time is the fact that we are all at home and can literally offer the dog 24/7 attention—and we’re not alone. The pandemic puppy is a real *phenomenon*.

My husband never had a dog as a kid, and he’s fulfilling a child-like need with this pup. For me, I’m hoping the dog satisfies my hormones’ need for a third baby. And for the kids, we hope they gain a playmate, best friend, develop the ability to help care for an animal, and as they grow older, increase their responsibilities with walks, feeding, etc. My children are 2 and 5 years old, and the idea of the dog growing up with them is exciting. It’s also a big step, as we are changing the dynamic of our family. I won’t lie and say I don’t have fears—but my husband seems very clear and committed to being the main caretaker of the dog, and I have to say I’m pretty excited about that.

“We have decided to celebrate our familial time together at home and do all the things we’ve always wanted to do—and this includes getting a family dog.”

We’ve talked about getting a dog for years, and which breed would be right for our family. My husband is 6’7” so a small dog felt out of the question for him, as he didn’t want to step on it accidentally, but a large dog felt out of place for our space. After a lot of research we decided to pursue an Australian Labradoodle. He’ll be about 35-40 pounds as an adult, and hypoallergenic, which is ideal for me as I have allergies. A labradoodle in San Francisco feels cliché and trendy, but what can I say? People love them. I have talked to friends, clients, and neighbors and they all say they are the best dogs—especially for families. If this pandemic has taught me anything, it’s that my husband and I are pretty unoriginal—every shelter-in-place purchase has been out of stock or had a long delay (exercise bike, tomato plants, and kayak). But if being unoriginal is the worst of my sins, in this day and age, I’m totally okay with that.

Emily is a realtor at Compass, mom to two children, and future dog mom.



Photo by R.D. Smith

If you are ready for a dog, one of the best resources are the local dog walkers in SF—they are everywhere, super friendly, and have a great sense of which breed would be right for you and your family. San Francisco SPCA is also a good resource to learn more about the benefits of adopting, training, vet care, and more. And DogTime.com offers these thoughtful questions you should consider before committing to a dog:

Why do you want a dog?

Is there enough time in your life for a dog?

Can you afford a dog?

Are you ready to deal with the problems a dog can cause?

Does your living situation allow for a dog?

Will your home environment work for the dog you have in mind?

Kids, COVID-19, and This Year's Flu Shot

With Natasha Agbai



Dr. Natasha Agbai is a pediatrician in San Francisco affiliated with Sutter's California Pacific Medical Center. She is a mom of two boys. She can be reached at Discover Health at 415.732.7029.

This fall, we could face a flu season like no other. While families are focused on preventing COVID-19, according to the Centers for

Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, children are at greater risk of complications from the flu than they are for COVID-19. What's more, if a child contracts both viruses at the same time, we fear they may be at higher risk for severe illness.

If my child gets sick, how will I know if it's the flu or COVID-19?

Unfortunately, flu symptoms are very similar to COVID-19 symptoms. If your child experiences symptoms like fever, cough, stomach issues, body aches, please keep them at home and contact your child's healthcare provider.

“By getting your children vaccinated with this year's flu shot, you are significantly lowering their chances of contracting the flu and COVID-19 at the same time.”

How effective is the flu shot this year?

The flu vaccine changes year to year because the virus mutates over time. Each year, the World Health Organization and the CDC identify which viral strains will most likely circulate during the upcoming flu season. Scientists formulate each year's vaccine based on these expectations. This year, vaccines will protect against two “A” strains—H1N1 and H3N2—and two “B” strains. In years when the circulating strains are a good match for the vaccine, getting the flu vaccine reduces a person's risk of contracting the flu by 40 to 60 percent. Perhaps more importantly, children who receive the flu vaccine are much less likely to get severely ill or die from the flu.

Are there risks associated with the flu shot?

The most common flu shot side effects are mild

redness, swelling, and soreness at the injection site. This occurs in 15 to 20 percent of individuals who receive the shot with reactions lasting one to a few days. Rare severe reactions, like Guillain-Barré syndrome (an immune response which damages nerve cells), are seen in 1 to 2 people per million flu doses. Severe allergic reactions can occur, but are rare.

Who needs one flu shot, and who needs two?

Everyone over 6 months of age is recommended to get a flu shot with rare exceptions. Young children (8 and under) may require a second “booster” dose if this is their first time receiving a flu vaccine or if they've only had one flu vaccine in the past. The second flu vaccine is given at least 28 days after the first dose. People 9 and older do not require a booster dose, just one dose each season.

When is the best time to get the flu vaccine?

Your body needs about two weeks after you receive the shot to create the protective antibodies. Flu season starts as early as September and tapers off in April and May. Antibodies last at least 6 months, so getting the flu shot in September or October should provide good protection through the flu season.

Where can I get the flu shot this year?

Most pediatric offices offer the flu vaccine. At Sutter Health, you can make appointments through your child's doctor or by visiting a Sutter Walk-in Care facility, whether you're a Sutter patient or not. Many grocery stores and drug stores also offer the flu vaccine.



For many people, symptoms are similar between the Flu and COVID-19, and the only way to tell is by doing testing for the virus. Here is a handy chart comparing the Flu and COVID-19

	The Flu	COVID-19
Common symptoms	Fever, body aches, chills, headaches, congestion and cough	Fever, body aches, chills, headaches, congestion and cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste
Testing options	Rapid Flu testing readily available	Testing is available, rapid testing is available at some sites.
Onset of symptoms from exposure	1-4 days	2-14 days
Contagious period (approximate)	1 day before symptoms start to 7 days after symptoms start (and 24 hours after resolution of fever)	2 days before symptoms start, to 10 days after symptoms start (if no symptoms, 10 days after + test).
Treatment options	Prescription Influenza anti-viral treatment available	Some treatment options available through clinical trials and/or emergency use authorizations, contact your doctor

Dr. Misa Perron-Burdick

Photo by Mini Anna Photography

Dr. Misa Perron-Burdick is the Medical Director of the Obstetrics, Midwifery, and Gynecology Clinic at SF General Hospital and an Associate Professor at UCSF. She created the SF Patient Pantry out of her Bernal Heights garage, where she lives with her partner, two kids, and a COVID puppy. She was interviewed by Colleen Morgan, a GGMG Magazine contributor and mother of two.

When shelter in place was announced in San Francisco, you set up a free supplies pantry in your garage. What inspired you to do this?

When shelter in place happened, many SF families lost their jobs overnight while the organizations that usually support them were forced to close. I had visions of patients, pregnant or carrying newborns, going from store to store desperately looking for formula and diapers, and these items being sold out or price gouged. I thought, *What if we brought these items to them?*

How did you get started?

I had no idea what to do, so the first place I turned to for help was GGMG. Members were pivotal in getting the effort off the ground. At a time when we were all forced to figure out how to work and school from home, GGMG moms used their precious time to create Amazon wishlists, fundraise, manage correspondence, and coordinate donations. Even at the beginning of the pandemic when everyone was scared of contacting items touched by others, GGMG moms were out there picking up donations, potentially putting themselves and their families at risk. I am so humbled by their bravery and generosity.

How has the pantry changed since its inception?

It started as a pantry for diapers, formula, toilet paper, and hand sanitizer. With generous donations and partnerships, we expanded to food staples and produce boxes. We're now operating out of donated warehouse space and no longer have to deal with produce rolling down the hill in front of my house. With 35 volunteers, we stock eight San Francisco clinics and provide 50 deliveries to patients per week. We just completed our 1,000th delivery.

What have you learned during this process?

I never realized how much labor goes into inspecting donated items to verify they work properly, are clean, and are not expired. It is incredibly helpful when people ensure their donations are in new condition and high quality prior to donating them. Not only does that save us time, but it communicates to the recipient that we value them as part of our SF community. The families we work with are worthy of the same things we all want in our homes. When I assess a donated item, whether it's a vegetable or a toy, I ask myself, *Is this something I would want for my family?*

How can GGMG members contribute to this cause?

There are three volunteer opportunities: pantry volunteers fill orders, restock, and pack food bags; delivery volunteers deliver



supplies to clinics and families; and remote volunteers procure donations, build our website, and coordinate volunteer schedules. Monetary donations are also incredibly helpful: Each dollar goes further when purchasing products through our wholesale partners. More details can be found on our website obgyn.ucsf.edu/san-francisco-general-hospital/covid-19-patient-pantry.

Do you have any advice for a fellow mom who would like to use her resources to support and empower vulnerable communities?

First, research the community organization you'd like to support and trust them to tell you what they need. Second, be creative about how you can funnel resources in their direction, be it time, money, or expertise. The most valuable offers have been those that don't require a lot of time or effort on my part, such as someone designing a logo or hosting a neighborhood food drive. Lastly, mobilize the resources of your whole community! Social media and email listservs make it so easy to do this. In a time of isolation and relentless hardship, this work has broadened and strengthened my community in ways that benefit everyone, not just the families we serve. A sense of community is what defines the spirit of the SF Patient Pantry—that every bag packed, every delivery filled is an act of love and respect.

Know a mom you want to spotlight in the next issue? Email editor@gmg.org with her name, email, and a few sentences about what makes her an awesome mom for our next Member Profile.

Celebrating Life's Quiet Moments

by David Jimenez

How do I celebrate my kids? It's easy. Get some balloons, cake, and ice cream and make a big deal.

But if you were a kid like me, that was the worst thing you could do. I hated the spectacle.

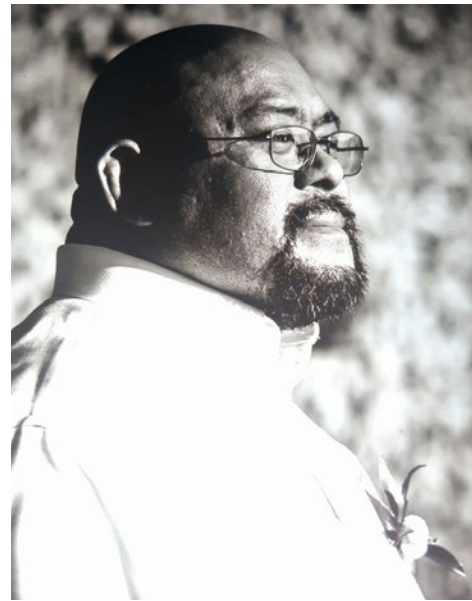
When I found out I was going to be a father, I contemplated this question seriously. The first time I saw her, I knew. She is my eldest daughter. I am now a father to three girls: a 19-year-old college student and twin 14-year-old high school freshmen. They are all outstandingly unique and the reasons why this stoic-faced guy smiles, inside, every day.

Recently, my twins were promoted from eighth grade to high school.

Pre-pandemic, this was one of those events in our town that was a huge deal. All these kids you had seen jumping around at parks, trick-or-treating, walking in parades, selling cookies: they stood at the end of the aisle approaching adulthood. Relief, satisfaction, and pride illuminated their smiles on that day while a tinge of sadness creased their lips as they knew this was the end to some friendships. Those were normal circumstances for my eldest daughter 5 years ago.

In 2020, kids stormed about wondering how they would get anything done after not being on campus for three months. Textbooks had to be returned, gym clothes picked up, and worried thoughts abounded, like "When am I going to get to take pictures with my friends one more time???" Parents and administrators buzzed around frantically trying to make sure these kids had their moment. The day before promotion, the campus dressed up so the kids could congregate one more time for pictures. Teachers recorded sentiments reminiscing on the times they all shared. Afterwards, a car parade passed by each teacher's home, where some waved and laughed toward onlookers, and others danced to their favorite music from behind sealed car windows, memories etched into their minds forever.

Why do all of this? It's not like they are leaving home for at least four more years. As parents, we need to remind our children sometimes how they help us smile. It is easy to get enveloped in big moments, the ones I mentioned earlier, with



balloons and cake and all that. From the moment they enter the world, we glow. There is a reason there is a giant window in the maternity ward. Parents look at their children proudly and boast, "That is my kid."

It's the same feeling our parents expressed when they saw us for the first time. And the same emotion our grandparents had when they looked at our parents. Granted, we more often hear about the hysteria we inflicted on their lives as we grew up. Every time I see my children, I revel in getting to share so much with them. When we go to eat, it is always entertaining because they experience my eclectic palette—being Filipino Portuguese and living in the San Francisco Bay Area.

From burgers to baos, they've always been willing to try everything at least once. Then they go to friends and hear, "You eat that?" I see them turtle up and shine a little less.

It is easy to celebrate when everyone else is swooning around you and blasting confetti. It's these quiet droplets of time when we should celebrate them most. From birth to losing baby teeth to being nervous before performing at the talent show to cooking for the first time to promotions and

"No matter what they do or where they go, I will always boast, 'That is my daughter.' That's how I'll always celebrate the chance to share life with them."

graduations and to trying durian ice cream for the first time, I am always proud of my children.

When they were old enough to understand me, I asked them to do one thing: Be better than your dad. My daughters are strong, amazing young women who surprise me every day. No matter what they do or where they go, I will always boast "That is my daughter." That's how I'll always celebrate the chance to share life with them.

Dave, a native San Franciscan of Filipino-Portuguese descent, grew up in a deeply nurturing family rich in traditions. Now, he enjoys sharing those with his three teenage daughters while discovering traditions in science, art, and food.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Shop for Joy



Our next event coming up on December 3 will be virtual. You will still have an opportunity to chat, sip some wine (BYOB), play some games, buy some great books for your kids, and support a good cause all at the same time. Oh, and did we mention there will be prizes? See you there!

Have you heard anyone talking about Flip 'n' Sips and wondered what they are all about? Have you heard of Usborne books? Usborne and Kane Miller books are high-quality, innovative, lavishly illustrated, and—best of all—books kids love to read! Usborne books representative Deanna Arellano Womack will bring many books to look at and answer questions, while we mingle and sip on wine or another beverage of choice. Fifty percent of the total amount sold is available for us to spend on books to donate to an organization we chose.

GGMG's first Flip 'n' Sip was in May 2019. We earned \$375 in free books, and 40 books were donated to the Homeless Prenatal Program. In November 2019, \$450 was earned, and we donated 45 book and plush sets to Project Night Night. In May 2020, we earned \$850 in free books. We were able to donate over 300 mini books to the Children's Council.



Some of the books donated

CONTEST

Theater in a Box!

The Rabbit Hole is a San Francisco theatrical space where children are exposed to the creative arts in a playful way. Their approach to arts education is to create a whimsical atmosphere that is built around the joy of childhood.

Creativity is a powerful tool that lives inside every human and must be cultivated with wonder and care. The Rabbit Hole centers its program on the importance of imagination and theatrical play, and less time focused on formal technique.

Even during COVID-19, the show must go on! The Rabbit Hole has created Theater in a Box! to bring a show to life in the comfort of your home. The kit combines the best of their studio, and includes set design, craft props, video tutorials, and a specially designed interactive audio show for kids to follow along.

Our first prize is this kit, sure to spark young imaginations, especially children ages 4 to 8. This prize has a value of \$150.

A second lucky winner will win a Bunny Box. Perfect for ages 3 to 6, this is a unique-themed imaginary play kit filled with a selection of our favorite handmade projects that are guaranteed to spark theatrical adventures! This prize has a value of \$55.

Two winners will be picked at random, one for each prize. **Please enter by emailing contest@gmg.org with the subject line "Rabbit" no later than November 15, 2020.** Your contest entry this month automatically enters you for a chance to win both prizes, and a different person will win each prize. To paraphrase parent wisdom, "you get what you get and you don't get upset!"

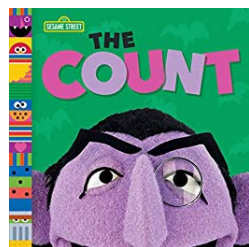
The winner of music lessons from Inspire Music Center in our last issue is **Sarah Baker!** Thanks to all our generous prize donors; please patronize their services!



Halloween & Thanksgiving

By Laure Latham

Demons, pumpkins, apples, ghosts, and vampires—the fall season is what magical stories are made of. Enjoy this selection of books celebrating Halloween and Thanksgiving for kids young and old.



The Count (Sesame Street Friends)

Written by Andrea Posner-Sanchez
Learn all about the Count in this photographic book that shows all the things that the Count loves to do. The first thing young ones need to know is that the Count

loves counting. Counting makes him happy and bat pajamas make him happy too. At the end of this book, you will be ready to discover characters in the Sesame Street universe. **Ages: 0 to 3 years**



It's Halloween, Little Monster

Written by Helen Ketteman, illustrated by Bonnie Leick
Going trick-or-treating for the first time can be scary. Dressed in green as a Martian from space, Little Monster and his papa venture out on Little

Monster Street where all trick-or-treaters are monsters themselves. Becoming braver with Papa's help, Little Monster learns to face his fears as they enjoy this slightly scary Halloween. **Ages: 2 to 5 years**

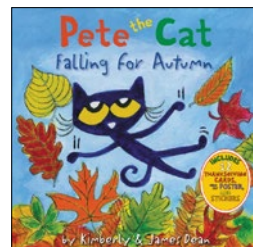


A Silly Milly Fall: Halloween and Thanksgiving with a Really Big Dog!

Written by Sheri Wall, illustrated by Ilona Stuijt
Big Dane lovers, this book is for you!

Milly loves fall and is ready to enjoy its wonderful traditions. Whether by dressing in pink for Halloween or jumping in leaves, this big dog's love for life is contagious. Clever rhymes (the book is all limericks) and gorgeous illustrations make this the perfect autumn read for little ones. As a bonus, you can follow the real Silly Milly from Texas on Instagram @sillymillythedane.

Ages: 3 to 6 years



Pete the Cat: Falling for Autumn

Written by James Dean and Kimberly Dean, illustrated by James Dean
If you love the warm days of late summer and dread the colder seasons, you will love this book. Pete the Cat isn't sure about the

changing of the seasons from summer to autumn. But when he discovers corn mazes, hayrides, and apple picking, Pete realizes there's so much to enjoy and be thankful for about autumn. Including 12 cards, a poster and stickers, this book is a fun read to share as a family around Thanksgiving.

Ages 3 to 8 years



Mr. Moonbeam and the Halloween Crystal

Written by Ryan Cowan
Elliott attends third grade in the town of Wolf's End, but unlike the other kids, he and his family are witches from a place called Moonstone. When Elliott's teacher, Mr. Moonbeam, discovers that Elliott might be a psychic, he warns him to keep

his powers secret. As Halloween approaches, they learn that an evil warlock is attempting to find the Halloween Crystal that would allow him to unleash all the evil of the world onto magical and non-magical worlds alike. The magic-fueled battle between good and evil will appeal to young readers.

Ages: 8 to 11 years



Cemetery Boys

Written by Aiden Thomas
After sensing that his cousin Miguel died without being located, a trans boy is determined to prove to his family that he belongs in a long line of brujx who have been granted magic power by Lady Death to heal the living and to guide spirits into the afterlife. Excluded by his

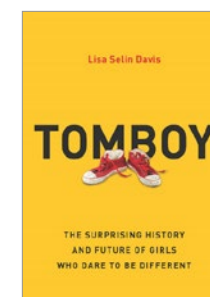
family because of his gender, he summons a ghost, thinking that he's releasing his cousin's lost spirit—except it's another boy who died the same day and his ghost refuses to leave.

Ages: 13+ years

Laure is the author of the mommy blog *Frog Mom* (frogmom.com), as well as the book *Best Hikes with Kids: San Francisco Bay Area*. She writes for several parenting websites and lives in London, where she peppers adventures with her husband and two daughters with compulsory cream tea stops. You can find her on social media @frogmomblog.

One Word Says It All

By Gail Cornwall



Tomboy: The Surprising History and Future of Girls Who Dare to Be Different

Lisa Selin Davis wrote an op-ed for *The New York Times* entitled, "My Daughter Is Not Transgender. She's a Tomboy." In it, she raises the specter that "we might be confusing cisgender girls with

stereotypically masculine interests with those who needed to transition, socially or medically—and in the process telling them that they're not actually girls, and thus narrowing that category." Her book is in some sense a lengthy reply to the criticism that followed, and she sums it up well: "If the word and idea of 'tomboy' are problematic, they are symptoms of a much larger problem: the problem of hyper-gendering of childhood."

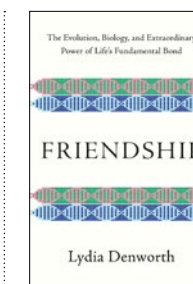
With that, Davis leads a guided hike through gender terrain trod by others before her. But there's new stuff too. Did you know the word "tomboy" has a connection to eugenics, "once referred to a boisterous boy or an adult woman's sexuality," and had a heyday in the 1800s before the 1970s one? Feminist parents may be relieved when their daughters drop the princess phase, Davis says, but really what it means is they've internalized sexism: "[A]sserting a tomboyish side [is] a way to push themselves higher on the status ladder."

Davis agrees, albeit in a begrudging and belabored way, with trans advocates who suggest the terms "gender nonconforming" and "nonbinary" can encapsulate tomboys: "It's as if all those words and ideas have been superglued, so the one way to break them apart, to be free of gender stereotypes, is to get rid of the boxes and blow up the gender binary altogether." But still, she writes, "The feminist in me couldn't help questioning why we couldn't widen that girl category.... Did it have to be abandoned in order for people to feel free to be themselves?"

She left me feeling torn too, and yet, hopeful. If the historical trajectory of the word "tomboy" ultimately teaches us anything, it's that "it is possible to steer the big ship of our culture toward more gender-equitable parenting."

That said, Davis needs a wee bit of help at the helm, having unquestioningly cited disputed research on innate differences between boys and girls before puberty. But she nails the dismount: "The way we've gendered childhood is a construction, not rooted in biological differences between sexes. Still, what is constructed becomes reality, so much so that we abide by the divisions of our invention as if they are unassailable truths."

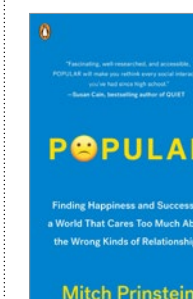
Gail works as a mom and writer in San Francisco. Read about parenting and education from the perspective of a former teacher and lawyer at gailcornwall.com/articles or by finding her on Facebook and Twitter



Friendship: The Evolution, Biology, and Extraordinary Power of Life's Fundamental Bond

Lydia Denworth tackles "life's fundamental bond" in *Friendship*, a 2020 book that reads like butter as it explains the science behind what we know to be true: our friends can be lifesavers, literally.

(And she gets bonus points for covering kids' friendships and friendship in schools.)



Popular: Finding Happiness and Success in a World That Cares Too Much About the Wrong Kinds of Relationships

Did you know there are two types of popularity? While the word "popular" is most often used as synonymous with "high status," Mitch Prinstein explains

why kids and adults alike would do well to shift their focus to its other incarnation: likable.

I liked it. I liked him. Prinstein alternates anecdote and data to produce that rarest of birds: the nonfiction page-turner.



Range

If someone accused me of saving the best for last, I'd have trouble mounting a defense. "Whether it is the story of Tiger Woods or the Yale law professor known as the Tiger Mother, the message is the same: choose early, focus narrowly, never waver," David J. Epstein writes, but "research in myriad areas suggests that mental meandering and personal

experimentation are sources of power...The challenge we all face is how to maintain the benefits of breadth, diverse experience, interdisciplinary thinking, and delayed concentration in a world that increasingly incentivizes, even demands, hyperspecialization." He makes a strong case (with lots of fascinating mental detours) that the path to a Nobel Prize may indeed be gluing plastic forks to a Post-it affixed to a coat hanger while a distance learning Zoom sits half-listened to.

Big Changes, Small Joys

By Jean Liu

“**W**hat the...” I mumbled to myself as I looked at the almost empty shelves of baby wipes at Target. I grabbed the last multipack of Huggies sensitive wipes and headed over to the cashier. Mayor London Breed had just announced that at midnight, San Francisco was going to shelter in place. I had no idea what the city’s version of lockdown was going to look like or how long it was going to last, but I thought we should have at least a few weeks’ worth of baby supplies.

I’ve lived through the 2003 SARS epidemic in Southeast Asia, and that is something I didn’t want to have to go through again, especially while pregnant. My husband and I were already taking precautions weeks before the first outbreak was reported in California. We were wearing masks while doing grocery shopping, earning lots of weird looks along the way. I had gotten a letter from my ObGyn to work from home for the remainder of my pregnancy so that I could avoid riding BART every day. We were living cautiously with hope that life would return to normal in a few months.

As we all know, that hasn’t happened. There is now a new “normal.” I knew that things were going to be different and challenging, but I didn’t realize how different and challenging they would be. First, our baby shower was cancelled. Then, my monthly pregnancy group meetings led by a UCSF midwife were cancelled, and the much-anticipated tour of the birthing center was postponed and then cancelled. Appointments were now single-person only. My husband drove us to the first one and then waited in the parking lot for my video call.

I was constantly worried that UCSF would change the visitor policy for delivering moms from one visitor to zero. My midwife was very reassuring that it was unlikely to change and told us that besides the new restricted visitor policy, recovery times were also reduced to one night postpartum and food was restricted to what the hospital cafeteria could provide. She was very calm and patient with our questions. So, with nothing else to do, we packed our go bag and waited for the day.



The day came very slowly and then the delivery also progressed very slowly. I labored for over two days (thank goodness for the epidural) with the goal of not having a C-section, as I didn’t want the complications of a surgical recovery on top of everything else. Everything I needed was taken care of and the food was impressive. When we found out the baby wasn’t in the optimal position, they moved me around and did positional massages to help her into the best spot. Finally, it was time. I did not have the luxury of pushing for an hour or less; I pushed for 5 hours (with an asthma attack). Again, the care team was amazing and

listened to me when I told them what I could or could not do, and together, we delivered my daughter into this very interesting world.

We spent an additional two nights for observation due to complications of my long labor. Fortunately, everything checked out and we went home to navigate the next chapter of our life as a family of three. The first month was the toughest. We couldn’t figure out why she was crying so much, what we should do to soothe her, or how to put her down “drowsy but awake.” Our friends who are parents tried to help but verbal advice only got us so far.

Four months later there have been heatwaves, protests, wildfires, and orange skies that turned the day into night. No matter what happens, our daughter continues to amaze us and gives us hope every single day. Like the day she smiled at us for real or when she laughed while getting splashed in the bath. On the days when the air is healthy, we’ll go for walks as a family at the Botanical Gardens. We take each day as it comes and try to make the best of it. She won’t remember any of this but she’ll have a digital journal to look back on when she’s older. Hopefully it’ll be less “this disaster happened today” and more “you had fun with friends” soon.

Jean is mom to not one, but two feisty and compassionate daughters. She spends her time (when she isn’t navigating a global pandemic) exploring San Francisco and the surrounding Bay Area for new adventures with her kids and husband.

“No matter what happens, our daughter continues to amaze us and gives us hope every single day.”

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Let's Celebrate! Not Everything Is Canceled

Having something to look forward to will save you

By Clare Deignan



At 98, my grandmother still knows how to throw a party. Born on the west coast of Ireland in a thatched roof house with no running water or electricity, my grandmother has seen a lot of change. Leaving home at a young age, immigrating to the United States, surviving the murder of her son and the death of her husband too young, I'm taken aback when my grandmother tells me, "These are unprecedented times." I remind her she lived through Hitler and the Cuban Missile Crisis. She says, "Yes, but *these* are unprecedented times."

COVID-19 is taking its toll. A study conducted in June 2020 from the *Centers*

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that more than 40 percent of participants (18 and older) are experiencing one mental or behavioral health issue. It's worse for young people (18 to 24), whose rates reached 60 percent.

Pre-COVID-19, once a week, Grandma and I would go to lunch with my daughters. Now, our weekly visits are a short wave with masks on, her standing at her door and me at the bottom of the stairs. My daughters yell, "Hi, Grandma!" from the car. It's just not the same.

Still as sharp as a tack, whenever I ask my grandmother how she survived the struggles of her life, she tells me:

crossword puzzles, good movies, and doing something for other people. My grandmother also emphasizes the importance of having something to look forward to in the future. And Grandma loves to look forward to a party. She calls her family up, gets everyone together, and we celebrate.

According to research, my grandmother is correct. Socializing and celebrating with others is good for our physical and mental health. An article from the *Mayo Clinic's News Network* reports that isolation can lead to depression and other mental health issues. Whereas socialization, even virtually, can boost your memory, make you happier, and—you guessed it—increase

your lifespan. So, let's celebrate!

Wait, not so fast.

With COVID-19 guidelines and San Francisco officials discouraging trick-or-treating this Halloween and other Bay Area counties following suit, to some, it may seem easier not to plan much this holiday season. Numerous reports of depression and grief from 2020 graduates indicate that the consequences of minimizing the holidays could be detrimental for kids and adults alike.

Graduation canceled

The words "confusion, frustration, and disappointment" define the 2020 graduation season, says San Francisco mom, Jeanette. This past June, her senior in high school and eighth grader graduated without any pomp and circumstance. Both students were excited to graduate in 2020, but no one could have guessed there wouldn't be graduation celebrations this year.

"I think the hardest part was the yo-yo effect and all the changes," shares Jeanette, who thinks the impact will affect her children for a long time. Her daughter's high school tried to plan some form of an event for prom. It was canceled. Then, it was moved to summer. It was canceled. The school attempted to organize a drive-thru graduation. It was canceled. By the time they did organize a socially distanced outside graduation, her daughter's vacation plans conflicted and she couldn't join.

It was similar for her eighth grader. A ceremony was planned with only pairs of students graduating at a time. A few days before, it was a no-go. The school even tried to plan a late summer celebration. It didn't happen.

After nine years at one school, her eighth grader took it hard. "With two older siblings who attended the same school, my daughter knew the last months are the most fun part of grammar school. She knows exactly what she missed out on," Jeanette adds.

Her graduation was just a drive-thru diploma pick up through the car window. Only one parent could attend. No cap, no gown, and no handshake.

"The day she picked up her diploma, I think all of the sadness came out and she just started crying. It was pretty heartbreaking," recalls Jeanette. Her daughter didn't want to celebrate, but to mark the occasion with a simple afternoon out with a close friend.

Jeanette's high school senior handled it differently, celebrating with her closest friends and a graduation photo shoot. Draped in their graduation gowns with stunning San Francisco views, Jeanette's daughter and her friends tossed their caps in the air.

Both students have started new schools and they've accepted their eighth grade and senior years are over.

Jeanette says they've been lucky to have extended family close during the pandemic. It's eased the isolation and disappointment. Her kids have cousins within walking distance, and they've

"Suburbia has never been so lonely. We can see and hear children playing, but my child cannot play with them."

created their own informal social bubble. Jeanette is finding this will come in handy this holiday season. It may not be the big celebrations of years past but at least they'll be with family.

"Community is my lifeline," says Jeanette. Since a close family member overcame cancer during the pandemic, she shares, "We have all experienced how short life can be. Celebrating life is so important, even during COVID-19."

Snap decision saves holidays

Not everyone is so lucky to have close friends and family to celebrate this holiday season. Bay Area mom Ally says, "Suburbia has never been so lonely. We can see and hear children playing, but my child cannot play with them."



Older parents who have struggled with respiratory issues, Ally and her husband aren't taking any risks during the pandemic. Work allows Ally to interact with the outside world, but due to layoffs and school closures, her husband and daughter are isolated.

"A few times, my daughter has sat in the living room staring out the window watching the little girl next door jump on the trampoline with other kids without masks," she recalls.

Ally notes explaining risk tolerance to a child is not a simple task. She tells her

daughter that they all could have been tested, they could be in a cluster or a pod, or they could just not be taking the same safety precautions. But Ally stresses, "My daughter just wants to play."

She points out the complications that come with socializing during COVID-19. Finding families to "pod-up" has proved difficult. "I've approached a number of different families to start a pod and they're either already "podded-up" or our risk tolerances don't match," shares Ally.

Although her family began planning Halloween costumes in July, Ally admits it's a challenge to keep up the enthusiasm. With the isolation growing and holidays drawing closer, Ally and her family decided to move to a rural intentional community to wait out the rest of the pandemic.



“We made a snap decision and I’m excited about celebrating Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s in a rural location where people want to be together and are already thinking about how to do that safely.”

Play is a primary need

This year with Halloween decorations popping up especially early, spooky tinsel, bats, ghosts, and witches on brooms remind us that there is fun to be had, even if this year it will have to look a bit different.

Licensed Marriage Family Therapist and founder of SF Bay Play Therapy Karen Wolfe says, “The aspects of the holidays that are play are essential because play is one of the most important ways that we feel connected to ourselves, that we feel connected to others and that the brain actually grows.”

Wolfe elaborates, “Play is a primary need. The definition of play is essentially anything we do for its own sake and that we want to keep doing.” Wolfe continues, “And in terms of families, parents and children, play aids in a sense of lightening the load, and the load is so heavy right now for all of us.”

According to Wolfe, it’s crucial for parents to act as a “safe harbor” and a “protective shield” for their children. She

doesn’t mean that parents hide the truth about the pandemic, but create a “safe harbor” of normalcy, routine, and play which can become a “protective shield” during this difficult time.

“I really encourage families to fill their home with these smells of the holidays. Our sense of smell is the most viscerally connected sense to our emotions and our earliest memories.” Keeping in mind any allergy sensitivities, Wolfe suggests, “With so much darkness in our world right now, these smells can bring us a sense of hope that everything is going to be okay.”

Social media, parenting blogs, and news headlines promise tips on how we can “save” the holidays this year, even while wearing masks and keeping six feet apart. Wolfe thinks anyone can use the internet to research and plan how to celebrate with friends and family. Rather than just scrolling through Pinterest, she encourages parents to start closer to the heart and look to their own childhood memories for favorite traditions to share.

Wolfe breaks it down into three parts:

1. Normalcy: What traditions do you already celebrate every year during the holidays?
2. Co-creation: What would you like to do or what would be fun this year?
3. Something to look forward to: Plan fun

At time of publication, GGGM Magazine learned the intentional community Ally and her family were moving to burned down during a California wildfire. They continue to live in their Bay Area home and are reassessing their holiday plans.

family activities and playtime that build excitement and hope.

“If parents are feeling very demoralized, having something celebratory to focus on can also help them,” Wolfe adds. “Making sure to celebrate your family’s traditions and create some new ones could provide protection from the feeling that the whole world is falling apart, and that not all of life is canceled.”

Reach out

Karen Wolfe quotes British psychologist John Bowlby: “The most powerful instinct of all is to reach for another human being.” Bowlby’s words seem completely contradictory for a time when touching is discouraged. But, they are a powerful directive when isolation is encouraged. And in 2020, there are various virtual ways to connect creatively so no one has to miss out.

Following John Bowlby’s advice, I texted my family asking, “How can we make Halloween playful and fun this year?” Whether it’s through a virtual haunted house, Zoom costume contest, texting silly photos of pretend trick-or-treating, or dropping off treats at each other’s houses, we will find a way to celebrate. And, they’re already brainstorming ideas for Thanksgiving. The little ones need something to look forward to and the big ones do, too.

No matter what we’ll do, I know my little family will end Halloween as we always do, visiting my Grandma at her house. This year we’ll be waving from the bottom of Grandma’s stairs: a six-year-old ladybug and a three-year-old reluctant Elmo, (of course wearing a mask) yelling, “Trick-or-Treat!” There won’t be as many treats this year—but by gosh, they’ll be Halloween and one we won’t forget.

Clare is a freelance journalist and mother of two.

If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health issues, contact Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, SAMHSA’s National Helpline, 1.800.662.HELP (4357).

The CDC offers guidance on COVID-19 related grief and loss including loss of milestones and special events. Learn more at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).



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50 Reasons to Celebrate Our City Right Now

Despite the challenges of the current pandemic, there is still lots to love about this place we call home.

By Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss



Countless news articles have drawn attention to city flight as San Francisco residents seek more affordable housing, larger living spaces, and outdoor access amidst a global pandemic. But what about those of us who refuse to leave this place we call home and have decided to stay? What is it about San Francisco that keeps us here even as current conditions make some of what we used to enjoy about city life a distant memory?

"[We have] so many different things to do in close geographic vicinity. Whether it's walks around the city, going to the beach, driving over mountains, hikes in natural spaces. Everything is all

within an hour (or less!) of our house," says Genny Bee May-Montt, a current member of the SF Longtimers group on Facebook. What started as monthly meetups to patronize classic SF hotspots like Trad'r Sam, Tommy's Joynt, and The Old Clam House has now evolved into a group that virtually celebrates what we still have and educates one another on local policy issues.

Below you'll find (50) specific and uniquely San Francisco things to revel in, based on the perspectives of local moms who have decided to stay put. What makes this city still one of the most incredible places to live?



The city's pandemic response

By and large, the Longtimer moms expressed satisfaction with the (1) city's ability to respond swiftly and effectively to the current crisis. According to Holly Coombs, one thing that has made her glad to be sheltering in place in San Francisco is that "our public officials and fellow citizens are actually using science to guide health decisions affecting our city, its people, and reopening plans."

Others mentioned our (2) state-of-the-art hospital systems. "I feel this is one of the safest cities to be in during this pandemic,"

says Kristen Ana, also a member of the SF Longtimers group. "Our city's hospitals are some of the best in the nation."

Sarah Elbogen, a mom and nurse in San Francisco, also mentioned the (3) responsible mask wearing she has observed while out and about in the city. "Having talked to friends who live elsewhere, I am immensely grateful how compliant everyone has been with wearing masks and keeping distance," commented Elbogen.

Any parent of a public school student also has been given the opportunity to secure not only a (4) free laptop for each

"There is much to mourn and be frustrated about, but in San Francisco especially, there is so much more to celebrate and keep us all hopeful."



child in their household, but also a (5) hotspot to aid with Internet connectivity. This is all thanks to generous donations by local tech companies who worked with the San Francisco Unified School District to ensure every single public school child in SF was given the technology required to participate in distance learning, regardless of demonstrated financial need.

Outdoor adventure

Whether it's sweeping views of the city from the top of a hill, or a quick day trip to the coast, San Francisco offers a vast number of choices for outdoor fun.

Going on the little hikes around (6) Mount Sutro or through (7) Glen Canyon

Park and the (8) Twin Peaks overlook were among the favorite city spots.

"(9) Ocean Beach at low tide on a hot day... You can stare at and count the birds, look out for other wildlife. The kids can run around in inch deep water. It's a super happy time," mentioned Coombs. (10) Baker Beach is another favorite, with striking views of the Golden Gate Bridge in the background and massive cargo ships coming and going.

(11) Golden Gate Park isn't going anywhere. You have everything: from closed-off bicycle and running paths to large fields to enjoy a socially distanced picnic, endless hiking trails, paddle boats, gardens, and more. You can also explore the funky buildings and trees and places to walk around in the (12) Presidio while catching a glimpse of the Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz Island from afar.

Also, despite a freak heat wave here and there, we still have some of the most (13) consistent weather in the nation, making outdoor plans a breeze, at least when there's no smoke.

Dining and entertainment favorites prevail

Residents of SF have long enjoyed the impressive array of dining establishments from all parts of the globe. The current pandemic might have put the pause button on some of these establishments, but slowly many have found creative ways to operate. (14) Microbreweries like Bare Bottle and Thirsty Bear continued to offer their famous growlers during the strictest shelter-in-place





orders and now outdoor sampling thanks to a new city ordinance allowing temporary patios to be built on the streets. A few **(15) full-street closures** on weekends allow diners to spread out and eat up.

And if you want to combine both delicious takeout and some classic SF entertainment, why not patronize the new **(16) Meals on Heels** program and have a drag queen come bring you some brunch, thanks to our favorite drag queen venue, OASIS. Or you can get a **(17) free pizza-making kit** from Pizza Express for your children.

Finally, for a unique and probably much needed haircut, the SOMA StrEat Food Park has recently launched their new **(18) Barber Collective** initiative, which brings together some of the best hairstylists in the city into their unique outdoor food truck space. Enjoy a cold beer, pulled pork sandwich, and come out freshly shorn. For some free comedy, you can find weekly **(19) Friday Night Outdoor Comedy** with Mutiny FM.

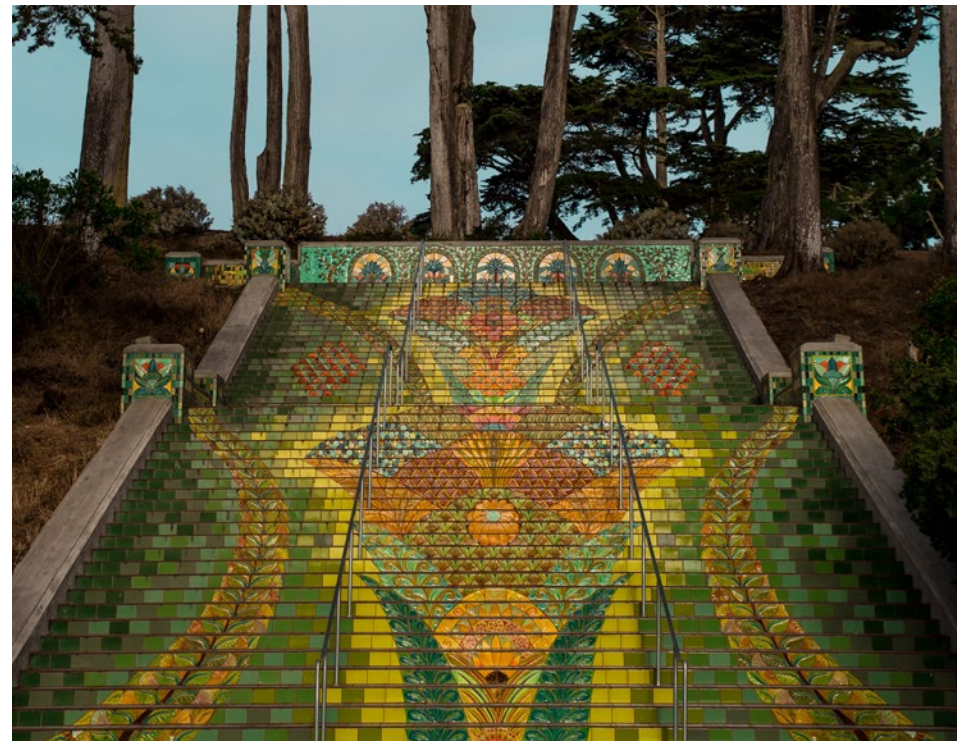
Soulful outings and classes

There are still plenty of places to visit and get a tiny dose of something joyful. **(20) The Douglass Street Dog Park** offers some of the best views in the city and a massive, tree-filled space for furry friends to congregate. Our **(21) farmers markets** city-wide continue to deliver fresh produce several times a week, giving us access to plenty of nutritious food. Enjoy an **(22) outdoor yoga class** on Crissy Field through Outdoor Yoga SF. Countless

(23) bootcamps have cropped up throughout the city as well, everywhere from the Marina Green to Dolores Park and Kezar Stadium. Aspiring skateboarders can learn the intricacies of the perfect Ollie with **(24) Golden Gate Skateboarding**.

Alternative transportation

Even with COVID-19 making public transportation and ride shares a little less optimal, San Francisco residents can still enjoy some impressive transportation options. “We can bike everywhere!” states Elbogen. With significantly less traffic in the city and a vast system of **(25) dedicated bike-only lanes** throughout major thoroughfares, biking has become an even more appealing option and a chance to explore different routes and neighborhoods you might not have seen. Thanks to companies like Uber, Lime, and Spin, **(26) electric scooters** have also become a great outdoor option to get from one place to the next. Also, the **(27) Great Highway** is now closed off to traffic and has become a favorite for families looking for some exercise and an opportunity to get their bike trips going along the coast. Finally, through the **(28) San Francisco Slow Streets initiative**, residents throughout the city have enjoyed leisurely strolling, roller skating, and jogging opportunities with plenty of space to stay apart.



Wildlife

Who knew you might encounter a rich array of wildlife in an urban setting like San Francisco? Our impressive **(29) bird-watching opportunities** mean on any given day, you can observe flocks of parrots, circling hawks, and even an owl by the bison patch in Golden Gate Park. Oh, right. We also have **(30) bison** in this city! And plenty of Bernal residents delight in **(31) daily coyote sightings** out and about in the neighborhood. You don’t have to go specifically to Fisherman’s Wharf anymore to see **(32) sea lions**—they appear spontaneously at any of the city’s beaches as well. Finally, though not technically wild, did you know San Francisco periodically brings in **(33) herds of goats** to help keep some of our wild grasses shorn? Visit citygrazing.org to learn more about their latest conquests in the city.

Neighborhood whimsy

People have found creative ways to connect and showcase their talents. Rebecca Pollak Kee—mother of two and head of school at Potrero Kids—has sponsored a neighborhood **(34) Cookie Slide** and **(35) Silent Disco** for Bernal residents. Fellow neighbor Natalie Mead has been hosting a **(36) weekly “I Spy” game** in front of her home by hiding five similar objects for kids to find from a

distance. Eleven-year-old Ella Klein has been posting weekly **(37) window puzzles** for locals to solve in her Haight-Ashbury neighborhood.

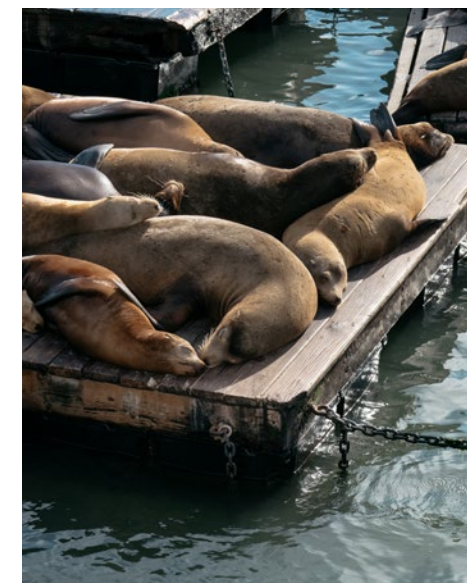
The Noe Valley Neighborhood Association sponsored a massive **(38) Noe Valley Scavenger Hunt** this summer, with clues accessed over a website. Magical **(39) fairy doors** appear throughout Noe Valley as well, complete with their own union! Other hunts have included rainbows, teddy bears, and the now-famous **(40) artist fnnch honey bears**.

Whether it’s a neighborhood band dragging a few instruments out on the sidewalk, a balcony opera show by a solo artist, or a nearby restaurant that decided to ramp up their sidewalk scene with some live music, **(41) impromptu concerts** are popping up all over the place as well.

Our schools might be closed, but the yards are still open for some playdates thanks to the **(42) Shared Schoolyard Project**. Kids can still get a small sense of normalcy playing in their beloved outdoor campus space on weekends.

Arts, culture, and education

(43) Collaborative art projects have emerged during this time as well, such as spontaneous string art appearing on the gates on top of Bernal Hill. The Tenderloin Play Streets initiative sponsored by the organization CounterPulse offers safe arts activities and a drumming circle every Saturday. **(44) The SF Art Institute** is projecting old movies on their iconic building in Russian Hill. Finally, the Bernal



Outdoor Cinema Association has just announced that they will continue their film festival this year as a **(45) drive-in movie** theater option at the Alemany Market.

(46) Little free libraries can be spotted throughout the city, offering residents the opportunity to purge already read books and discover new ones for free. SF MOMA and the Asian Art Museum are providing **(47) free museum entry** to city residents to kick off their reopening. For some continued outdoor art gazing, there’s no better destination than **(48) the Mission murals**. Also, don’t forget our city still offers **(49) free City College tuition** to all residents, something uniquely special about our city.

(50) The people

The people of San Francisco are by and large a major common theme as well. “The kindness of others in this city is what most stands out,” says Ana. “People are respecting guidelines but also being friendly. Whenever we’re out people keep their distance but they still wave or say hi. It makes me feel like we’re all in this together.”

Tania Shah agrees. “Parents here help each other, even if they don’t know each other. If someone posts that they need last-minute urgent childcare (pre Covid), people would offer to watch the kids, or if someone posts a need in Buy Nothing Families, often there are several quick replies.” Buy Nothing is a Facebook group where members can both purge unwanted items, sparing our landfills, and get items

for free. People of all income levels and backgrounds participate; it is truly open and available to all.

Our city is strong, resilient, and uniquely quirky enough to get us through these tough times and keep us laughing, entertained, and fulfilled if we keep our eyes open long enough. There is much to mourn and be frustrated about, but in San Francisco especially, there is so much more to celebrate and keep us all hopeful.

Jennifer is a mom of two and founding member of the SF Longtimers Group. When she is not justifying to family her reasons for not moving back East anytime soon, you can find her enjoying sweeping views of SF on top of Bernal Hill with her dog, Nugget. Find out more at jenniferkuhrbutterfoss.com.



Due to the ongoing shelter-in-place and related COVID-19 shutdowns, we are not planning events more than 3 to 4 weeks ahead. As things slowly start to open back up, and we add more events, we will update the events calendar on the GGMG website as well as the GGMG Facebook page. Hope you are all safe and healthy.

Mommies with Toddlers Virtual Meetup

Looking to meet other GGMG moms with similarly aged kids? We're looking for the proud owner of a toddler! Nothing will make or break you like the fierce and passionate love of this little one. We're so excited to connect mamas who are walking the journey of motherhood with littles 12 to 24 months of age. Let's combine forces and discuss everything: learning to walk and talk, jumping and going downstairs, picky eating and teething, or even throwing food at the dinner table.

Our host is Dr. Deana Rosaia, a Physical Therapist and Pediatric Clinical Specialist. A wife, mama of two amazing kids, lover of Extra Toasty Cheez-Its, founder and owner of Next Small Step Pediatric Physical Therapy & Wellness, and creator of the Milestone Savvy Mommas infant development program, she has 10+ years experience empowering mamas to understand all the tips and tricks to support milestone development.

Date: Wednesday, October 14, 21, 28
Time: 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
Place: Zoom Call
Cost: FREE for members, \$10 for non-members. Fees paid for the event can be counted toward GGMG annual membership fee.



Virtual Moms Night IN Every Last Wednesday

Come hang every month at our Virtual Moms Night In via Zoom! Wine, pajamas, messy bun—all accepted. No agenda, just hanging out and connecting with each other. This will be the last Wednesday of every month.

Date: October 28, November 25
Time: 8 to 9 p.m.
Place: Zoom Call
Cost: FREE

Virtual Playgroup Formation Mixer

You've become a mom—or will have a baby soon. Congratulations! You've embarked on the treacherous and rewarding journey of motherhood, but you don't have to walk alone. Sign up for GGMG's Virtual Playgroup Formation Mixer and meet the women who will support you along the way.

In this newly revamped Playgroup Formation Mixer, we are inviting expert panelists to join us and talk about their collaborative classes with GGMG that you might be interested in. We're also holding a raffle for attendees, prizes of which include postnatal yoga classes, baby sign language classes, and such.

Please sign up and answer the survey questions. We will organize you into playgroups by your neighborhood and child's age, so that when the world goes back to normal, you will have ready-made playgroups that are convenient for in-person meet-ups.

On November 21 at 4 p.m., we will host an informational meeting via Zoom for all RSVP'd attendees. On November 22 and 23, each of the newly formed playgroups will connect via Zoom at a TBD time to meet one another virtually. We encourage you to hold these virtual playdates regularly until you are able to come together in person.

This event is targeted to new moms with infants under 1 year old. We encourage any mom who would like to meet other moms to sign up, and we will do our best to place you with moms you can connect with.

Kindly **RSVP by November 14** so that we can organize you into playgroups before the virtual event. Once the playgroups are organized, you will receive a Zoom invitation for the informational meeting on November 21 and an invitation with the time and date of your individual playgroup's meeting. Questions? Get in touch with us at me@ggm.org.

Date: Saturday, November 21
Time: 4 p.m.
Place: Zoom Call
Cost: FREE

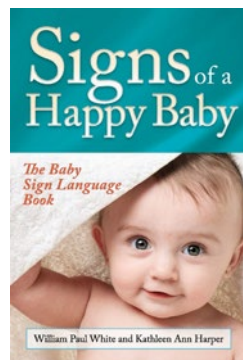
Baby Sign Language—Learn a New Language and Socialize with Other Parents

Stop guessing what your baby is trying to tell you and learn how to sign with your baby in Happy Baby Signs' six-day workshops.

This course is aimed at expectant parents through parents of 18-month-olds, though toddlers and preschoolers are welcome, too. On Wednesdays from 3 to 4 p.m. Baby Sign Language gives babies the opportunity to communicate long before they can verbalize their wants and needs. Fun activities and songs will show you how easy it is to integrate simple signs into your everyday routine to jump-start your child's verbal skills. Signing with babies accelerates language acquisition, reduces frustration, enhances a child's self esteem, and deepens the bond between parent and child.

Teacher Bill White is the founder of the Happy Baby Signs and co-author with Kathleen Harper of *Signs of a Happy Baby*. He has facilitated baby sign language programs at Kaiser Permanente, Dignity Health, Sutter Health Hospitals, Harmony Birth and Family, Blossom Birth and Family, Stanford Work-Life, Cisco Systems, Children's Creative Learning Centers, Genentech, Bright Horizons Family Solutions, and multiple libraries and mothers' clubs.

Date: Wednesday, November 26 to Wednesday, December 30
Time: 3 to 4 p.m.
Place: Zoom Call
Cost: \$30 for members, \$75 for non-members. Fees paid for the event can be counted toward GGMG annual membership fee.



CAREER & ENTREPRENEURSHIP EVENT

Build Your Personal Brand: How to Master the 4 Cs to Brand Clarity

Want to stand out from the crowd when you apply for a job or are vying for that promotion? Whether you are making a career change, re-entering the workforce after a break, or just hoping to grow your career, you won't want to miss this free webinar presented by Marietta Gentles Crawford, an expert on personal branding and LinkedIn. You will learn how to identify your strengths and translate those into a personal and professional brand, position yourself for a career change, overcome the challenge of a career gap, and learn how to use your personal brand to overcome any weaknesses in your candidacy. Learn the simple strategies you can use to communicate your unique value so you can confidently elevate your personal brand and access high-caliber opportunities (with ease). Marietta has 15 years of experience working with Fortune 500 companies as a trainer and writer. A recording will be sent to those who cannot attend live.

Date: Friday, December 4
Time: 12 to 1 p.m.
Place: Zoom Call
RSVP: <https://www.ggm.org/calendar/event/465327/2020/12/04>

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REGISTER FOR EVENTS AT GGMG.ORG/CALENDAR UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Land Acknowledgement

In September, the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) committee hosted a training on Land Acknowledgement that was open to all GGMG members. Land Acknowledgement is a way to honor the people who lived on the land before you. It can be a formal recognition at an event or a private practice before a family meal. As Meztli Projects, an Indigenous-based arts & culture collaborative explains, “practicing land acknowledgments can help us begin a process of reconciling how the majority of our existence is a continual displacement of Indigenous Peoples.”

While Ohlone peoples lived all over the Bay Area, San Francisco sits on Ramaytush Ohlone land. The living descendants of the Ramaytush Ohlone comprise The Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, which is “dedicated to researching, revitalizing, and preserving Ramaytush Ohlone history and culture.” You can learn more, including the ways that they are continuing their work, at www.ramaytush.com.

While there are lots of ways to practice Land Acknowledgment, for large events, consider including someone from the local Indigenous peoples to lead the Land Acknowledgement. Reach out to them far in advance, offer an honorarium, and ask how to include a call to action. Even if you aren’t holding events, organizations can include acknowledgments in virtual events or on digital or printed literature. The goal is to foster a deep and genuine relationship, so ask about ways to support them moving forward. Metzli Project explains how best to hold a Land Acknowledgement: <https://bit.ly/343z22B>.

Looking to do more? There are so many ways that individuals and families can incorporate Land Acknowledgment into their own practice. A first step is to regularly practice Land Acknowledgement by looking up the land that you live on, or are visiting, to know more about the Indigenous people who lived on that land first: native-land.ca. Create a Land Acknowledgement poster with your child and on the bottom or top of the poster write “This is _____ Land”, after doing research on whose land you are a guest on. This is a great everyday visual reminder. Another way is to incorporate music, such as “This is Ohlone Land” from the kid-focused social justice Hip Hop group Alphabet Rockers: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdAxTSkexdo. Some people and organizations choose to pay a land tax. Any way that you incorporate Land Acknowledgment, the goal is to heal and lift up Indigenous peoples.



This map does not represent or intend to represent official or legal boundaries of any Indigenous nations. To learn about definitive boundaries, contact the nations in question.

via <https://commons.wikimedia.org>, user Noahedits

SisterWeb Wrapup

This summer the D&I committee engaged in a Donation Matching for SisterWeb, raising \$5,122 together with GGMG member contributions and the Diversity & Inclusion committee’s matching funds! Thank you so much for all the generous donations to SisterWeb and supporting Black maternal and infant health.

SisterWeb’s mission is to build culturally rich neighborhoods in San Francisco and help Black, Latinx, and Pacific Islander pregnant people and individuals welcome children with joy and pride. Established in March 2019, SisterWeb works to remove “Black or brown” as a risk factor for mortality and morbidity, while highlighting structural racism as the biggest threat to wellness through awareness, education, and one-on-one support. Their programs strive to boost individual and family resiliency and help create the circumstances for positive parenting experiences.



Even though the campaign is over, you can still donate to SisterWeb at sisterweb.org and support its incredible work!

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

The Volunteer Engagement Committee’s mission is to support the volunteers of GGMG. Our committee organizes the logistics for the bi-monthly volunteer meetings, GGMG’s annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, and an annual Chair Appreciation event. In lieu of our annual in-person Chair Appreciation event this past June, we were happy to have been able to send Thank You gifts to our chairs.

We sincerely appreciate all our volunteers and all of the hard work you do. Thanks to our volunteers who have pivoted and hosted fun, creative, yet socially distanced activities to help keep moms engaged. We can’t wait to see what you continue to come up with next!

If you are interested in volunteering with GGMG, please reach out! We are looking to fill a number of roles across the board and at different levels (committee members as well as co-chairs)—from Member Support to Parent Education to Diversity & Inclusion to many, many more!

Please reach out to recruiting@gmg.org to learn more. We would love to have you join us.

MEMBER EXPERIENCES

Since the pandemic began, the Member Experiences Committee has been working hard to figure out how we can help our new moms connect. That means bringing a lot of our previously In Real Life (IRL) events online.

A prime example of online events is our Playgroup Formation Mixer, which has been redesigned for Zoom and is better than ever! We’ve packed it with a ton of new content to help new moms find a supportive peer group, learn useful knowledge, and discover how GGMG can help them as they embark on the exhilarating but stressful journey of motherhood.

Participants will be connected with a small group of moms with babies of similar ages in a structured format that encourages conversation. They’ll also have opportunities to meet renowned experts who will give separate classes on key topics like baby sign language, healthy sleeping habits, and infant development. Finally, they’ll meet their GGMG Neighborhood Director who will explain what GGMG has to offer. At each step, they’ll be given ways to continue to connect, learn, and get help after the event.

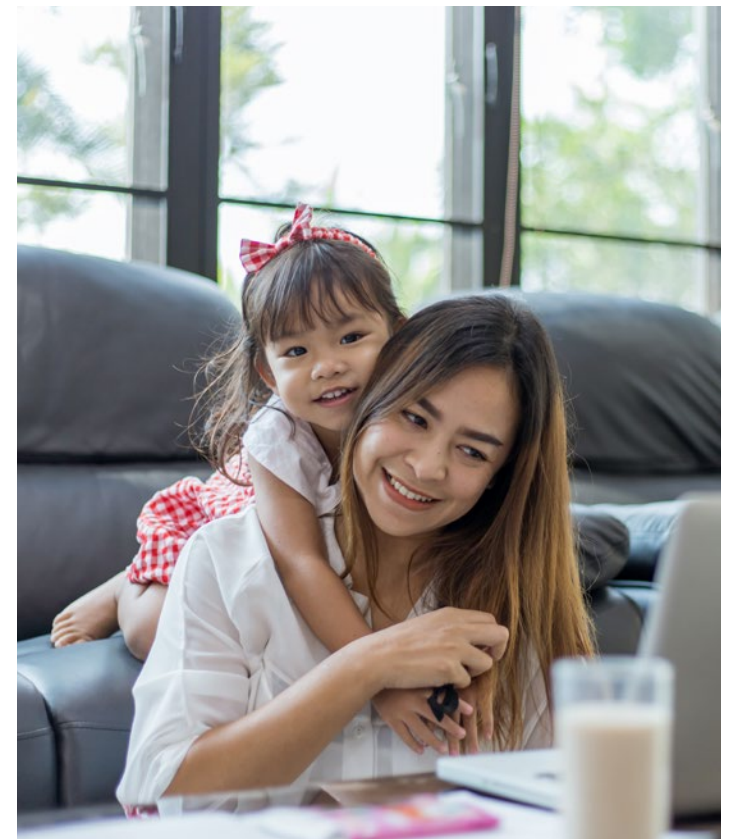
Our next Playgroup Formation Mixer is Saturday, November 21 at 4 p.m. If you’re a new or expecting mom, please sign up. We’re looking forward to meeting you! Check the GGMG calendar for info.

CAREER & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Career & Entrepreneurship Committee is excited to announce the creation of a new resource list for our members, which you can find here: <https://bit.ly/3IUHfwc>. This new list includes four areas:

1. **Job Search:** A list of recommended websites that offer tools, techniques, and tips to support your job search
2. **Professional Development:** Resources that offer training and capacity building in a number of areas so you can continue your professional development
3. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Resources you can use to advance values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice in your workplace or business
4. **Entrepreneurship:** Support for you in launching or growing your own business

This is an evolving list that we will continue to add to as we learn about other resources that we hope will support our members. If you have ideas for additions, please email us at entrepreneurs@gmg.org.



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In Times of Death: A Celebration

By Jennifer Kuhr Butterfoss

In the span of a single week, I found myself starting a new full-time job, painting a bunch of rocks for a socially distanced Shared Schoolyard “monster hunt,” designing outdoor neighborhood ninja quests for my son’s birthday, and assembling and delivering over 160 “virtual Girl Scout meeting” baggies to my daughter’s troop. I knew it was going to be a frantic and overextended week, but somehow amidst this pandemic and smoky air, I was grateful to be lost in a whirl of tempera paint, paper bags, and hot glue. In the thick of my creative fury, I got the devastating news that my former middle and high school mentor had passed away suddenly.

Ellen Landis was not only the mother of a good friend, but also our Odyssey of the Mind coach. This meant she provided a warm meeting space, endless snacks, and thoughtful guidance on a weekly basis as we took on a yearlong creative challenge for an intense annual spring competition series. Very few of us had stay-at-home moms back then, so Mrs. Landis plugged in some of the gaps of our parents’ daytime absence for all of us: a listening ear, gentle reminders to be nice, and the occasional ride. Around her kitchen table, she introduced us to all the “good snacks” like caramel apple dip, Double Stuf

Oreos—even a three-layer nacho dip recipe I still make for my book club on occasion. We spent countless hours in her basement, taking turns at the sewing machine to churn out various projects: a costume, a semi-formal gown (and matching bowtie for our date), some silly hats for our crew. She shuttled us around in her giant maroon Jeep; the pompom on top of her car antennae was the subject of endless teasing.

The weekend after school got out each year, the Landis family would invite all of us for a long weekend at their family’s cozy Vermont lakeside cabin. We played pranks, held canoe wars, engaged in flashlight tag, and ended each night by the fire with hot cocoa. It was exactly the makings of a nostalgic movie and a truly simpler time. Mrs. Landis documented it all on her camera, taking time to print and mail copies of her photos to each and every one of us upon our return home.



Her death was incredibly tragic, but the memories have been beautiful to celebrate. All of us who used to gather in her home years ago turned 40 this year, one of those milestones forcing us to reflect on the events and people who shaped us. We came together virtually to tell stories and cry and laugh together thanks to an app called VidHug, which allowed everyone three to five minutes of time to talk and then strung our tales together with music in

the background to send to Mrs. Landis’ family. In some ways, a virtual celebration over a traditional funeral enabled us even greater connection during this time. With all of us scattered across the globe and hunkered down with our own families and responsibilities, I’m not sure how many of us would have been able to make the trek to our hometown to honor this great woman.

Mrs. Landis celebrated each and every one of us by letting us be who we truly were during the most awkward years of our lives. She gave us the gift of so many magical memories

“Mrs. Landis celebrated each and every one of us by letting us be who we truly were during the most awkward years of our lives.”

captured on camera, in our hearts, and in the little songs we hum to our own kids. It is no surprise I was in super-mom-crafting-and-hosting mode when I got those texts about her passing. In many ways, my life as a mom has become a celebration of my own

idyllic childhood that she contributed to immensely, as I attempt to recreate some of the memories with my own kids and their friends. I am fortunate to have grown up with a loving adult like Ellen Landis who was constantly opening up her home and heart to us all. I live in deep gratitude for the gifts that she was able to give with her genuine presence, time and patience. While I grapple with a level of global crisis too large to fully wrap my head around, my recent travels down memory lane in honor of a truly special woman remind me that it’s the simpler, smaller things that capture the magic of my own pandemic- and smoke-free childhood, and those things just may be what our children need now more than ever.

Jennifer is a mom of two and a crafting enthusiast. One day she will remember the teachings of her mentor that the cloth-only scissors are, in fact, not for cardboard. Find out more at jenniferkuhrbutterfoss.com.