

Wharf spring to mind. But on Pier 38, at the corner of Townsend, you'll find the space to host your next highfalutin event: the **AON/A Chandlery**, a street-level loft with floor-to-ceiling windows and killer views of the Bay. Though it's home to a candle and textile-design firm, owner Linda Marshall will customize the space—complete with a backlit bar area and a spacious deck. And you thought piers were for tourists. *Pier 38*, 415-546-6020



Best Way to Infiltrate the Lit Scene

Writer's Seminars for Adults offer admission to the publishing world via intimate panel discussions (held at 826 Valencia) featuring established authors who give the inside scoop on everything from the writing process to working with editors and agents. This month's seminar focuses on writing and publishing a novel, July's event addresses mystery writing and August's, deciphering the world of the short story. *826 Valencia St.*, 415-642-5905, www.826valencia.org

Best Diamond-in-the-Rough View

These have been gloomy times for football fans, who need more than copious amounts of liquor to numb the Niners-induced pain. The perfect way to put the latest defeat into perspective is right out the window of **Bloom's Saloon**: a view of the downtown skyline that reminds us that it could always be worse. We could be living in Cleveland. *1318 18th St.*, 415-552-6707

Best Spot for a Country Sing-a-Long

Whether you hail from North Beach or Nashville, there is a certain joy to singing lyrics like "Well, I was drunk the day my mom got out of prison/And I went to pick her up in the rain" (thank you, David Allan Coe) after a few refreshing cold ones at the **Expansion**. When the twang from the jukebox hits a fever pitch, expect an added howl from the bar's mascot Ratchet, canine companion to Mia the bartender. *2124 Market St.*, 415-863-4041

Best Tango Teacher

Attention, fans of *Dance with Me* (you know who you are): Not only is Argentine tango instructor **Sonja Riket** a crackerjack dance teacher but she also doubles as a social director—organizing festive group dinners, private practices and milongas (tango dance parties) for her lucky students. Most Sunday evenings between 8 and 10 p.m., Riket can be found at Papa Toby's Revolution Café (*3248 22nd St.*, 415-642-0474), where she encourages students to strut their stuff to live music and sometimes—weather permitting, that is—take it to the street. www.intimateembracetango.com

Most Eclectic Venue

Formerly known as 848 Community Space, **CounterPULSE** was rechristened after relocating to SoMa last year—and the shiny new moniker couldn't be more fitting. In addition to serving as a gallery and performance space for awe-inspiring choreographers and up-and-coming artists, the wholly original venue also plays host to lectures and the most fascinating experimental workshops in all of San Francisco (naked dance or devotional chanting, anyone?). *1310 Mission St.*, 415-626-2060, www.counterpulse.org



JANE GANAHL AT EDINBURGH CASTLE

The Individualist

Jane Ganahl's "Single Minded" column appears in the *Chronicle's* Style section every Sunday, and she's also a frequent contributor to the daily Datebook. This fall, she will be coproducing the Litquake festival (Oct. 6–14), and her first book, *Naked on the Page: My Unmarried Midlife in the Sunday Paper* (Viking), comes out this winter.

"**Edinburgh Castle** is home to both the Litquake festival and myriad cultural events, from Robert Burns Night (pass the haggis) to World Cup parties to dozens of literary readings and plays. The US premiere of the stage play of Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting* debuted there before the book was even published in this country." *950 Geary St.*, 415-885-4074, www.castlenews.com

"Martin Muller's openings at **Modernism Gallery** always carry the whiff of brilliance; so do the attendees. Rock stars like Marilyn Manson and Lars Ulrich show up to honor rock-star artists like Gottfried Helnwein. Even low-key happenings are frequented by curators and the curious." *685 Market St.*, 415-541-0461, modernisminc.com

"Kathi Kamen Goldmark, novelist and musician, takes over **El Rio** on the second Tuesday of every month for a

come-one-come-all jam session. Bring your instrument (or your voice) and favorite songs—and hope the band is familiar with them." *3158 Mission St.*, 415-282-3325, www.dqydj.com

"Activist and author **Stephen Elliott** has a splendid Rolodex and manages to get top-notch talent (Tobias Wolff, Po Bronson, ZZ Packer, Andrew Sean Greer) to do readings that benefit progressive congressional candidates nationwide. Republicans may want to skip this one, though." www.stephenelliott.com

"Club level at the night games at **AT&T Park**: Not only is the food higher-quality than in the bleachers (fish tacos are the best for your buck) but so are the singles. I met a sexy lawyer at a game who ended up being my boyfriend for several years. But I don't hold it against the Giants." *24 Willie Mays Plaza*, 415-972-2000, www.sfgiants.com

Best Way to Impress Your Date

Nothing says class like rolling up to a swank restaurant (read: **Nihon**), presenting a claim ticket and retiring to a plush, private room where you can share your own personal bottle of Suntory (stored on the premises for free) with your sweetie. *1779 Folsom St.*, 415-552-4400, www.nihon-sf.com

