



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE



Spirits of Halloween Past: A host of delightful goblins and fairy-tale characters crowded the Town Square for Noe Valley's Spooktacular in 2017. This year promises to see an equally decked-out carnival of thrills on Sunday, Oct. 28, from noon to 5 p.m. See our story on page 15.

Photo by Art Bodner

Winning at Both Ends of the Leash

Dog Trainers Share Their Methods and Experience

By Olivia Boler

Known as Stroller Valley for its high quotient of families with tykes, Noe Valley is also home to approximately a bazillion dogs (number not verified, although we at the *Voice* tried). If we Venn-diagrammed it, we'd also see that there is a mix of households that are keepers of both strollers and leashes.

With all of these dogs and kids coexisting in our neighborhood, we began to wonder just how important training is for both dogs and people.

We spoke to three neighborhood dog pros—Beverly Ulbrich (The Pooch Coach), Pali Boucher of Rocket Dog Rescue, and Paula Benton of Paula Benton Dog Training. Both Ulbrich and Benton are certified dog trainers. Boucher is the founder of Rocket Dog Rescue, which has saved the lives of more than 10,000 animals since it began in 2001.

All three agree that the amount of formal training a dog needs really depends on the dog and its person.

"I have met lovable, well-mannered, often small dogs who live quite successfully never learning any basic training at all," says Benton. "I've also met a whole lot more who have benefitted greatly with a little professional help."

Ulbrich has a similar opinion. "It's almost like asking the same question about



Intimacy and Trust. Beverly Ulbrich, also known as the Pooch Coach, mixes positive reinforcement with "tricks and techniques" to get the best out her canine charges.

Photo by Art Bodner

a kid. Some parents raise their children successfully without any books or interventions. Others need professional help. With dogs, some are easy-going and the owners know what they're doing. Others have that, but they still want a better-trained dog."

Boucher says, "There are many variables, of course. While every dog can benefit from some basic obedience train-

ing, I honestly believe that building a relationship in which you understand your dog's emotional needs, fears, and responses—whether they be protective, reactive to certain triggers, or fearful of noises, etc.—and building a trusting relationship in which they look to you for guidance—is hugely valuable. Good

Local Dems Aim To Flip the House In November

Battle Cry Is 'Turn Red to Blue'

By Matthew S. Bajko

Alec Bash's political activism was birthed in 2003 when then-President George W. Bush invaded Iraq. Retired from his job as a city planner, Bash had plenty of free time to assist in the effort to unseat the Republican former Texas governor the following year.

He became a volunteer on John Kerry's presidential campaign.

"I thought he was the strongest candidate because of his credentials on national defense," recalled Bash.

But Kerry, then the junior U.S. senator from Massachusetts, saw his ambitions for the White House derailed by misleading claims about his military service in Vietnam. Slow to counter the false attacks, Kerry went on to lose by a slim margin.

Bash, undaunted, cofounded the group Democracy Action with other local residents wishing to work on elections at the federal level rather than on city or state races. The founding members all were veterans of the Kerry campaign, and Bash served as president for the first five years.

"For six years, we were the only Democratic club in San Francisco focused on national politics and not on local politics," said Bash, 72, who has lived in Noe Valley since 1971. "I don't focus on local

Kids Ask Katie

Kids Ask Katie is a column in which Katie Burke—a neighborhood resident, writer, and family law attorney—gives answers to Noe Valley kids' questions about Noe Valley. Children ages 3 to 12 can address their questions to Katie@noevalleyvoice.com. Katie will write you back to schedule an interview and photo session.

What is the biggest house in Noe Valley?

—Asked by Ty Wagner Hogg, 6

In March, I met 6-year-old Ty Wagner Hogg inside Two Birds clothing store on Castro Street. He was shopping with his sister, 9-year-old Billie Wagner Hogg (8 at the time), and their mom, Tara Wagner. (I met dad Chris Hogg on another day.)

When I asked Ty whether he had a question about the neighborhood, he piped up, "What is the biggest house in Noe Valley?"

I had my marching orders. Over the next few months, I looked around the neighborhood, asked realtor friends, and searched real estate listings for Noe Valley's biggest house. I learned there is no list ranking all Noe Valley homes by square footage, and that curbside views can deceive, since houses that look small in front can be pretty big in back. The experts came up with some big houses, such as the firehouse-turned-residence at 3816 22nd St. (6,045 sq.ft.), but I was



Ty Wagner Hogg and sister Billie reach the top of a Noe Valley skyscraper and gaze at the scenic view of Twin Peaks and the Castro Street hill. *Photos by Katie Burke*

hoping to find an empty house Ty and his family might explore.

Finally, on a Zillow search of Noe Valley listings, I came upon the four-story home at 645 Duncan St., near Newburg Street, listed (by Nina Hatvany at Pacific Union) for \$6,995,000.

I then reached out to Zephyr Real Estate agents Doug Carpenter and Eduardo Aguire, who enthusiastically agreed to give Ty, Billie, Tara, and me a guided tour in mid-September.

While not Noe Valley's biggest house—nor the kind of home most Noe Valley residents lived in—the four-bedroom, 4.5-bath wonder was the biggest house Ty had ever seen.

This 5,165-square-foot home featured two fireplaces, an outdoor fire pit, a living

garden wall (rows of plants fed nutrients hydroponically), an elevator, a wine room, two glass-enclosed balconies, a rooftop deck, a backyard deck with a sunken patio, a second back patio, and sweeping views from Twin Peaks to the downtown San Francisco skyline.

Carpenter and Aguire brought Brady, their 10-year-old dog, whom Ty and Billie immediately befriended.

"Is that in dog years?" Ty asked of Brady's age.

Carpenter said no, dog years would put Brady at about 70.

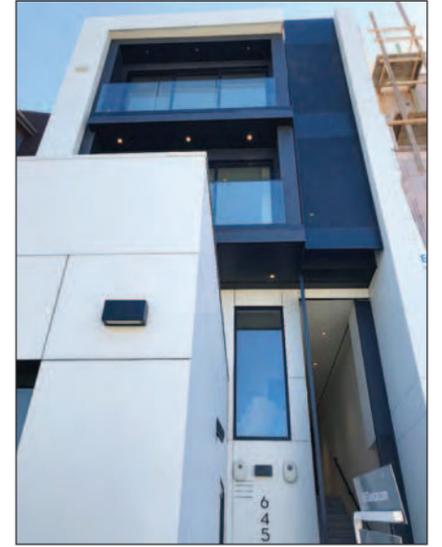
At the outset of the tour, Carpenter suggested that Ty and Billie choose the bedroom each would want if this were their home. Ty claimed the room closest to the outdoor garden wall, for its view through tall glass windows. Billie selected the master bedroom, featuring an interior barn door and exterior glass doors leading onto a balcony.

All present gasped upon seeing the kitchen's 16-foot-long center island. Then Ty set his sights on the backyard deck into which the kitchen spilled out. He reclined on an outdoor sofa in the deck's patio, looking right at home.

Ty stood in several areas, illustrating their scale: the master bath walk-in shower (approximately three "Tys" high and two Tys long) with marble bench, the wine room (at least two Tys high and 2.5 Tys long), and the home's dramatic front door (roughly three Tys high and one Ty wide).

After exiting the wine room, Ty declared, "This would also be a good room to keep snacks in."

Carpenter explained to Ty and Billie that the home was staged for sale—that all the furniture, artwork, and rugs they saw would be removed when someone bought the house and the new owners



The house at 645 Duncan may not be the biggest, but it's one of the tallest.



Ty demonstrates that the home's front door is more than three "Tys" high.

moved in. Asked how he would use the family/media room on the top floor, Ty said it would be a "party room." That was appropriate, given the room was outfitted with a wet bar and a wine fridge, and sat adjacent to the rooftop deck.

At the home's ground level, Aguire showed Ty and Billie the four-car garage. Billie pointed out that since her family owns just one car, there's plenty of room left over for bike storage and an extra playroom.

Asked what his favorite game to play in the house would be, Ty replied, "I'd want to play with a Slinky because there are so many stairs!"

Ty said he'd love to live in a house that big someday, and that "it would take 88 years to save enough money to buy it." I think he may be right.

What a fun tour, Ty. Thanks for prompting it with your question. And thank you to Doug Carpenter and Eduardo Aguire for leading us around.

See you in the neighborhood!

—Katie Burke



Sitting on a bench in the entryway, Ty Wagner Hogg, 6, and realtors Doug Carpenter and Eduardo Aguire (with Brady the dog) gear up for their tour of the house at 645 Duncan St.



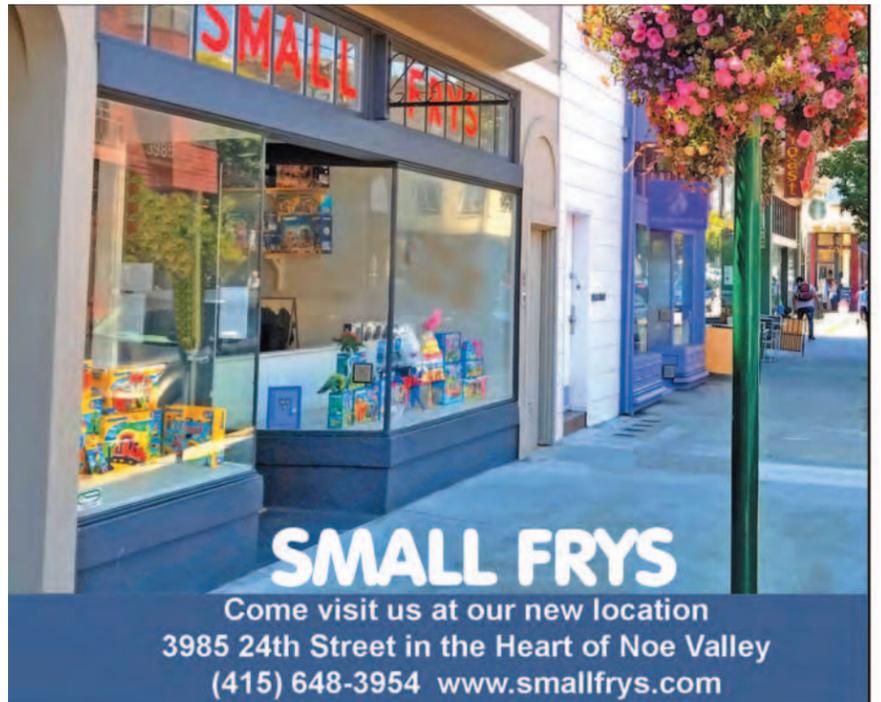
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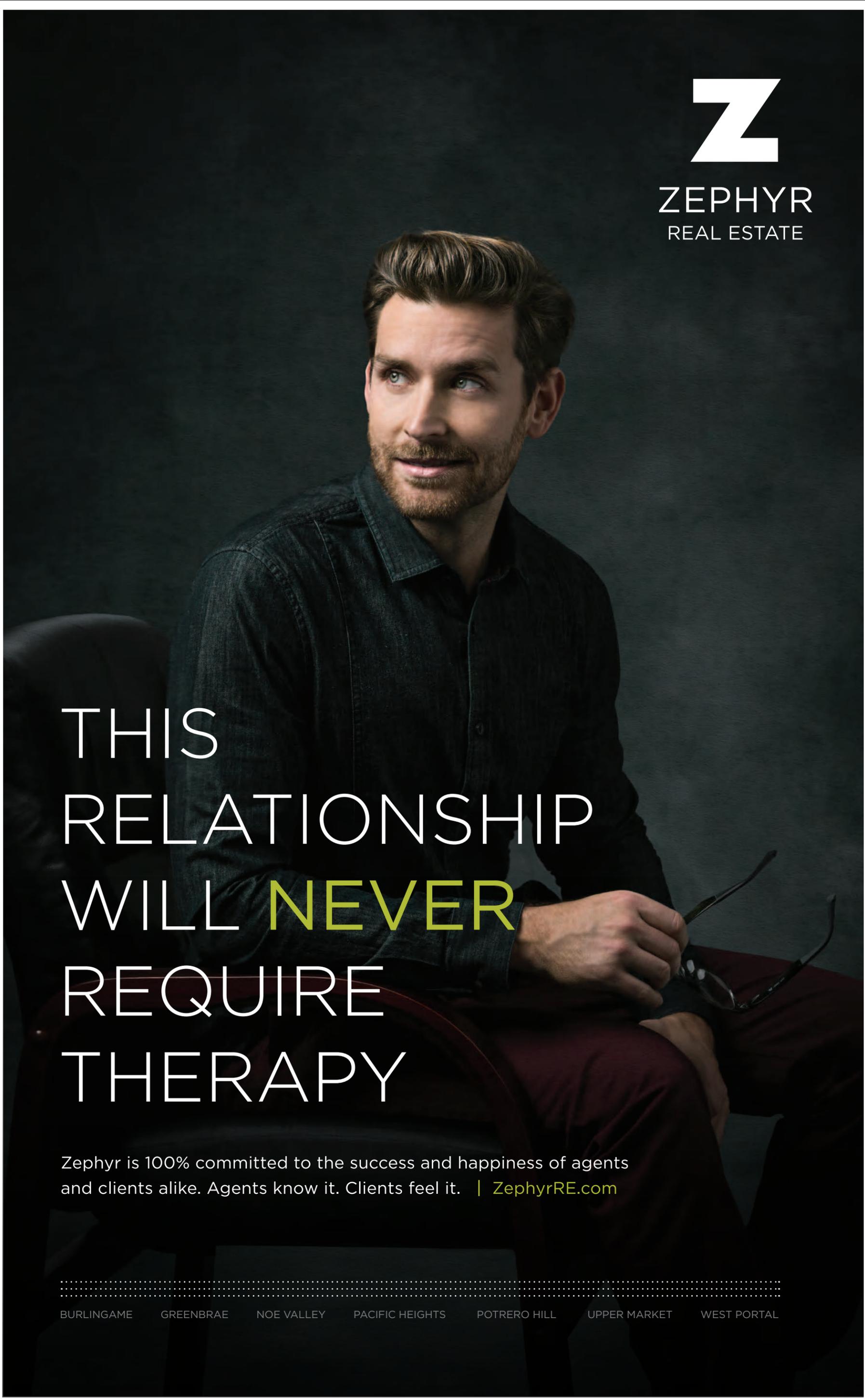
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