☎ NOTE: RCPC has a new phone number. Call 510/644-4228 with questions and comments on community issues. ☎

THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

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Sponsored by The Rockridge Community Planning Council • 5245 College Ave. PMB 311 • Oakland, CA 94618 • 644-4228



PHOTO: LYDIA GANS

Rockridge Branch Head Librarian Pat Lichter enjoys her new position.

New Head Librarian For Rockridge Library

For the first time in 1-1/2 years, the Rockridge branch of the Oakland Public Library has a head librarian. She is Pat Lichter, a longtime librarian with extensive experience working in Bay Area libraries and with young people.

Although she lives in Albany, Pat says, "I've spent a lot of time in Rockridge. I can tell I'm going to love this community, and the building's gorgeous. I'm already having fun."

Marilyn Citron, chair of Friends of the Rockridge Library, says supporters are

LIBRARIAN, PAGE 10

District Redraw Plan Could Split Rockridge: RCPC Opposed

Strong opposition to a redistricting proposal that would have split Rockridge in half was voiced in a letter from the Rockridge Community Planning Council to Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown and members of the City Council. At a meeting last month, the Council appeared to be moving away from the drastic change.

The Council's original Plans A and B kept Rockridge intact, while Plan C1 proposed dividing Rockridge at Shafter/Keith (near Market Hall) and attaching the two sections to different council districts. "This shape seems particularly odd, and intended at some level to divide our neighborhood in two, both in terms of representation and in terms of neighborhood collaboration," RCPC Chair Glen Tripp said in his February letter. "It just does not make sense to split such a cohesive neighborhood."

Plan C1 proposes dividing Rockridge at Shafter/Keith (near Market Hall) and attaching the two sections to different council districts.

At a March 18 meeting, the Oakland City Council tentatively approved the Reid-de la Fuente compromise plan, which makes significant boundary changes in other districts but leaves Rockridge intact. A final report will be submitted for approval later this month. Full details on the redistricting plan are available at www.oaklandnet.com.

Every decade, political district boundaries are redrawn in response to population shifts. According to the 2000 Census, District 1, which now includes Rockridge, has grown by only 50 residents while the city of Oakland has grown much more rapidly. District 1 will need 3,172 additional residents to meet the new population standard, while other districts will need to lose residents.

Redistricting also affects state and national election units. However, because RCPC's concerns are primarily local, the impact of being in two different City Council districts would be much stronger.

DISTRICT PROPOSAL, PAGE 13

agenda: RCPC General Meeting

Thursday, April 24, 7:30 p.m.

Rockridge Branch Library
Community Room
5366 College Avenue at Manila

■ **Candidates Night**

Come listen to candidates for the Rockridge Community Planning Council's Board of Directors and cast your vote.

■ **Meet Councilmember Brunner**

City Councilmember Jane Brunner talks about her North Oakland LivableCommunities Project and asks: How can we make Rockridge a better place to live?

Brunner Has Questions, Plans For Rockridge Improvements

Rockridge is the model of a livable community that City Councilmember Jane Brunner had in mind when she launched her North Oakland Livable Communities Project, but "even though Rockridge is an extremely successful neighborhood, I believe we can make it better," she says.

At the Rockridge Community Planning Council's April 24 General Meeting, she'll be seeking ideas on how we could make Rockridge an even better place to live. The meeting will also include brief remarks by candidates for RCPC's board of directors, followed by voting at the meeting. Residents may also vote on Saturday, April 26 at the Rockridge Library. (The candidates

RCPC IN APRIL, PAGE 3

Vote for RCPC Board Candidates at the April General Meeting or on Saturday, April 26.

Around the Neighborhood



by Jacqueline Tasch, Editor, **The Rockridge News**

College Avenue Merchants: Always the Core of the Neighborhood

You don't have to live long in Rockridge to know that the lively merchant community on College Avenue is at its heart. Even before the area now identified as Rockridge came to be recognized, College Avenue was drawing the community together.

Growing up on Lawton Avenue in the 1920s, my neighbor Neva remembers lots of attractions on College Avenue: a Bank of America where Market Hall now stands, a Chimes Theater nearby, and a German deli that sold pickles and sausage. The streetcar to downtown Oakland ran up College, and Neva and her playmates would look down Lawton to see when the streetcar went by on College, then race up Broadway to catch it there.

Those were different times, of course. Instead of the recycling truck, the rag and bottle man came by from time to time. "Every Saturday a lady came to the house and washed our hair," Neva says, although she can't remember why that seemed necessary. Kids at the Alcatraz end of Rockridge went to The Pink School, a one-room school (named after its color) in the lot where Safeway shoppers now park. Neva and her friends went to the Claremont School—no Middle to it—which offered Grades 1 through 8.

After some time at the New England Conservatory of Music and a brief marriage, Neva soon returned to Oakland. In 1945, she came back to Rockridge, moving into a house on Ross Circle with her daughter and her mother—three generations sharing the house. Although Ross Circle started life as a mere driveway for the Ross farm, by the 1940s a number of houses had been built, most of them bigger and grander than the one Neva and her family occupied. B. F. Edwards, an executive with Bank of America, lived in the big house at 106 Ross—the first on the block—and prominent architect Worley Wong lived up the street, next door to the well-known painter, Jason Schoener. Neva's daughter Jacquelin had only one potential playmate on the mostly child-free block. Fortunately, they became good friends, enjoying the neighborhood's doings, especially visits by Ah Bing, who brought his horse-drawn wagon up Ross with produce and other treats.

Not that there weren't shops at this end of College, too, including a produce market and butcher at the corner of Florio. In a time before two coffee shops per block, students tended to hang out at the tables the pharmacy put out for patrons of its soda fountain. Neva has enjoyed the proliferation of restaurants on College, and she was such a fan of La Farine's morning buns that her photo hung on the wall there for a time.

"As far back as I can remember," Neva says (and that's going some), "College Avenue has been much the same as it is today. Lots of small shops with warm service and friendly people inside."

Which makes it especially hard to see shops closing on College Avenue—some of them longtime neighbors who've added to the quality of life in this special place. Elsewhere in this issue, you'll find a list of recent closings and a story about the departed Sierra Club bookstore.

I'd prefer to focus on the longtime neighbors who continue to fill our grocery bags, clean our clothes, cut our hair, and fix our cars and bikes. Some of you may have stories about Rockridge's longtime merchants and service businesses—those on the street for at least a decade or two. Others may have questions about how old favorites came to be. Please share your stories and questions. My mailbox awaits your words.

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

See Community Calendar, page 15, for Library program details.

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 non-profit public benefit organization founded to: preserve and enhance the unique character of the Rockridge neighborhood; promote the health, safety and quality of life of its residents; furnish a forum for community involvement, and provide leadership and representation of neighborhood interests.

***Rockridge News* Production**

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Neil Getz, Claire Isaacs... Writers
Barry Kaufman.....Food
Jo Ellis.....Calendar
Theresa Nelson.....Neighborhood Merchant
Lydia Gans.....Photography
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Susan Montauk.....Business Manager
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Contacting *The Rockridge News*

- Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in ***The Rockridge News***?
- Do you have questions about newsletter distribution?
- Would you like to volunteer to be a *Rockridge News* block captain?

Contact us at one of the following addresses or telephone numbers:

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www.rockridge.org
The Rockridge News, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618
RCPC Voicemail: 644-4228

Newsletter Advertising/Deadlines

Publication date of the next issue is
- **May 5, 2003;**
- **May deadline is April 17.**

Advertising rates are $22/column inch. Six-month pre-pay rate available. To advertise, call Lauri Scharber at 655-2196. *(RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad that it deems inappropriate.)*

At the March RCPC Meeting

Bungalow Fever at RCPC Monthly Meeting

by Claire Isaacs

The Arts and Crafts Design Movement may have originated in England, but its influence spread widely throughout the United States between 1900 and 1930. This aesthetic movement was adapted to residential housing in the form of the Craftsman bungalow, a style of housing enormously popular in California and truly ubiquitous in Rockridge.

Thus, the people who attended RCPC's monthly meeting on Thursday evening, March 20, at the Rockridge Library, were absolutely glued to the brilliant slide lecture offered by author and Arts and Crafts expert Paul Duchscherer. Although the war in Iraq started that day, an eager crowd of neighbors abandoned the breaking news to learn about this beautiful period in home design. Using a large and exceptionally varied set of slides, Duchscherer traced the Craftsman bungalow style through the first three decades of the 20th century.

The word bungalow, explained Duchscherer, derived from the East Indian word, bangala, a native mud hut in India featuring heavily overhung roofs. The word was Anglicized during the English Raj. The first use of the word bungalow in America dates to about 1880. Here it describes small, cottage-like structures, usually one story. Some built low-rent bungalow complexes, especially in Southern California, and the wealthy commissioned custom bungalows and larger houses in the Craftsman style.

But most homes were built for middle class owners. Potential owners could order everything from floor plans to interior and exterior wall treatments, even special built-ins such as a sideboard, benches, bookshelves, and cabinets. Special add-ons included sleeping porches and sliding pocket doors to hide extra sleeping, studying or work space. These houses were attractively economical.

More important, "they offered a new kind of house for a new century," said Duchscherer. The long hallways and entry ways characteristic of Victorians disappeared. Visitors to a bungalow enter the living room itself and pass from room to room directly rather than through a hall. The Arts and Crafts influence can be seen in the way construction is exposed. Beams, columns and supports under the extended eaves were not covered with stucco, stone or wood.

For the rapt audience, this history of Rockridge's signature home style was pure delight. Those who missed this thorough and detailed presentation may look for books by Paul Duchscherer and his co-author, Douglas Keister: *The Bungalow*, *Inside the Bungalow* and *Outside the Bungalow*, as well as several on specific aspects such as fireplaces. They should be available in local Rockridge bookstores. Duchscherer's latest publication is *Victorian Glory.*

RCPC in April

from page 1

describe themselves and their reasons for running on pages 4 and 5.)

Following are some of the questions Councilmember Brunner would like residents to consider:

- Are the streets in Rockridge walkable and do they feel safe?
- Are there enough high-quality programs and recreational opportunities for youth?
- What stores and services can you walk to from your home? What business would you like to see close by?
- How can we capitalize on what's good about your neighborhood to make Rockridge even better?

RCPC's General Meeting is one of several neighborhood meetings Brunner plans to hold as part of the North Oakland Livable Communities Project. At each, residents will be asked to describe their neighborhood's strengths and weaknesses and to identify the two most important projects. "To me, a Livable Community is a place where housing, schools, parks and shopping are all within easy walking distance, and convenient public transportation gets residents to jobs and social services in other communities," Brunner says.

"When I envisioned this project, I wanted to replicate the lessons and successes of Rockridge in every neighborhood in North Oakland," Brunner says. "North Oakland's neighborhoods are among the best in the Bay Area, but there is still much we can do to make them everything we want them to be."

Interested residents may attend the RCPC meeting or call Brunner's office at 238-7001.



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Address	*Bed/Ba*	*List Price*	*Selling Price*	*Close Date*
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465 Hudson	2/1	$469,000	$620,000	03/11/03
393 61st	2/1	$595,000	$745,000	03/14/03
5340 Broadway Ter	2/2	$489,000	$510,000	03/21/03
5690 Ocean View	4/1	$849,000	$935,000	03/21/03
59 Bowling Drive	5/6	$3,100,000	$2,800,000	03/21/03

Rockridge sales volume is down 63% (13 homes sold in this quarter vs. 35 in the last quarter)
This decrease in supply vs. the demand drives the prices up. Median price of a home in Rockridge is currently $627,000.

If you are thinking of buying or selling call me for a free consultation.

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VOTE FOR RCPC BOARDMEMBERS: APRIL 24 AND APRIL 26.

Rockridge Residents to Elect New Members Of RCPC Board

A candidates' forum and election for the 2003 Board of Directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council will take place at the General Meeting in the Rockridge Library on April 24 at 7:30 p.m. Residents are invited to meet the candidates, ask questions, and cast their votes. Votes may also be cast outside the Rockridge Library on Saturday, April 26, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Rockridge residents who are over 18 and who live within RCPC boundaries are eligible to vote (see map at www.rockridge.org for boundaries, or at the library). Voters will be asked to verify their address with a driver's license.

Dan Ferdelman

Claremont Avenue



For the past two years I have served on the RCPC Board and the RCPC Land Use Committee. I have worked with residents, the city of Oakland, property owners and developers to foster a satisfying built environment and good community. I would like to continue to serve our community and ensure it remains the dynamic and charming place we all love. I currently work for a residential architect in San Francisco as project manager and designer, but my education includes a degree in Community Planning. My experience includes working on residential and commercial remodels and new construction; I have also worked for community nonprofits and city development agencies. As a five-year resident of Rockridge, I appreciate the special nature of our community and if re-elected I will work toward the preservation and enhancement of our neighborhood.

David Hatfield

Manila Avenue



I am running for re-election to the Rockridge Community Planning Council because my first year on the council has been enjoyable and there's more I'd like to do. In my first year on the RCPC, I became involved in our ongoing website redesign and also with the committee to explore the beautification of the exterior of the BART station. I was also recently named Editor-in-Chief of *The Rockridge News*. My wife and I are expecting our first child in July and we plan to make Rockridge our home for quite a few years. I'd like to be as involved as possible during that time.

Hiroko Kurihara

62nd Street



Our family moved into the neighborhood almost five years ago. We've come to know our neighbors and almost every merchant on College Avenue. Now, I'd like the opportunity to work on long-term issues that affect the livelihood of this vibrant neighborhood, like advocating for sustainable transportation plans and ensuring that there are more neighborhood-serving businesses. This year, I'm starting a skills and interests survey of my immediate neighborhood to help share stories and strengthen our community. My formal education is in textile design from the Rhode Island School of Design. I applied my skills towards urban design, then community economic development for the past 10 years, primarily in the not-for-profit field. I have experience on not-for-profit boards and commissions. Recently, I started a home-based socially responsible business that produces hand-made blankets and scarves. I feel blessed to be living in Rockridge with my husband, Jason, my 10-year-old son, Theo, and my 2-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Denali. I look forward to being part of the commitment and energy that the RCPC Board represents.

CANDIDATES CONTINUE TOP OF NEXT PAGE

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Jessica Pitt
James Avenue



I have lived in Rockridge for the past four years and recently became a homeowner in the neighborhood. I work for a non-profit community development organization in Oakland and assist neighborhood organizations throughout the city to build their capacity to shape local development. I would like to become more involved in my own community and bring my experience and skills in neighborhood development to Rockridge. This year, I served on the District 1 Community Development Board, which recommends allocations for Oakland's Community Development Block Grant funds. As an RCPC board member, I would seek to encourage opportunities for neighborhood residents to become more involved in decisions that affect our community, and to build a stronger sense of community among Rockridge residents.

John Potis
College Avenue



I am volunteering to serve on the RCPC Board because, as a landscape architect, I would like to continue to see excellent land use in the Rockridge neighborhood. It's important to assure that neighborhood projects, especially larger scale projects like Dreyers, Market Hall and the CCAC dormitory, devote as much attention to site design as they do to building design. Common areas such as the BART Station, the 51st Street median, and neighborhood parks and playgrounds need regular review to assure they meet safety, utility and aesthetic standards. Further, if resistance to a fourth Caldecott bore fails, land use must be an essential part of mitigation. I would appreciate your vote and promise to work hard for the good of the community.



Glen Tripp
Hillegass Avenue



I joined the RCPC Board two years ago shortly after moving here with my family. In my first year, I involved myself with recruiting volunteers for the big FROGpark build and helping to create the community service grant for schools that was recently awarded to North Oakland Community Charter School. I was elected Chair in my second year and have since involved myself mostly in the duties of organizing the monthly board meetings, recruiting new volunteers, helping the organization set its strategic priorities, and enjoying being a new father. In the next two years, I'd like to focus even more on the idea of connecting interested neighbors with community service opportunities. Additionally, I'd like to support the UnderBART project and the completion of Phase II of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt. Thanks for your support.

Greg Yoch
Shafter Avenue



My name is Greg Yoch. My wife Ahroon and I have lived on Shafter Avenue in Rockridge for about a year. I've been a resident of the Bay Area since 1996. My professional background is in business, specifically marketing, sales and consulting. I am currently the Director of Retail Sales and Marketing at Niman Ranch in Oakland. I'm thrilled with the Rockridge neighborhood and all it has to offer. My goal is to be more connected with the people of this community and make it even a better place. I would like to do that by applying my leadership, creativity, and organizational skills to the RCPC. One of my first objectives is to organize fun, informal events to promote greater social connection between residents.

Rockridge Kitchen Tour Seeks Volunteers



Rockridge Kitchen Tour Co-Chairs Deborah Larson, Susan Montauk, and Natalie Mehta (pictured from left to right) are busy cooking up plans for the 2003 Tour. You can help.

PHOTO: LYDIA GANS

by Natalie Mehta

The Rockridge Kitchen Tour Committee has had the pleasure of being invited into a number of neighborhood homes as we continue the selection process for kitchens to feature in the fall tour. Suffice it to say that the temporary inconvenience of cooking on a camping stove in the garage and washing dishes in the bathroom sink has resulted in many stunning renovations to Rockridge kitchens, and we look forward to a spectacular tour on September 28.

The tour has become a Bay Area favorite since its inception in 1995, and much of its success is due to the enthusiasm

TOUR, PAGE 13

April 19: FROG Community Day Offers Opportunity

by Carroll Moore

If you and your kids have spent happy times at Hardy or Redondo playgrounds, or you can take an hour or so to do a little neighborhood spring cleaning, one golden opportunity is the Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt (FROG) semi-annual Community Day on April 19. We need help to sweep the walkways and play structures, rake the groundcover, sift the sandboxes, collect trash and do other family-friendly tasks. Bring children of all ages for an hour or the whole day – anytime between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. There will be something for everyone to do.

Rockridge and Temescal had no community playgrounds until October 2001, when more than 1,300 volunteers labored side-by-side to build the park play structures. In those sad and uncertain days after 9/11, FROGpark was a place for us to work and be together, joined in community by a powerful and peaceful task. The work continues, and everyone can still be a FROGpark volunteer.

As part of FROG'S negotiations with the city, the community agreed to help keep the play areas and structures in good shape. During Community Days in the spring and fall, we add new features, clean the play structures and grounds and do needed repairs. The work provides another chance for us to join in common cause.

When you come to the Hardy or Redondo Parks, please bring work gloves, a water bottle, rake, broom and hand whisk if possible. You may want to label your belongings so they don't get mixed up with others. Bring your own lunch for a picnic in the park from 12 to 1 p.m. Beverages and dessert will be provided for all volunteers. If you can bring a dessert for the group, please contact Kate at 658-7833.

This workday will also be your *last opportunity* to make your own ceramic tile to decorate the playground. "We had such a tremendous response to the tile-making fundraiser, we've already nearly filled the playground fencing with tiles," says tile-making volunteer Karen Cheever. The tile-making ($25 each) will take place near the Hardy Park play structure. Don't forget your checkbooks.

Contact carroll@arcadiaworks.com if you have questions or need more information.

FROG Playgrounds Free of Carcinogenic Wood

In February 2003, the Consumer Products Safety Commission issued a report acknowledging the health risks associated with common "pressure treated" CCA (chromated copper arsenate) lumber. Since the 1970s, much of the wood used for playgrounds, decks and other outdoor construction has been treated with pesticides that contain arsenic or other carcinogens. These carcinogens leach from the wood and create significant health risks when contacted, including an increased incidence of bladder and lung cancer.

The FROG playgrounds do not contain CCA treated wood. Responsible alternatives, including ChoiceDeck (recycled plastic lumber), ACQ Preserve (non-toxic exterior lumber) and other environmentally sound materials were consciously used, and the playgrounds do not pose a carcinogenic risk to any users. Visit www.leathersassociates.com for more information about the safe materials used throughout the FROG playgrounds, and go have fun at the park!

FROGpark Offers Materials Surplus

If you're planning to build a deck for your backyard or if other projects are on your spring agenda, the FROGpark playground project has surplus lumber at heavily discounted prices—and it is environmentally responsible and non-toxic (no arsenic!). The wood is pressure-treated 2x4 and 2x6 lumber suitable for decking and other weather-exposed construction. You'll not only save lots of money by buying from FROG, your purchase will help fund other community projects. For information, call Jimmy Pedersen at 652-8440.

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April 19: Temescal Creek and 51st Street Cleanup

Get a head start on Earth Day celebrations

Two local groups are organizing volunteers to spruce up our public areas in time for spring. While official Earth Day activities elsewhere in the Bay Area are taking place on April 22, Oakland crews will hit the streets on April 19.

by Jacqueline Hoeppner-Freitas, Chair, DMV Neighbors Association

Temescal Creek and neighboring areas on 51st Street are targets for Earth Day volunteers in North Oakland on April 19, in a cleanup is sponsored by the DMV Neighbors Association (DNA), under the City of Oakland's Adopt-a-Creek Program. The nearby Colombo Club, an Italian neighborhood organization established in the 1920s, will provide the pasta part of a potluck for workers after the job is done.

At 9 a.m., volunteers for the creek-and street-cleaning projects should sign in at Temescal Creek in the Department of Motor Vehicles parking lot at Clarement and Cavour. Tasks will include weeding, raking, picking up debris, sweeping, pruning, and cutting back ivy. Creek volunteers should wear boots because of the wet creek bed. Fifty-first Street volunteers will work between Telegraph and Lawton Avenues.

The City will supply some gloves, garbage bags, and tools (rakes, hoes, shovels, brooms, loppers, etc.). However, volunteers are urged to bring their favorite, well-marked tools and gloves in case city supplies run out. In addition, wheelbarrows are always welcome because green waste is stacked, not bagged.

When the work is done—about noon—the DNA-Colombo Club-sponsored potluck will take place at 5275 Redondo, across Cavour from the DMV. Donations of side dishes such as green salad or fruit salad are always appreciated. The Colombo Club brings pasta and garlic bread; the DNA will supply dessert and beverages.

For more information call Margaret at 655-1767.

ROCKRIDGE CRIME REPORT

Rockridge Area Crimes Reported to OPD

Report Period: 2/20 – 3/15/03

by Neil Getz

Date	Description	Address
2/20/03	Burglary: Commercial	B'way (Coronado - College)
2/21/03	Attempted Robbery	Taft & College
	Vehicle Theft	B'way (Napa - B'way Terr.)
	Vehicle Theft	Colby & Claremont
2/22/03	Burglary: Residential	Claremont (Clarke - Telegraph)
	Theft: Personal Property [Over $400]	Boyd (Clifton - Cavour)
2/23/03	Burglary: Residential	Locksley (Clifton - Cavour)
	Burglary: Residential	Shafter (Clifton - Cavour)
2/24/03	Petty Theft: Shoplift	College & Harwood
	Burglary: Auto	Cavour & Locksley
2/25/03	Burglary: Commercial	College (Bryant - Clifton)
	Vehicle Theft	Ayala & Howell
	Petty Theft w/Prior for Theft/Burglary/Robbery	Telegraph & Alcatraz
	Petty Theft w/Prior for Theft/Burglary/Robbery	Telegraph (50 St. - 51 St.)
2/26/03	Burglary: Residential	Hudson (Shafter - Miles)
	Burglary: Auto	Claremont & Martin
	Burglary: Auto	Ocean View (McMillan - B'way)
	Assault with Caustic Chemical	Telegraph (50 St. - 51 St.)
2/27/03	Burglary: Residential	Telegraph (Claremont - 55 St.)
	Burglary: Auto	Ayala (Martin - Howell)
	Burglary: Residential	49 St. & Lawton
	Vehicle Theft	50 St. (Lawton - Shafter)
2/28/03	Vehicle Theft	Desmond (Coronado - 51 St.)
	Burglary: Auto	Auburn (Florio - Mystic)
	Burglary: Auto	Taft (B'way - College)
3/1/03	Theft: Personal Property	Telegraph & 51 St.
	Vehicle Theft	Oak Grove (Forest - College)
	Burglary: Auto	55 St. (Vicente - Telegraph)
3/2/03	Robbery	Colby & 61 St.
	Vehicle Theft	Colby (Alcatraz - Woolsey)
3/3/03	Burglary: Auto	Whitmore (Gilbert - B'way)
	Vehicle Theft	49 St. & Coronado
	Burglary: Auto	Ocean View (McMillan - College)
3/4/03	Burglary: Auto	Whitmore (Gilbert - B'way)
	Burglary: Auto	Telegraph (Claremont - 55 St.)
3/7/03	Vehicle Theft	Lawton & Clifton
	Burglary: Auto	Clifton & College
3/9/03	Vehicle Theft	Coronado (49 St. - 51 St.)
	Burglary: Commercial	Telegraph & Alcatraz
	Burglary: Commercial	College & Chabot
	Petty Theft: Auto Clout	Taft (B'way - College)
	Burglary: Auto	Keith & McMillan
3/10/03	Petty Theft	Telegraph (Alcatraz - North)
	Burglary: Auto	Bryant & College
3/11/03	Burglary: Auto	Rockwell (Mystic - Florio)
3/12/03	Burglary: Auto	Whitmore (Gilbert - B'way)
	Burglary: Residential	Belgrave & Napa
	Vehicle Theft	Hudson (Shafter - Locksley)
	Burglary: Auto	Shafter (Forest - Hudson)
	Burglary: Auto	Manila (Bryant - College)
3/13/03	Petty Theft: Shoplift	B'way (Coronado - 51 St.)
3/14/03	Burglary: Auto	Miles (Avon - 51 St.)
3/15/03	Burglary: Commercial	College (Oak Grove - Chabot)

Dial 911 to report crimes and suspicious actvity in progress.

(Cell phone users in Oakland, call 777-3211 for 911 service.)

Remember: If you don't report it, it didn't happen.

Sierra Club Bookstore Closes After 25 Years on College

by Claire Isaacs

A familiar, friendly, even funky little bookstore run by the local Sierra Club Chapter at 6014 College Avenue shut its doors permanently March 15. Rumors and other signs of impending demise had spread for at least two months. A few weeks ago, when the volunteers who staffed the store stopped accepting donated books for their ongoing $1 outdoor sale, it was obvious the end had come.

"In this time of recession and difficult conditions for all independent bookstores, our bookstore has been losing an increasing amount of money. This, alas, cuts into the funds available for the Chapter's conservation mission," The Sierra Club's newsletter, *The Yodeler*, explained in its March issue.

A few days before it closed, customers wandered forlornly through the shop, its shelves nearly emptied by a sale at 40% off. Among the leftovers: an atlas of India, a map of Hungary, snowy Christmas card scenes, stacks of 2003 Sierra Club Calendars, and stationery made of recycled paper. *Fairs and Festivals of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio* might have a limited local audience, but others seemed to have more appeal, for example, *Conversations with Eminent Women in Science* or *California Bass Angling Guide.* And there were also one-of-a-kind gems like *Road Frames, the American Highway Narrative*, by Kris Lackey, which described a 63-day journey across America in 1903. The "first public account of a transcontinental automobile journey," it appeared only 33 years after the death of the last surviving member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Presiding over the store's demise was part-time co-manager Iris Goldman, a volunteer for many years, who consoled visitors and explained the reasons behind the closure between hugs and tears.



Photo: Claire Isaacs

A final customer enters the Sierra Club Bookstore in its closing days.

When it rented the College Avenue space 25 years ago, the Sierra Club's San Francisco chapter wanted office space, but the C-31 zoning for College Avenue requires that street-level space be operated for retail purposes. Thus the shop was opened, showcasing the Sierra Club's many beautiful publications, calendars, and cards as well as offering a wide variety of materials on ecology, natural history, science, conservation and travel.

Ed Bennett, long-time Executive Board member and now assistant treasurer of the Sierra Club chapter, said income peaked at $300,000 a year, just before the Oakland Firestorm of 1991. As residents left the area while houses were rebuilt, store sales dropped. For the last several years, sales have been about $200,000 at best.

Meanwhile, the rent began to creep up, 5% to 7% a year, said Bennett. The original landlord had sympathized with the Sierra Club's cause and kept the rent low. His sons and heirs felt obliged to maximize the return on the property.

Finally the line was crossed, as income fell below expenses.

"There are more and more conservation issues to deal with all the time, requiring more funds," said Bennett. In addition to the campaign to keep oil drilling out of parts of the Arctic Refuge, the Sierra Club has been working to establish the East Shore State Park, and is concerned with plans to develop the Albany Race Track and Franklin Canyon. Bennett said that the board decided that funds to keep the store open would be better spent on conservation and membership activities.

The Sierra Club Chapter now has offices in Berkeley at 2530 San Pablo between Dwight and Blake. The fight to retain open space in the Bay Area, pay for Environmental Impact Reports, and support environmentally minded public officials goes on.

Nevertheless, Rockridge will miss the little "green" hangout on College, a victim of changing times.

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Changes on College
by Theresa Nelson

New Store

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Closed/Moved

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5427 College Avenue

Creme de la Creme
5362 College Avenue

Sierra Club Bookstore
6014 College Avenue

Boero, Inc.
5410-18 College Avenue

Cellular One
5467 College Avenue

Juicy News
3167 College Avenue, Berkeley

Finding Time for Art In Times of War

With our political leaders focused on war, and government budgets going to support waging it, our arts community finds itself sadly neglected—not an unusual experience. But the arts will survive. Try to eliminate them and you might as well tell the world to stop breathing. In fact, tough times tend to reveal the valuable contributions of the arts to help sustain our spirits and distill some meaning from all the chaos and confusion around us.

Look around you for art exhibits—for example, To Conjure a Language at the Pro Arts Gallery Downtown—and poetry readings or plays that respond to war. Everyone can engage in art themselves—so use painting or writing or photography or crafts to express your powerful feelings. Make beauty, not war.

It's important to find time to enjoy or participate in artistic expression—and important as well to contribute resources that support the arts. Here are a couple of opportunities:

Elizabeth House Art Auction

The dedicated volunteers who operate Elizabeth House on Colby Street know that art and music can be great healers.



by Ortrun Niesar

Elizabeth House serves as a temporary haven for disadvantaged women and their children. Director Courtenay Redis takes every opportunity to enrich the lives of her community with art. When I visited, the walls were covered with art works and photographs, and the kids had just finished their afternoon music lessons.

Somehow Courtenay never has a shortage of artists willing to donate their time and talent. As Elizabeth House looks to raise funds this year, many artists are stepping forward to help out. On Saturday, April 26, an art exhibit/ auction and dessert reception at Holy Redeemer Center in Oakland will benefit the women and children at Elizabeth House. Women artists, among them Rockridge artists Karen LeGault, Carol Aust, Claire Lomax and Elizabeth Opalnik, will donate most of the works to be auctioned. If anyone wants to donate more art, attend the auction or volunteer, call Elizabeth House at 658-1380 or visit their web site at www.oakehouse.org.

Park Day School Garden Tour

On Sunday, April 27, Park Day School will hold its 17th annual fundraiser, Secret Gardens of the East Bay. This year, the emphasis is on gardens designed for outdoor living, featuring the work of some of the Bay Area's most noted garden designers. The tour will benefit scholarship and academic programs at Park Day School located at 370 43d Street. For more information and tickets call the Garden Tour Hotline 653-6250.or look up www.secretgardentour.org.

Feather River Arts Camp

The Annual Adult Arts Camp sponsored by the Oakland Parks and Recreation Department at the Oakland Feather River Camp near Quincy will take place this year from July 20 to 27. The cost is extremely reasonable, and the setting is spectacular. Classes will be taught in painting, pottery, writing, guitar, meditation, papermaking, musical instrument making, nature photography and more. Wow! And we didn't even know this was available to us. To take advantage of this hidden treasure, call Karen LeGault, 510/601-1619, or e-mail her at klegault@jps.net. Karen is co-director of the camp.

Rockridge Photo Exhibition

Note: The dates for this year's exhibition are September 21 to October 31. Please call Lydia Gans, 658-4445, or e-mail me at oniesar@aol.com if you would like to participate.

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Librarian

from page 1

"thrilled to welcome new Rockridge branch manager Pat Lichter. We look forward to working with her, and we know she will be an asset to the branch."

Rockridge's good fortune in getting a full-time leader is ironically a result of Oakland's budget problems, a crisis that just weeks ago threatened to close or reduce services at some branches. Instead, most of the cuts were made at the downtown branch. Pat's position directing programs in the Children's Room was restructured, and she was transferred to Rockridge.

She's getting a warm welcome there from old friends and colleagues. Gay Ducey, who has been acting head librarian, is also a children's librarian, and the two have worked together on projects in the past, including Head Start training. Pat has also worked on special projects with Erica Siskind, Gay's partner as Rockridge's children's librarian.

As it happened, to fill in for a sick staffer, Pat spent part of her first day in Rockridge doing a Saturday story time. "It's already obvious to me that Rockridge parents are enthusiastic readers," she says, "and they share their love of books with their children from a very early age."

Staffing the reference desk—there is an unfilled reference librarian's position—Pat has learned that Rockridge's adult customers are well-read and interested in politics, particularly in these troubling times.

Pat brings to her job experience as "pretty much every kind of librarian," working with children and teens and as reference librarian and branch manager over a career more than two decades long. Talking about her new job, she shows an enthusiasm that's not always associated with veterans: "I had a friend over just to show off the library," she says, "to stroll around the neighborhood and smell the flowers."


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North Oakland Neighbors For Peace

by Lydia Gans

From the whimsical display in Scout's window featuring "Weapons of Mass Decoration," to the person who tossed rocks through that window, to the many people who wrote messages of support on the board that temporarily covered the window, there are strong feelings aplenty about the war in Iraq.

When five Rockridge neighbors called a meeting March 1 at the Rockridge Library to talk about peace, 30 people showed up. Many ideas for actions were proposed, committees were formed, a preliminary mission statement was formulated. It was agreed to expand to include the Temescal area, and North Oakland Neighbors for Peace was off and running.

At the next meeting a week later, the mission statement was agreed on. "We are neighbors joining together to actively and unconditionally oppose the intended war against Iraq by educating and organizing our community and other neighborhoods to spread the anti-war message."



Protesters of the move toward war in Iraq gathered at the Rockridge BART station in a candlelight vigil to make their views known.

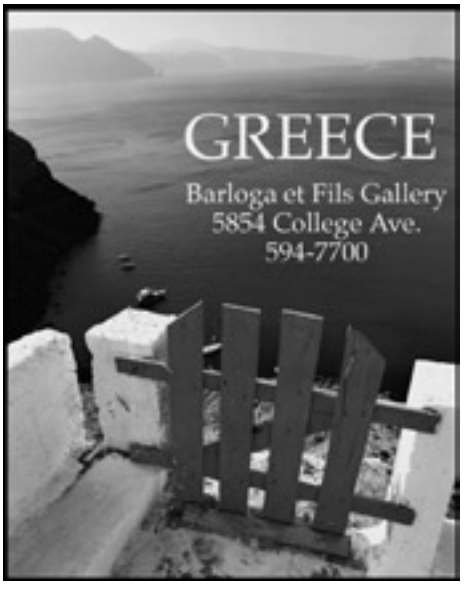
Photo: Lydia Gans

On March 16, hundreds of neighbors joined in a candlelight vigil at the Rockridge BART station as part of a worldwide plea to stop the move to war. With the war under way, North Oakland Neighbors for Peace initiated a variety of activities including an informational evening at Diesel Bookstore with Norman Solomon and Reese Erlich on April 10 (details: Community Calendar), a petition drive, informal house meetings to talk about the war and aftermath, leafleting, street theater and more.

Jack Gerson, one of those who called the first meeting, declared, "The obscene amount of money going to the Pentagon ought to be going to rebuild our cities, it ought to be going into schools, into hospitals, into housing, into mass transit. But instead, these essential services are being cut to the bone and the money is being used to fuel the war machine." Responding to those who feel that since the war has started we should support our troops, Frank Fried, another of the original members, pointed out that "the best thing we can do to support our troops is to bring them home, alive, quickly."

This is a time for people to connect with each other, to talk, to inform themselves and to act in whatever way moves them. North Oakland Neighbors For Peace offers an opportunity to do so. For information call 658-5520 or 843-0599.

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Hillside School Provides Safe Harbor for Education

by Janet Somers

High on a hidden cul-de-sac above Chabot Road sits a terraced vegetable garden, decorated with handpainted tiles and framed by a curlicued arbor.

In a low-lying, nondescript modern building at the foot of the garden sit the expelled students, juvenile offenders and foster care kids who built and tend it—students at Rock La Fleche Community Day School, one of a handful of "alternative education" programs administered by the county.

Rock La Fleche probably doesn't exist on most Rockridge residents' radar screens. It moved to the Chabot Road site seven years ago from East Oakland, into a building that previously housed another school and was already named "Rock La Fleche," after a former Alameda County superintendent of schools. The school's population – usually numbering 50 to 60 – consists of expelled students, abused or neglected teens living in foster care or group homes, and kids on probation for crimes ranging from sexual harassment to pulling a knife on someone. Most are boys, and most are African American.

Over the years since Rock La Fleche's arrival, groups of neighbors have held meetings with police and school officials about car thefts, break-ins and other problems they believe are the fault of its students. "Since the school came in, we've had nothing but problems," said one neighbor.

But Kelly Robinson, who runs the school's garden program and teaches its nutrition class, said, "If folks knew the children, they wouldn't have the same idea. I'd say, hey, walk up the hill, come see this beautiful garden, this beautiful archway that the kids made. The garden isn't vandalized, the garden isn't destroyed, and the kids spend all day here!"

It would be difficult to determine how much crime in the area actually has been caused by Rock La Fleche's hapless pupils; various neighbors, police and the school administration all have different perceptions of the issue. "There's nothing wrong with a black kid walking up and down my street," said one neighbor, speaking anonymously. "I think we're being paranoid."

Even fearful neighbors, though, might find reason for hope in several programs that began last year. All students are now transported to and from the closed campus by van. The county also has formed a partnership with Seneca Center, a Bay Area nonprofit organization that provides care for seriously troubled children. Seneca has provided a new principal, an onsite therapist and four mental health assistants to do classroom interventions: like when one student starts pushing his chair back and forth, and the others follow suit, and pretty soon they're all pushing their chairs back and forth and laughing, and suddenly five kids have disappeared from the room. Monitors now deal with such situations, leaving the teachers free to teach.

Despite some clowning around, most of the students observed during a recent visit were well-groomed and polite. Students walked the hallways purposefully, without the sunglasses and hats one neighbor said they wore in previous years.

During Ms. Robinson's nutrition class, one student repeatedly grasped her hands as she walked by, at one point getting down on his knees and gazing into her eyes, longing for attention; Ms. Robinson responded with kindness, rubbing his hands while she continued the classroom discussion. She and

Continued next page











Nestled among trees and a student-created vegetable garden, Rock La Fleche school sits on a hillside overlooking upper Chabot Road.

Photo: Lydia Gans

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

fellow staff members consider giving affection part of the job.

Shannon and David, 12th-graders whom the administration picked this year to be student body president and vice-president, respectively, don't like the new behavior-modification program instituted by Seneca Center last August. "This is like a prison," said David. "We get searched when we walk in the door." And Shannon had a bitter complaint: "I don't feel like I'm being treated right at all," he said. "I sometimes get the feeling, coming here, some of the teachers, they don't want to see us." The two are particularly angry at having had their classroom Brita water taken away after the whole class used it to cool themselves off by pouring it over their heads one hot day. Now they have to drink what they call "nasty faucet water."

There's one part of the school that both enjoy, though: working in the school's garden, a joint venture with the California College of Arts and Crafts and the California Nutrition Network. "It's the most fun I've ever had," said Shannon. "We got tomatoes, we got everything."

At first, the kids weren't interested in gardening and were mystified by fresh vegetables. Now they're harvesting five kinds of lettuce each week and eating it, along with other vegetables, at the student-run salad bar.

Ms. Tarango, the school's social worker, says her reward comes when a student leaves the school with a life plan—what she likes to call a "map." David has one already: he wants to attend Chabot College, then a four-year college. "I want to be at least an electrician," he says.

Shannon hopes to attend Brooks College in Long Beach and become a film-maker. His life plans include a left-handed compliment to the school: referring to the movie about the prison on Alcatraz Island, he said, "First movie I'm going to make, I'm going to make it about this place. It'll be called 'The Rock.'"

Tour

from page 5

of community volunteers, many of whom return year after year to help out. This year we have openings on the publicity, photography, food, flower and raffle committees and we are, of course, looking for docents to show off our kitchens. All our volunteers will be treated to a preview of the kitchens that appear on our tour, but that's just part of the reward.

Helping the Rockridge Community Planning Council raise funds to continue its work on behalf of the Rockridge neighborhood is the added bonus!

If you've got only a few hours (or a few more) we'd like to have you on board to make this year's tour the best yet. To find out which job may suit you or to recommend a special kitchen for the tour, call Deborah Larson at 547-3855. To volunteer as a docent, call Nancy Sale at 655-4625.

District Proposal

from page 1

RCPC would have to familiarize two different sets of Council staff members with planning and zoning issues on College, depending on whether the project is on College near Berkeley or on College by Market Hall.

"We are all volunteers working to make our City a better place, and this would effectively double the volunteer time our neighbors must spend on issues, thus reducing our effectiveness and ability to effect positive change," Tripp said in his letter.

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Vote in the RCPC Board Elections...

At the General Meeting Thursday, April 24 or on Saturday, April 26. Details, page 4.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

E-mail Rockridge News Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210, or mail to: Rockridge News Community Calendar, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month.

District 1 Councilmember Jane Brunner's Monthly Community Advisory Meeting

First Saturday each month, 10am to noon at Peralta Elementary School, 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz Ave., just east of Telegraph). Note: Jane Brunner will be at the April RCPC meeting to get your input about how to improve Rockridge through her North Oakland Livable Communities Project. For more inf. and to get Meeting Topic for May 3 : 238-7001 or www.oaklandnet.com.

Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

Steering committee meetings the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7 to 8:30pm. Claremont Middle School, 5750 College Avenue. At the April 15 meeting, residents and business members of NCPC's 12Y and 13X districts are invited to bring up their concerns about crime and public safety. For more information see the link to the NCPC webpage at www.rockridge.org.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Ave. Celebrate National Library Week – April 6 through 12. Come in to get a new library card and take your pick of bookmarks at the Children's Reference Desk.

For Children:

- Toddler Story Time, Saturday at 10:30am: 4/5, 4/12, 5/3 and 5/10.
- Pre-School Story Hours, Tuesday at 10:30 and 11am: 4/15 and 5/6.
- Pajama Story Time, Wednesday at 7pm: 4/9, 4/23 and 5/14

Special Event: Make a Book

Saturday, April 5, 2 to 3:30pm. Make and decorate your own journal, photo album, diary or blank gift book for a friend. Ages 5 to 15; kids 7 and under please bring an adult helper.

For Young Adults:

Teen Advisory Council meets the second Thursday of the month, 3:30- 5:30pm: 4/10 and 5/8.

For Adults:

Lawyers in the Library: Free legal advice. First Thursday of each month, 6 to 8pm. Sign-up begins 5pm.

Library Hours: Mon. Tues. Sat. 10am to 5:30pm, Wed. Thurs. 12:30 to 8pm. Closed Fri. & Sun. For more information call 597-5017

Rockridge Library Art Gallery

During April, the Gallery will be showing paintings by Frank Edie: still life's in acrylic. Anyone interested in showing artwork at the Rockridge Library art gallery: Call Judith at 843-8812.

North Oakland Neighbors For Peace

will host a discussion featuring Norman Solomon and Reese Erlich, authors of *Target Iraq*, to talk about the war. Thursday, April 10 at 7pm, Diesel Books, 5433 College Ave. The group also sponsors a weekly Candlelight Peace Vigil at the Rockridge BART station on Sundays from 7-8pm. For information, call 658-5520 or 843-0599. The North Oakland Neighbors for Peace will meet at the Rockridge Library on April 14 from 7 to 9pm. All are welcome.

Free Comedy Showcase & Open Mic

Start your career in comedy at A'Cuppa Tea, 3200 College Ave, (corner of Alcatraz), Every Tuesday, 7:30 to 9pm. Be there by 7pm to sign up. **Also:** Every Saturday, 7 to 9pm: free acoustic music performance. For more information call 420-0196.

Rockridge Toastmasters

Every Tuesday, 7pm, Veterans Building, 200 Grand Ave., Oakland. Improve your public speaking skills in a friendly and supportive environment. For more information call Craig at 597-0951 or e-mail www.rockridgetoastmasters.org

Writer's Support/Critique Group

1st Saturday of the month - May 3rd, 2 to 5pm; June 7th, 2:30 to 5:30pm. Rockridge Branch Library. ALL writers welcome. Bring 6 copies of any 5 pages of your prose for on-site reading/discussion with warmhearted peers. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch. For more information: Writefox@aol.com

Chabot School PTA's Annual Spring Auction

Saturday, April 26, 6 to 11pm, Oakland Masonic Auditorium, 3903 Broadway. Chabot's chief fundraising event to generate funds for computers, library resources, art and music in the school. For tickets contact Pam Rich at yak_girl@hotmail.com or Clair Hamner at 596-9099.

Fundraiser: Children's Support League of the East Bay

15th Annual "Heart of the Home" Kitchen Tour Friday and Saturday, April 25 – 26, 10am to 4pm. The tour will showcase five remodeled kitchens in Piedmont (maps will be provided) and a Boutique at the Piedmont Community Center, 711 Highland Ave., Piedmont. The Boutique will feature unique vendors, raffle prizes, a grand door prize and a gourmet, catered luncheon. All proceeds go directly to programs for children's charities in the East Bay. Tickets: $30 per person in advance, $35 on the days of the tour. Call in advance for tickets and luncheon reservations: 273-9109 or www.wehelpkids.org .

College Avenue Adult Center

College Ave. Presbyterian Church, 5955 College Ave. Every Wednesday, open from 9:30am to 1:30pm. Light exercise, socializing, travel programs and music.

- Special programs 11am to noon
  4/9 VCR: Land of the Eagles
  4/16 VCR: Biography of Arthur Godfrey
  4/23 Visit from the Charter School children
  4/30 Kathy's trip to Norway
  5/7 Charles Fitch slides of Europe
- Field Trips
  4/25 Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek
  5/10 Stinson Beach

Hot lunch at noon for $1.75. For details on upcoming field trips and events, call Kathy, 531-6724.

North Oakland Multi-Purpose Senior Center

5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Center Hours: Monday – Friday 8:45am to 4:45pm. Classes, workshops and educational/social events:

- AARP Tax assistance every Tuesday until tax day
- Computer Classes
- Craft and sewing classes
- Walking groups and field trips:

Sign up in advance for: Sacramento by Amtrak on April 10 , Reno Hilton over-nighter on April 24-25 and Yosemite June 4-6. The newsletter, "North Oakland Senior Times," provides a full schedule of classes and a monthly lunch menu: (suggested donation: seniors age 60 + $1.75 and $4 for those under age 60). Call 597- 5085 for details about membership, newsletter, class or appointment times and opportunities to become a volunteer.

Elder Care Support Group

Alta Bates Medical Center, Herrick Campus, 2001 Dwight Way, Berkeley, 3rd floor, room 3369B (take elevator B). Free for family/friends caring for older adults. 3rd Wednesday of each month, 4-5:30pm. For information on all support/education groups offered by Alta Bates/Sutter Health: call Monica at 802-1725 or e-mail Monicalcsw@alum.calberkeley.org

Art Auction Benefit

Saturday, April 26, 7 to 10pm, Holy Redeemer Center, 8945 Golf Links Road. Proceeds from **"Sweet Inspirations: A Community Art Experience and Auction,"** will benefit Elizabeth House, a residence for homeless and low-income women and children at 6423 Colby St. in Rockridge. **Rockridge Artists Still Wanted**: deadline for submission is April 12.

Donate paintings, photographs, edible art, crafts, or give lessons in your art form. In return, you will get publicity through press coverage, website exposure, a tax deduction, and the gratitude of the women and children of Elizabeth House. For information, contact Gail Sullivan: 658-7755 or sullivang25@hotmail.com

May Day Spring Festival And Garden Opening

Join the festivities for the opening of the new Learning Garden, dedicated to world peace. Thursday, May 1, 5:30 to 7:30pm, Far West School, 5263 Broadway Terrace.

Created and presented by Arts Far West School, CCAC Center for Arts and Public Life, and CCAC students. For more information: 594-3754

Date to Remember: April 19

TWO Earth Day warm-up activities!

See *Rockridge News* articles pages 6 & 7.

- FROGpark Community Day Spring Cleaning;
- Temescal Creek & 51st Street Clean-up.

Help jump-start spring in Rockridge!



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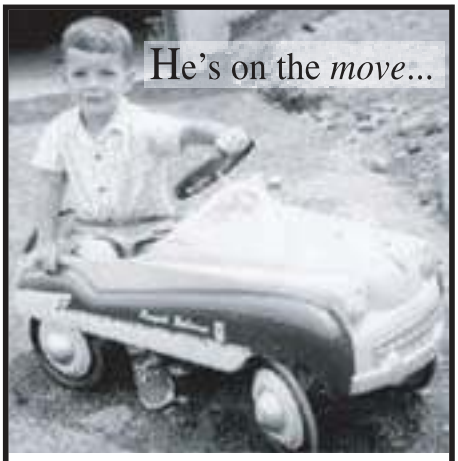
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