THE Rockridge News

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Sponsored by The Rockridge Community Planning Council • 5856 College Ave. #130 • Oakland, CA 94618 • 814-6060

Oakland's 52-Mile Scenic Drive

by Annalee Allen

The Scenic Drive of Oakland being unveiled this summer incorporates 52 destinations and features key City landmarks and historic sites. Distinctive oak tree logo signs, underwritten by corporate, business, and community organization sponsorship, have been appearing all over town in anticipation of the inaugural tour taking place in July.

Oaklanders will get their chance to experience the Scenic Drive during "Celebrate Oakland Week" in conjunction with the Grand Reopening of City Hall. On July 19 at 10:30 AM, the opening celebrations begin with speeches, entertainment and guided tours of City Hall. On July 22 the scenic tour will officially be launched with departures from Jack London Square scheduled throughout the day.

In 1988, former director of the City Parks and Recreation department, Herbye White, came up with the idea of a 52-mile drive modeled after San Francisco's 49-mile drive (San Francisco was incorporated in 1849, Oakland in 1852).

See "Scenic" on page 3

General Membership Meeting Agenda

Thursday, June 15, 1995, 7:30 p.m.
College Ave. Presbyterian Church
5951 College Avenue (Sanctuary)

- **Chiron Expansion –** Joanna Pace, San Pablo Avenue Golden Gate Improvement Association (SPAGGIA) (see article on page 3)
- **Save Our Creeks –** Video Presentation by Alameda County's 'Save Our Creeks' Campaign
- **Dreyer's Update**

Rockridge & Dreyer's — Truth with Consequences

by Annette Floystrup and Kathy Walsh

On short notice, Dreyer's entertained several hundred Rockridge neighbors at an open house the afternoon of May 24th. Along with free ice cream, neighbors were served up architectural drawings and computer-generated pictures of the proposed project. Unfortunately, several significant pieces of misinformation, clearly designed to counter neighborhood objections, were given out along with the ice cream.

Zoning – Facts and Fiction

Dreyer's officials consistently and erroneously stated that College Avenue's Special Retail Commercial Zone, C-31, imposes no size limitations on businesses. They continued this misrepresentation despite repeated corrections by knowledgeable individuals, including a Planning Commissioner. And, indeed, Section 4483 of our zoning code limits any single establishment to a total floor area of 7,500 sq.ft. **Traditionally, Conditional Use Permits have allowed local retailers to exceed that limit when the community good was served by a necessary function, as, for example, by Lucky and Safeway markets, or civil buildings like our new library, at about 14,000 sq. ft.**

The current Dreyer's office space, excluding the retail stores, already exceeds the limit by 650%. The new proposal will exceed it by 1400%, and that does not include the three-story, mostly underground, parking structure for the exclusive use of Dreyer's. If those 87,817 sq.ft. are included, the total floor area devoted to this "single establishment" (194,421 sq.ft!) will exceed the statutory limit by 2600%.

Dreyer's statement that it does not require any variances for this expansion is correct, but incomplete. This expansion, like the last one, will require a fistful of Major and Minor Conditional Use Permits, which carry the same legal onus and bureaucratic process as variances.



Photo: Kathy Walsh, developed and printed courtesy of Ag photo, College Avenue.

Slated for demolition, should Dreyer's be allowed to expand, is this large, handsome four-plex at 6048 Claremont, currently being used as offices by Dreyer's. Only BART and Highway 24 construction have permanently removed more housing stock in Rockridge than Dreyer's.

Finances – Who Feeds the City's Kitty?

One common mistaken belief among Oakland residents is that only corporations contribute greatly to the City's tax revenues. In fact, Property Tax Revenues account for over half of Oakland's tax money, and the 94618 zip code sur-

See "Dreyer's" on page 8

Community Forum on Dreyer's

District 1 Councilmember Sheila Jordan is sponsoring a facilitated community meeting on Thursday, June 22, 7:00 p.m., at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church (5951 College Avenue), to discuss and analyze Dreyer's proposed project and its potential impact on the Rockridge neighborhood. The meeting will be facilitated by a representative from Oakland – Sharing the Vision. Dreyer's has been invited to attend.

Don't miss this opportunity to express your opinions and concerns. ■

Book Corner

by Gay Ducey, Children's Librarian, Rockridge Branch Library

Summer Reading Program: "Solve Mysteries—Read!"

Here's the Deal: Kids read eight books, get some neat stuff every now and again, and get a free ticket to an Oakland A's game. The program starts June 19 and ends August 26. Each child has his or her own folder to record the books as they are read. Children choose what they want to read. We don't ask for a book report, or a little chat, or a drawing, or anything else. Preschoolers and elementary school students can participate, too, by having an adult read to them. Pretty simple and awfully accessible. All Oakland Public Library branches and the Main Library offer this program.

Here's the Philosophy: We keep down the number of books to be read to encourage quality, not quantity. Young people can always read more titles, but eight books is a substantial commitment for some kids. There is no prize for the most books read. We let kids choose what they wish, so there are no rules about reading one red book, one nonfiction book, etc.

Here's the Really Big Deal: Kids often associate reading with work. Very sensible. Most reading takes place in or related to school and involves worksheets, book reports, dioramas, and oral reports. Books are used as text to learn to read and later to develop critical faculties as well as exposure to ideas, to wonderful plots and characters, and to rich language. All to the good. But somewhere along the way a whole bunch (professional library term for "lots") of kids figures that reading stops at the schoolhouse door. That worries me. I want kids to read long after formal education ends, and I suspect they will do so if it is pleasurable. And they won't if it's not. This program is a way to emphasize the fun part. Please bring your kids in and give it a try. Help them along by encouraging them to read what they find interesting, or amusing, or gross, or cool. Ask me for some help (especially with the gross ones). Have fun. ■

ROCKRIDGE BRANCH LIBRARY

5803 Birch Court at College Avenue
Note the new phone number: 597-5017

HOURS
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday: 12:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Closed Friday, Sunday

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

FREE CLASS: Bonnie Lockhart, member of the Plum City Players and well-known music educator will offer "Songs and Music Games from Around the World" on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:00, beginning July 12 and ending August 9. Parents and children from preschool through primary grades are welcome.

The Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded in 1986 by Don Kinkead, is published monthly in Oakland and is sponsored by The Rockridge Community Planning Council, a neighborhood-based nonprofit organization. Membership includes everyone living within the organization's boundaries. The goals of the organization are to promote community involvement in neighborhood planning and area development, to address neighborhood concerns (such as educational and recreational resources and the deterrence of crime), and to serve as a liaison between the community and the City of Oakland, in particular the Oakland Planning Commission.

Rockridge News Production

Kathy Walsh	Editor-in-Chief
Trish West	Editor
Valerie Knight	Graphics; Layout
Susan Montauk	Advertising
Maya Byrne Nissanka	Billing
Mary MacDonald	Writing; Editing
Don Kinkead	Distribution

Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in *The Rockridge News?* Call 814-6060, or write to 5856 College Avenue, #130, Oakland 94618.

Publication date of the next issue is July 15. To advertise, call Susan Montauk at 547-3855. **July deadline is June 29.**

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Golden Gate Neighbors Ask for Your Help

by Joanna Pace, San Pablo Avenue Golden Gate Improvement Association (SPAGGIA)

How big a shadow does a 300-foot tower cast? How would your neighborhood's commercial area survive with no peak-hour parking? Must urban residents always choose between more jobs and a liveable neighborhood?

Residents in the Golden Gate neighborhood of both Oakland and Emeryville are asking neighbors throughout our cities to learn about the next large development coming to our neighborhood and the "Alternate Scenario" we are proposing.

Chiron Corporation, one of the world's leading biotech companies, has proposed a massive expansion of its facility at 53rd and Hollis streets in Emeryville, two blocks from the Oakland city line. Plans call for several blocks of large buildings topped by two towers, one of them 22 stories (300 feet) high, and 3,400 parking spaces for 4,000 employees.

Residents and members of SPAGGIA have expressed concern about the impact of the proposed project on the surrounding neighborhood and commercial area, including major traffic problems and harmful solutions proposed to fix them, such as removing peak-hour parking from San Pablo and Stanford avenues and removing medians. We have objected to the massive scale of the project and the excessive burden on Oakland's streets, air quality, police, fire, schools and other services, while almost all benefits go to Emeryville. We are also concerned that Oakland citizens will be left out of the employment the project may bring.

In the name of balanced, responsible development, SPAGGIA is proposing an Alternate Scenario where "all parties agree to work to make this a model project of cooperation across borders and boundaries, environmentally responsible and socially equitable, providing benefits to the entire surrounding area and particularly to the working-class neighborhoods immediately adjacent. The goal will be to design a hospitable, productive environment for biotech and other high-tech industries in our subregion and ensure its viability into the next century."

The Oakland City Council has formed a litigation negotiating team to address this issue with Chiron and Emeryville. If you, too, are concerned about the questionable urban planning aspects of this proposed project and its impact on our city, call negotiating team chair, John Russo, the other two members, or the mayor to express your concern.

John Russo 238-3681
Sheila Jordan 238-3680
Natalie Bayton 238-3658
Mayor Harris 238-6907

For more information about SPAGGIA's Alternate Scenario, call me at 658-3745. ■

Scenic

from page 1

Like so many other Oakland projects, progress on the scenic drive was interrupted by disasters—earthquake and fire—but now the drive is ready!



Sites that speak to Oakland's ability to rise above calamity, such as the restored City Hall and the Firestorm Memorial Tile Wall at the Rockridge BART station, are featured on the drive. A full-color brochure with map and descriptions of the points of interest will be available. The maps will be distributed through hotels, visitor centers, libraries, and other key locations. The Scenic Drive is being coordinated through the City's Office of Marketing and Public Information, and all funds for the reproduction of the signs and maps are being raised through sponsorships and donations. In the Rockridge neighborhood, the Rockridge Community Planning Council and the Rockridge Area Merchants and Professionals Association have jointly purchased one of the oak tree logo signs for College Avenue.

For more information, call Project Coordinator Samee Roberts at 238-2193. ■

ROCKRIDGE CRIME ALERT HOT LINE

Dial 814-2255
(814-CALL)
to report suspicious activities or to hear weekly updates on criminal activity in Rockridge

No serious incidents have been reported this month on the Crime Alert Hot Line. To help track crime in the neighborhood, please report incidents to the Hot Line after notifying the police. ■

Chabot School Notice

The Chabot School PTA is looking for a Spanish instructor to teach elementary school children, part-time before or after school. Applicants should be experienced and eager to work with children at different levels, taking a fun and interactive approach. Send resume to the Language Program, Chabot School, 6686 Chabot Road, Oakland 94618. ■

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New Volunteers Join "A Tasteful Tour of Rockridge"

Plans Proceed for Fall Kitchen Tour

by Theresa Nelson, Kitchen Tour Promotion Volunteer

The 1995 Fall Kitchen Tour, "A Tasteful Tour of Rockridge," features nine wonderful kitchens and "tastes" from Rockridge restaurants, for an unusual and exciting fundrais ing event. The tour date is Sunday, October 8, from 12:00 noon-5:00 p.m. From Craftsman to Mediterranean, the kitchens selected represent some of the best of Rockridge architecture and design, filled with ideas for those considering a kitchen project from any architectural period.

The tour has already attracted many new volunteers, and anyone is welcome to join the fun. Each volunteer receives one free ticket for the tour! You can help plan tour logistics, work on the brochure and graphics, help publicize the tour, work with restaurants and other sponsors, decorate kitchens for the tour, and participate in many other activities. Just fill out and mail the adjacent coupon, or call Kitchen Tour Chair Susan Montauk at 547-3855. To volunteer only for the day of the tour, call Susa Kessler, 653-6248.

If you are a merchant, builder, architect, designer, or other home-kitchen professional interested in being a sponsor, please call RCPC at 547-3855. **Be sure to save the date, Sunday, October 8, noon to 5 p.m.** ■



Adele Crawford's kitchen, one featured on the tour, includes an old Wedgewood stove and Adele's custom stenciling on the floor and at the top of the walls.

A Tasteful Tour of Rockridge Kitchens-Oct. 8, 1995

Yes, I'd like to help with the following:

___ I'd like to be one of the fifty docents.
___ I'd like to work on the docent committee.
___ I'd like to work on public relations.
___ I'd like to work on the tour brochure or graphics.
___ I'd like to work on the day of tour planning committee.

Name:_____
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Off to Camp!

by Trish West

The pile beside the duffel bag grows as I toss on another pair of shorts, a University of Iowa sweatshirt, a flashlight, a beach towel, and sunscreen. No, I'm not sending a kid off to camp; the happy camper, c'est moi! I'm getting ready for a second summer session at Oakland's Feather River Adult Arts Camp.

I have great memories of last year's session: a picnic beside the refreshing spray from a waterfall; the ice cream social where I concocted the most outrageous chocolate sundae; a sunrise Tai Chi session; the canopy of bright stars over my cozy little cabin. Most of all, I remember the great people I met, both the teachers and the other campers.

This summer, I've signed up for "Writing a Sense of Place," taught by Bay Area writer Tobey Kaplan. Here are the other classes available:

- *The Artistry of Outdoor Photography*, with Rex Burress
- *In Search of the Perfect Pulp* (papermaking), with Anne Busse
- *Interpreting the Landscape*, with Kirk Cooper
- *Chinese Bush Painting*, with Lam-Po Leong
- *The Art of Storytelling*, with Marijo
- *Expressive Painting—Listening to Nature's Song*, with Taju Mohibi
- *Tai Chi Ch'an*, with Eric Wong

Additional recreational activities abound, with swimming, hiking, and horseback riding. Just plain loafing in this beautiful setting is encouraged too.

Adult Arts Camp is sponsored by the Oakland Office of Parks and Recreation Cultural Arts Division in cooperation with Oakland's Feather River Camp. The 50-acre camp site is located in the Plumas National Forest about 225 miles from Oakland.

Dates: July 29 through August 5, 1995

Cost: $395

Included in the cost are round-trip charter bus transportation from Oakland to the camp, 8 days and 7 nights accommodations, three meals daily, community bath and laundry facilities, daily classes, evening programs, and some supplies. It's a great deal!

For a registration form, call 238-6951. Registration deadline is July 12. Informational brochures are available at Studio One and branch libraries. And if you want to see photographic documentation of the fun in store, call me at 653-6560. ■

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Riding home on BART recently, I was joined by a colleague who lives on the shore of Lake Merritt in one of those lovely old classic buildings. He is here on a one-year assignment from the Los Angeles area and was meeting a friend of over thirty years for dinner at Oliveto. As we chatted about East Bay neighborhoods, Rudy referred to the overdevelopment of different areas and asked how it is that Rockridge has been protected and has maintained its character as the very special place it is. He wondered how commercial enterprises had been prevented from placing large, out-of-character buildings in Rockridge and destroying the charming qualities we all want for our urban neighborhoods. I enjoyed telling him about the Rockridge Community Planning Council and the good work it does in standing up for the neighborhood and seeing that our special zoning laws are upheld.

Thank you, RCPC, for a job well done. Please keep it up.

– Leigh Trivette
Forest Street

Editors' note: We couldn't agree more! As a former RCPC Board Member, Leigh might be just a **little** *biased. Even so, her friend Rudy was right on target with his observations: College Avenue's particular charm is not an accident, but a carefully planned pedestrian-oriented retail environment.* ■

College Avenue Adult Activity Center

5951 College Avenue

Invite your friends to come along with you to the following programs, all at 11 a.m. on Wednesdays:

June 14 Video presentation: "Atlantic Vistas, Scenic America" by Kathy Connelly

June 21 Vic Steppan: Slides of Tibet

June 28 "Kathy's Adventures in Bali"

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Changes on College

Lillian's Children's Store

5833 College Avenue

(formerly O'Toole's)

Consignment children's clothing, equipment, and toys are available, just as in the former store, which Lillian used to manage. Parents are encouraged to bring in outgrown children's items. 428-1009

Isobune Sushi Restaurant

5897 College Avenue

(formerly site of Home Video)

The boats (isobune) of sushi go round and round the sushi bar 362 days a year. Owner Shochi Imanaka was granted a U.S. patent for "a new and useful invention" when he submitted the design for his unique little boats. Other locations of the restaurant are in Japantown in San Francisco and Burlingame. Hours are 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. 601-1424

Cotton & Company

5858 and 5902 College

The infant and maternity portion of the expanded shop has moved just across the street. Owner Claudette Von Ruskin says that hers is the only maternity shop in Oakland now.

Miki Berkeley

5833 College

(former site of Bunny, Didd & Tubbs)

This shop has relocated less than half a block away, retaining its comfortable cotton clothing for women and kids.

To Herb With Love

5495 C Claremont

Marti is the proprietor of this new herb and aromatherapy shop, which is open 5-9 p.m. Tuesday-Friday.

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Progress on Soundwall Compromise

by Gordon Piper, Representative for Hiller Highlands Homes Association

Substantial progress was made at a May 25 meeting of representatives of approximately 14 local homeowner associations whose members will be impacted by the proposed soundwall associated with the Highway 24/13 interchange project. Greg Kos, aide to District One Councilmember Sheila Jordan, served as facilitator among the groups and the Alameda County Transportation Authority (ACTA).

Faced with the challenge of making a 1,900-foot soundwall above Chabot Canyon on the north side of Highway 24 both less conspicuous and more effective, representatives endorsed the following concepts: 1) building the soundwall, where possible, on the shoulder of the freeway behind tall shrubs for screening, and 2) utilizing a noise barrier system that would combine innovative materials and a landscaping screen to maximize noise reduction and to minimize reflected noise on the south side of Highway 24. Among the new materials being examined by the group is one developed by the Carsonite International Company.

Homeowner association representatives expressed optimism that the recommended soundwall system could be constructed at less expense to ACTA than the originally proposed 14-foot-high concrete block soundwall system, which was projected to cost $1.14 million. Representatives indicated their hope that cost savings would be utilized by ACTA in implementing a "master planned" landscaping mitigation program recently proposed to ACTA by City of Oakland Park Services Manager Tony Acosta. The "master planned" landscaping mitigation plan would create a view/noise buffer and fire-resistant landscaping on City of Oakland and Caltrans properties around the Highway 24/13 interchange project area. Federal transportation enhancement grant funds are potentially available.

Chabot Canyon Homeowner Association President Roland Brandel indicated that the homeowners he represents support both recommendations.

Gordon Piper is also Chair of the North Hills Landscape Committee and was instrumental in creating the Firestorm Memorial Garden near Hiller Highlands. ■

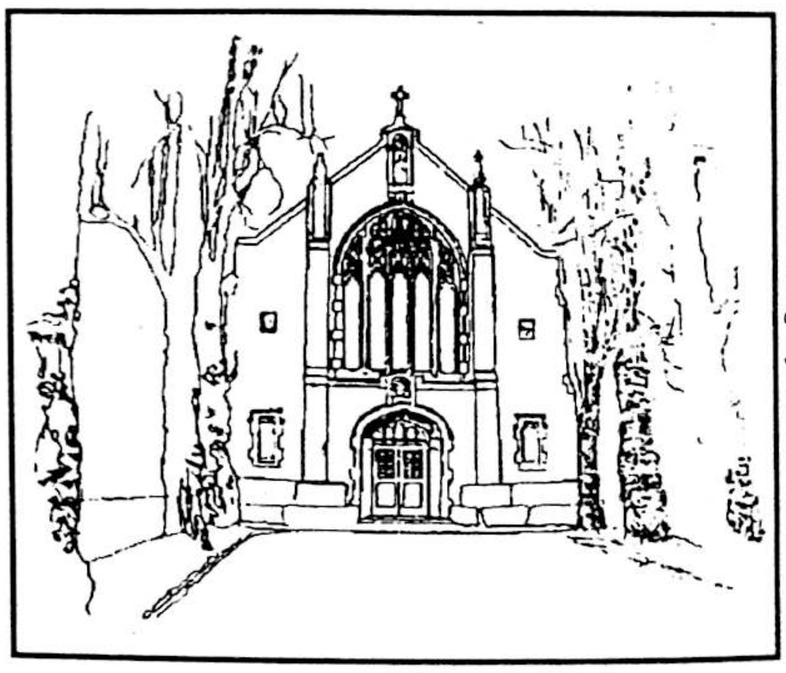
St. Albert's Priory (Re)Visited

by Father Denis Reilly, Prior of St. Albert's

A choir of monastic-robed men chanting Hebrew psalms in Latin graced the cover of millions of CDs sold last year. Such sights and sounds (although now in English) are nothing new to Rockridge residents.

The Dominican Order was founded by St. Dominic some 800 years ago; it was Dominic's desire to have a community of mobile men, based on a democratic constitution whereby its members elected their own superiors (and with term limits), who directed them to a life of common prayer and study for the purpose of preaching the gospel. In the 13th-century ecclesiastical and secular world, this was a novel idea. We Dominicans like to think that it still is.

One of the pioneer Dominicans to come to California in the mid-1800s was later to become the first Archbishop of California. The archbishop's last name of Alemany is familiar to residents of the Bay Area. In the early 1930s, we moved our *studium* to Rockridge in order to be close to the University of California, as it is within our tradition to be near centers of learning. Currently our



Drawing by Donald Wardlaw

students live at St. Albert's Priory (located on Birch Court and Chabot) but study at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. As a House of Formation, our men spend eight years focusing upon spirituality and pastoral ministry in addition to philosophy (two years) and theology (four years). Once completed,

See "St. Albert's" on page 7

THE NEIGHBORHOOD MERCHANT

by Trish West

TRANSPORTS

6022 COLLEGE AVE.
655-4809

My brand-new Nike cross trainers are on their maiden voyage, striding back to the store where I recently bought them. It must be the purple trim that makes them extra speedy. They transport me down the hill to TranSports in record time, just ahead of co-owners Bev Newcomb and Kei Kodani.

My visit to TranSports falls on the day after the annual Bay to Breakers, so I hear about the runners who crowded in to buy new shoes on Saturday. Inaugurating new shoes on a 7.5-mile course is not something Bev and Kei recommend, even for the slower-moving "centipedes" who come in for matching tights. Those tights probably provided welcome warmth in this spring's wacky weather.

Kei's participation in this year's Bay to Breakers event marked his first time in 15 years. It was something of a family affair for him, as his recently retired dad wanted company for his own first venture up the dreaded Hayes Street Hill. It was also his parents' influence that got Kei into the sports shoe business. Kei says, "My family was always going backpacking and fishing. With my mom, I started making outdoor equipment for stores when I was in high school." That interest led Kei and his partners (the third partner is Frank Monaghan) to open TranSports in January of 1982.

When asked about the genesis of the store's name, Kei replies, "The idea is personal transportation, people moving under their own power, as in running, swimming, and biking. I guess it could also signify a transformation from sedentary to fit." Once in a while, however, someone perusing the phone book inquires about shipping a car from coast to coast!

TranSports seems to occupy an ideal spot on College Avenue. Right next door is Hank & Frank Bicycles. The Sierra Club Bookstore is a few doors away, as is Walkabout Shoes. Each of these outdoor-oriented stores has its own specialty niche, which Kei claims is the secret to small-business success. Just as important is the friendly personal service. Kei says, "We don't just cater to the elite or hardcore athlete. We take care of everyone from the beginner to the fastest runner. Customer service is an important goal here."

Employee Don Williams echoes Kei's sentiments, saying, "I like working here because you can educate customers about running shoes. That takes some expertise because we carry about 250 styles." Don's commitment to education is central to his "other life" as well. He is teaching a young people's program at Marin Conservatory Theater this summer. Sometimes he's "on the boards" himself, with his favorite role so far being that of Horatio in "Hamlet." Bev and Kei claim that in slow moments in the store, Don regales them with "Good night, sweet prince...."

Kei and Bev each have two small children who love to visit the store. Of course they all wear tiny running shoes. "Our kids are definitely well shod," says Bev. "Just like their parents, they need to try out the products."

Although Bev is a runner and a veteran of the Bay to Breakers, her specialty is swimming. TranSports has a complete line of swimsuits, goggles, and other accoutrements for water lovers. She helps supply Oakland's swimming clubs for kids, just as she does with Bay Area running clubs like the East Bay Striders.

Friendly owners and employees, a wide selection of products, knowledgeable personal service, fair prices—TranSports has them all. For my money, College Avenue's TranSports easily wins the race against the huge sports outlets.

TranSports is open Mon.-Sat., 10 AM-6 PM; Sun., 12-5 PM. ■

St. Albert's

from page 6

we can be assigned anywhere in California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Arizona and Utah; we also have men in missions throughout the world.

And so our community is a combination of young (the students), middle aged (we are a center of spiritual and intellectual renewal for priests and sisters from around the world), and elderly (because of the contemplative atmosphere of St. Albert's, we are valued as a place for retirement). With 70 priests, sisters and brothers living here most of the year, we are a "city" onto ourselves, although we did take in seven men and women who lost their homes in the Great Oakland Fire (the longest such resident stayed with us for 18 months).

St. Albert's is the center and heart of our province. We are happy to be able to share in the beauty of Rockridge with others who have discovered the wonder of the area. ■

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juicy NEWS

Dreyer's

from page 1

rounding College Avenue is one of the most revenue-productive in Oakland. The interesting small businesses of College Avenue are directly responsible for making the area attractive to residents and visitors alike.

Oakland's 26 neighborhood commercial areas, excluding Chinatown/ Downtown, put over $680,000 into Oakland's business tax revenues in 1994 as well. College Avenue is #1, accounting for 10% of that total. Oakland's two C-31 Special Retail Commercial Zones, **College Avenue and Piedmont Avenue, together accounted for 19%**, putting a hefty $126,755 into the City's business tax revenues.

Success on these Avenues has been created and supported by the City's two most dedicated, organized, and long-standing neighborhood groups, RCPC and PANIL (Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League). **Both groups have worked hard to create and sustain C-31's pedestrian-oriented retail, conserve housing, and prevent commercial encroachment into the residential zones.** As a result, these neighborhoods have generated significant tax revenues for the City over the past two decades.

Several small businesses are located in the Dreyer's building on College Avenue (among them the well-known bakery *Katrina Rozelle*), contributing to those business tax revenues, and all of those businesses owe a debt to RCPC, as do the businesses facing them. **Dreyer's original plans were for a long office wall facing College Avenue, and only strong pressure from RCPC to enforce C-31 zoning created those ground-floor retail spaces.**

Positively Promoting Oakland

In the past few years, College Avenue has brought the City a great deal of positive publicity in the regional and national press. Professional journals, newspapers, and lifestyle magazines, such as *Sunset* and *The New York Times*, promote Oakland's Rockridge neighborhood as a model of the best in urban living. The Avenue draws an interesting mixture of national celebrities including **Sally Quinn** and **Ben Bradley** (*Oliveto*), **Branford Marsalis** (*Citron*), **Maria Shriver** and **Arnold Schwarzenegger** (*Oliveto*), and actor **Kelsey Grammer** (*Tachibana*). They were drawn, as are many visitors, by the interesting mix of fine restaurants and pedestrian-oriented retail stores on College Avenue. **Rockridge's C-31 retail and restaurant zone serves a valuable regional and national advertising function promoting Oakland.**

During the same period of time, Dreyer's has eliminated even its few modest references to Oakland in its Annual Report. It's unfortunate, but Dreyer's, with its heavy internal emphasis on "heritage," doesn't see fit to even mention Oakland in its annual report, except in the address.

Home Today – Gone Corporate Tomorrow

Dreyer's has already demolished, converted, or kept out of circulation 15 residential units from Oakland's housing stock, and now proposes to tear down a 16th. The residential character of the Chabot/Claremont/College triangle has been seriously eroded as Rockridge has been deprived of residents, and the City has been deprived of business tax revenues on the rental of converted units. **Only BART and Highway 24 construction have permanently removed more housing stock in Rockridge than Dreyer's.**

During the last expansion in 1989, Dreyer's took three lots on Chabot Road out of residential use in the R-35 zone. Two houses, in use as a duplex and a triplex, were demolished for parking. The third, next to the parking lot, still contains a classic two-story Craftsman stucco house with a two-story rear duplex. Dreyer's uses these homes for corporate and industrial purposes, including separate men's and women's company fitness spas, employee parking, and a product test kitchen (added in 1992, according to completed Building Permits on file). **These units violate Oakland Zoning Code Sections 4484 & 7026 (conversion of living units to non-residential use) and the R-35 residential zone.**

Continued on next page

Comments by Susan Smartt, Boardmember, East Bay Regional Park District

A Vision for Our Regional Parks

East Bay Regional Park District boardmembers, staff and citizen volunteers are continuing work on the newest District Master Plan, the road map for District policies and programs into the next century. The Master Plan sets general policies for planning, land acquisition, resource preservation, restoration and management, recreational development, nature education, and park operations.

The current Master Plan was adopted in 1988; work to amend it was started in 1994. Major steps taken so far include approval by the Park District Board of the overall process for completion of the Master Plan, and a series of public meetings that led to approval of the first Cultural Diversity Policy for the District. The next step is development of a Public Review Document that will outline Master Plan issues for review during public forums this fall.

A key component of the planning process is citizen input. The Park Advisory Committee (PAC) is a group of citizen volunteers who are appointed by the Park District Board, other public agencies and citizen organizations. The PAC is working with District staff to identify issues that will be included in the Public Review Document. The dates and locations of the public forums to review this document have not yet been set, but will be noticed in the local newspaper well in advance.

I recently appointed Rockridge resident [and former RCPC Boardmember] Gary Jereczek to the PAC. If you are interested in Master Plan issues or need information on the public process, you may call him during working hours at (415) 433-2220, ext. 272.

There have been significant changes affecting the Park District since approval of the 1988 Master Plan. These have included passage of the $225 million Measure AA Open Space Bond Act in 1988; establishment of the East Contra Costa County Assessment District in 1991; adoption of the two-county Regional Trails Assessment District and passage of state legislation creating the East Shore State Park, both in 1993; and the Camping Task Force in 1994.

Our two-county District continues to be a growing, dynamic place. The Park District Board serves as stewards of citizens' investment in the quality of their lives as we balance increasing needs with declining resources. I encourage your creative thinking and participation as we think and re-think the many policy decisions that will be made during the Master Plan update process. ■

Dreyer's

from page 8

Dreyer's also demolished a duplex and house at 6044-46 Claremont Avenue, which it had been using as offices, and proposes to demolish the pink-and-white Craftsman stucco four-plex at 6048 Claremont Avenue, currently in use as offices for Dreyer's.

Keeping It Legal

Dreyer's knows that Oakland law requires it to get a Major Conditional Use Permit for residential conversion. In the 1989 EIR, it implies it obtained a permit in the mid-1980s to convert three residential units on Claremont Avenue to offices (later demolished for the existing parking lot), but City Planning staff found no Department records to back up that claim.

Dreyer's was specifically denied permission to build the product test kitchen during its first application for expansion, because it is an industrial use. Although the house and duplex at 5939-43 Chabot Rd. were in just-remodeled condition when acquired, Dreyer's has claimed it cannot return these houses to their legal residential use, citing the money it has invested in the illegal conversions! **Neither the corporate fitness spas nor the product test kitchen qualifies for *any* zoning exemption under Oakland law.**

These conversions are an arrogant corporate flouting of Oakland law, and show a real contempt for our city and our neighborhood, which fought hard to preserve housing. Dreyer's should know Oakland's laws apply equally to it.

The current project proposes to convert even more residential land to commercial use, and includes tearing down a house zoned R-60, high-density residential. One house would remain on Claremont as a self-described buffer zone, but given Dreyer's flagrant track record of illegal residential conversions, one can but speculate on this one's intended corporate function.

Expand and Abandon a la Kaiser

For many years, PANIL fought the expansion of Kaiser Hospital into their residential areas. As Kaiser grew, it expanded from Broadway to Howe Street and Piedmont Avenue. **Kaiser's move to Emeryville will leave several large buildings empty, and take away a significant percentage of Piedmont Avenue's shoppers.** Piedmont Avenue merchants, PANIL, and Oakland officials face tough decisions on what to do with large, specialized buildings that are unsuitable for conversion and re-use by small scale retail businesses and offices.

Since 1988, Dreyer's has grown nationally from 575 employees to the current 2062, according to *America's Fastest Growing Employers*, 1994, and Compuserve's *Disclosure, Inc.*, 1994. The growth on College Avenue has been from 22 office employees plus 35 day-shift factory workers in the mid-80s to the current 192 office workers. The 1989 EIR was based on a maximum of 165 employees, which the current proposal almost doubles to 310. Since Dreyer's has proposed to double its presence twice in six years, future growth into the residential zone must be a concern based on past performance.

Dreyer's *Belongs* in Downtown Oakland

The current Dreyer's building can lend itself to small office conversion, but, combined with the newly proposed building, there is very little re-use potential without prohibitively expensive and extensive renovation. **According to the project architects, no part of this project is designed for re-use.** As a publicly held corporation, Dreyer's cannot make absolute future commitments to remain in Oakland, and the adverse economic impact of over 194,000 sq.ft. of empty buildings, badly suited for conversion, would be severe should Dreyer's move after completing this proposed expansion. Fluctuations in corporate size that can be absorbed in a Downtown economy could easily be devastating in Rockridge.

If Dreyer's left College for Downtown Oakland now, a minimized economic impact would be felt as the current building filled up with accountants, lawyers, architects and other professional offices. Downtown, as Dreyer's continues to grow, it can expand without fistsful of Conditional Use Permits, encroachment on residential land, and destruction of housing stock. If it leaves (like the downtown Blue Cross did), its office space would be immediately reusable for other large-scale corporate use.

Among College Avenue businesses, Dreyer's, a national corporate administrative headquarters, is out of place. As a large, rich corporation, Dreyer's, unlike the neighborhood, can buy most of what it wants. Let us hope that does not include the common sense of our public officials as they weigh the true value of one corporation's immediate wishes against the long-term health of a thriving neighborhood that generates top business license tax and property tax revenues to the benefit of *all* of Oakland. **Oakland's Downtown needs more corporate businesses to succeed, and Rockridge is a neighborhood that doesn't need fixing.** Dreyer's belongs in Oakland, and Rockridge neighbors will be the first to applaud Dreyer's continued success and expansion — but it shouldn't happen at our neighborhood's expense. ■

Make *Your* Impression in Rockridge

There's still time to order a granite tile (or section of a tile) to pave the new library entry.

- For $100 – 3 lines of type, 20 letters/spaces per line
- For $300 – 4 lines of type, 20 letters/spaces per line

Or make a donation in any amount to help buy books and furnishings. Donors of over $500 will have their names engraved on a plaque to be displayed in the library. Send checks to Neighbors for a Rockridge Library, 5856 College Avenue, #130, Oakland 94618. Want information? Call Nancy Dutcher, 653-6018. ■


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The Rockridge Muse

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Open Studio Reminder

Eleven artists from the Rockridge neighborhood are opening their studios to public view during the 13th annual East Bay Open Studios event on the weekends of June 10-11 and June 17-18. For a list of local artists' studios with addresses and a summary of their work, check last month's *Rockridge News*. For information about the citywide event, contact the event's sponsor, Pro Arts, at 461 Ninth Street in Oakland, (510) 763-4361.



Karen LeGault, Locksley Avenue resident and a participant in the Open Studios event, will be showing this watercolor along with her other works on rice and rag paper, combining Chinese compositions and brush painting techniques with Western color and form.

It's Elementary, My Dear Christensen Heller

Christensen Heller Gallery (5831 College Avenue) will be featuring young artists from Alameda's Otis Elementary School at a show that opens on Tuesday, June 20 through Saturday, July 1. A reception for the artists will be held on Saturday, June 24, from 1-2 p.m. As with previous students' exhibits, all proceeds from the sale of the art work will go toward a cause of the children's choice.

Walk On the Wild Side of College Avenue (Which Side is That?)

Oakland Heritage Alliance, the city's umbrella preservation organization, will again be sponsoring summer walking tours from July through August. Logically, College Avenue's commercial district is the subject of a new walking tour on Sunday, July 30, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., led by local historian Jennifer Katz and long-time walking tour guide Sharon Moore.

Other tour locales include Mountain View Cemetery, Brooklyn Historic District (and if you don't know where that is, you should definitely get out your walking shoes), Oakland's Chinatown, and the historic churches of San Antonio, to name just a few of the sixteen tours. To receive a full schedule, call Oakland Heritage Alliance at 763-9218.

Did'ja Ever Wonder How They Make Chairs?

In a ground-breaking move, the California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC) is offering an Extended Education program for the general public beginning this summer — an exciting prospect. Courses are offered at CCAC's San Francisco and Rockridge (5212 Broadway at College Avenue) campuses. Some local classes have already started, but it is still possible to register (if you act quickly) for a number of courses that have not yet begun: Wood Surface Design, Veneering, Chair Making, Designing Jigs and Fixtures, Traditional Water Gilding, and Practices and Principles of Joinery. The courses are all taught by successful professionals and are offered on a not-for-credit basis.

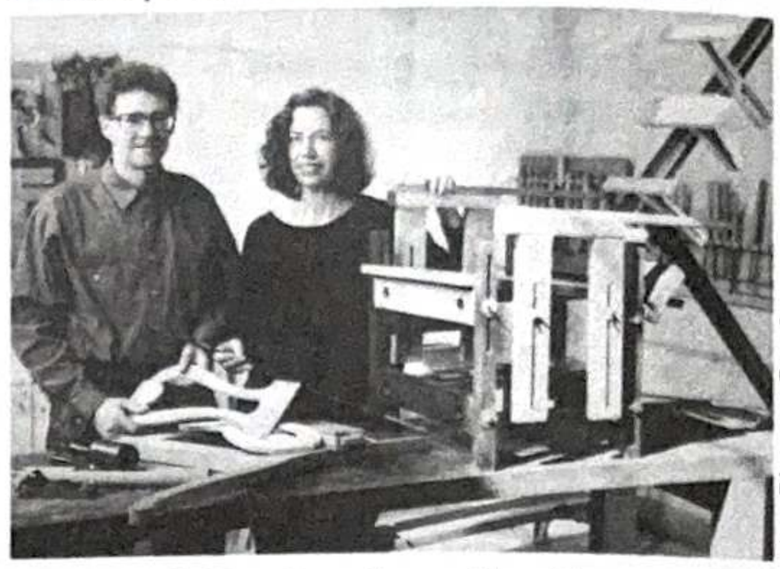


Photo: Sharon Beals

John and Carolyn Grew-Sheridan with the "Fitting Chair" they will use in CCAC's summer Chair Making class.

According to CCAC's new Director of Extended Education, Nina Sadek, another group of offerings is scheduled for the fall, and an even more extensive program will begin in January. To be placed on CCAC's Extended Education mailing list or to register for a class, call CCAC at (510) 653-3710.

If you managed to read through this column, well, that's an adventure of some merit and you do get points for it. Advance the cause: let the Muse know what creative things you're up to. Send your news/ To The Muse at 5856 College Avenue, #130, Oakland 94618. ■

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Zoning Applications

This column provides a list of new and continuing City of Oakland Planning Department applications as well as decisions affecting the Rockridge area. RCPC tracks all commercial and residential applications, usually provides comments on proposals to the City's Planning Commission, and brings to the attention of the Rockridge community those propositions that merit community-wide concern.

The information listed in the column is taken from the Planning Commission's agenda, the Commission's final report to the applicant, and/or the case file or comments made at public hearing. The number following the applicant's name and address is the Planning Department case number. Call the Planning Department at 238-3911 for additional information on a particular item.

Rockridge Area Plan/Case File SAP 9.02

At May 24, 1994, hearing, Planning Commission referred the Rockridge Area Plan, as submitted to Planning staff by RCPC in March 1994, to the General Plan Congress for incorporation into City's General Plan, as appropriate.

City Planning Commission/Case No. ZT95-67 (Amendments to Zoning Regulation section 9300)

Proposal by Planning staff to streamline non-residential Design Review process for color changes, certain signs, awnings, and other "minor" changes for existing facilities. May 24, 1995, public hearing continued to June 21, 1995, at 6:30 p.m. for further input and consideration of guidelines to implement amendments. ■

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Rockridge Expatriates Seek to Return

Couple and toddler seek 2+ bedroom house or flat for long-term rental. Looking for quiet location, gas appliances, yard, near BART. Excellent references. Call Katherine or Alan at 559-9567.

Algae Comes to Rockridge

If you've heard about Super Blue Green Algae and wanted to learn more, now is your chance. Rockridge distributor offering free trial to Rockridge residents. Recorded message at 464-4542 or E-mail to ljvw71@prodigy, com.

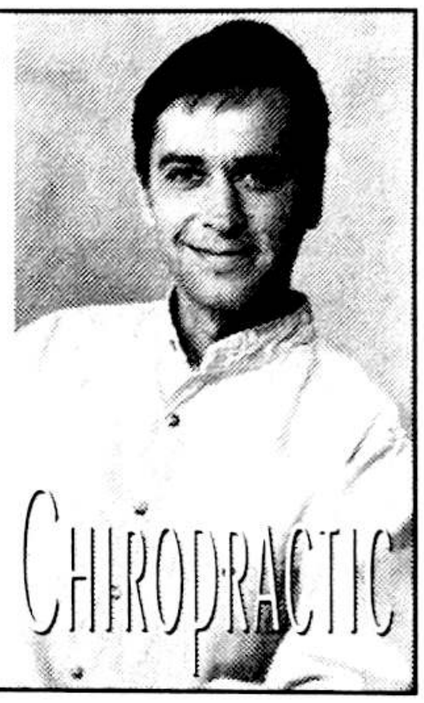
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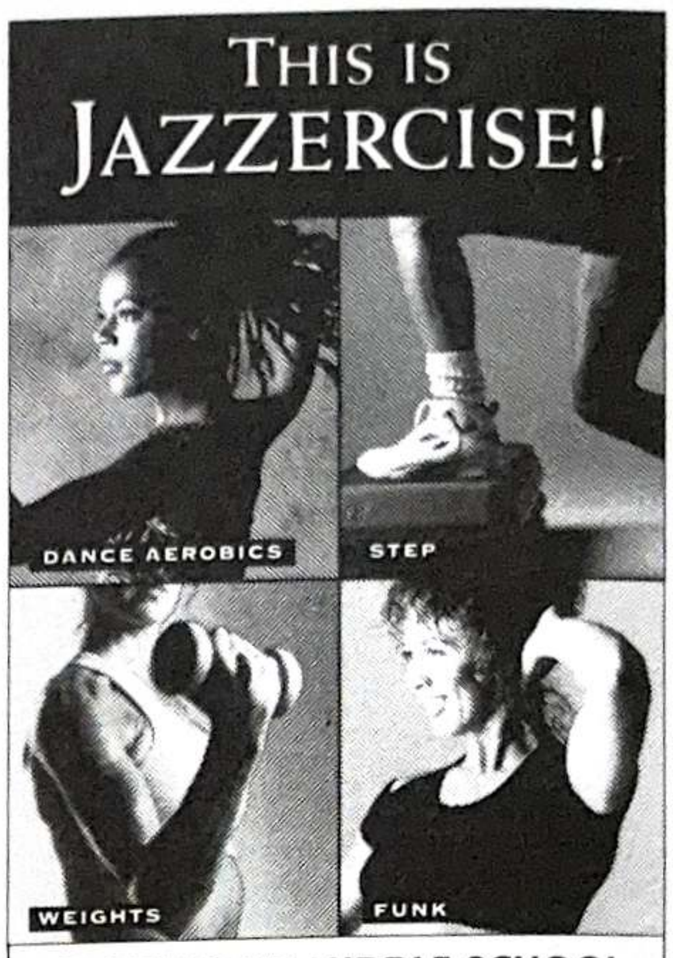
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