THE Rockridge News

Remember: No Rockridge News in August

www.rockridge.org

VOL. 18 ■ NO. 7 ■ ISSUE NO. 192 ■ July 5, 2003

CIRCULATION: 5,100 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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

Got Ink in Your Veins? The Rockridge News Needs a Business Manager

An excellent volunteer opportunity is opening up to serve as the Business Manager of The Rockridge News—and meet lots of neighbors and get to know Rockridge businesses. Key responsibilities include overseeing the unique neighborhood distribution network, coordinating with the advertising manager, and managing the printer.

If you're interested please contact RCPC Board Liaison David Hatfield at davidh@frp.org.

agenda: RCPC General Meeting

Thursday, July 17, 7:30 p.m.

Rockridge Branch Library
Community Room
5366 College Avenue at Manila

- **Neighborhood Beautification Efforts in Rockridge.**
  Come hear from your neighbors how they are improving the physical environment in Rockridge and find out how you can get involved.
- **Friends of the Rockridge Temescal Greenbelt (FROG)**
  Sally Fitzhugh (Chair of FROG) will update us on the implementation of Phase II of FROG Park and review of Phase I.
- **UnderBART**
  Teresa Drenick (Chair of UnderBART Committee) will outline progress on plans to improve the area under the Rockridge BART Station (story on page 7).
- **Locksley Garden**
  Mike McDonald (resident on Locksley) will describe a new effort to enhance the land at the corner of Locksley and Forest (story on page 6).
- **Adopt-A-Spot**
  Felicia Verdin (Oakland Public Works) will discuss the Adopt-A-Spot program and how the City of Oakland can help you do your own project in the neighborhood.

ATTENTION: Vote at this meeting on a new RCPC bylaw on board terms. See page 12.

RCPC Opposes Restaurant Plan: Review of College Avenue Planned

by Hiroko Kurihara

After consulting with area residents, the Rockridge Community Planning Council has voted to oppose a plan for a new 3,000 square-foot, two-story restaurant at 5362 College Avenue in the building where Crème de la Crème recently operated. While the restaurant would seat nearly 150 people, the plans provided no parking spaces for their cars, a key element in the RCPC's decision. The site is adjacent to the Rockridge Library.

In May, Maezono Architecture presented its restaurant proposal to the RCPC's Land Use Committee, which made the

▸ RESTAURANT, PAGE 10

Mark Your Calendar for the September 28 Kitchen Tour!

Advance tickets on sale now!

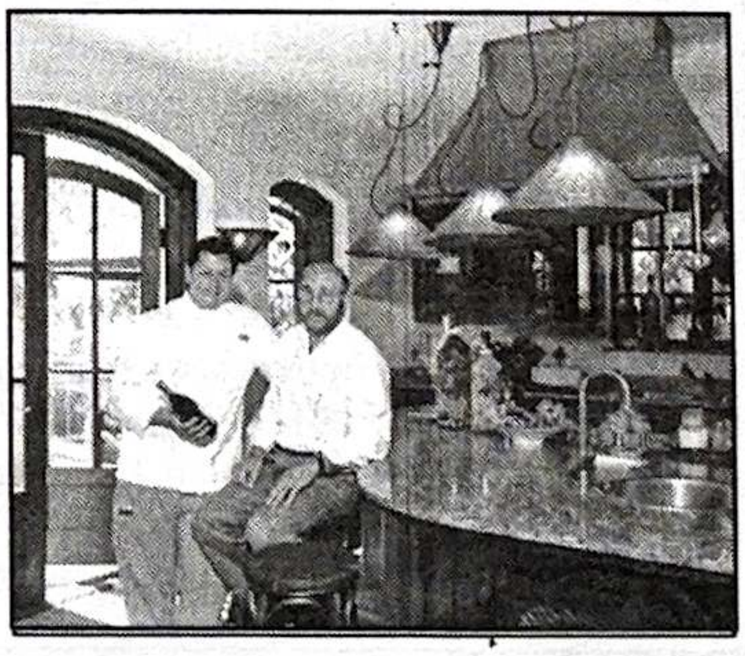
by Natalie Mehta, Kitchen Tour Co-Chair

Looking for an opportunity to get a closer peek into some of the beautiful homes in our neighborhood? Curious about how that neighbor's construction project turned out? Looking for inspiration in planning your own kitchen renovation? Then please join the Rockridge Community Planning Council as we proudly present nine beautifully remodeled residential kitchens, open for tour on Sunday, September 28. This biennial tour is the major fundraiser of the RCPC, which coordinates resources and funding to improve our neighborhood.

One kitchen featured on this year's tour is a contemporary renovation based on a red-blue-green color theme, weaving copper and maple finishes throughout and incorporating hand-painted murals on the walls. Another kitchen, designed for two serious cooks, combines the seemingly opposing elements of zinc countertops and a cozy kitchen hearth to create a truly unique and warm space. Yet another kitchen offers a stunning example of how to

▸ KITCHEN TOUR, PAGE 11

▸ You saw this kitchen on an earlier Tour. Surely you remember the year? Take the Tour Quiz with this photo and others on page 11. (Answers available at end of article.)





Around the Neighborhood

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

Odds and Ends (of Beginnings)

Since I was a kid, I've been obsessed with anniversaries, and two big ones are coming up for me this month. On July 15, I will celebrate the end of my first year in Rockridge. And, by that time, the last issue in my first cycle of *The Rockridge News* will be on your doorstep. We don't publish in August.

It's hard to believe this is the eighth issue of *The Rockridge News* published under my—I search for a word, and neither *direction* nor *management* feels like a good choice. I know the "herding cats" metaphor is overused, but in a lot of ways, it suits the circumstances—and, fortunately, I like cats.

From Our Readers

I keep a file of letters from readers, and it's time to close that out for the year. My apologies for failing to respond sooner and more personally. Some readers say nice things about *The Rockridge News* or this column, and I'm always grateful for the encouragement.

Others have story ideas, and unfortunately, we've had little spare room in the last few issues. So I'd like to wish a quick happy birthday to Elizabeth Austin, a resident of Otterbein Manor who began her 101st year last month. Another reader urges us to start a "what needs fixing" column, pointing out among other things the broken / empty news racks at BART. She'll be happy to read the article on page 7, which tells of an intrepid band of local residents who are already on task.

Some readers have points of view. I've misplaced a letter from a reader who thought getting out and walking in the evening—toting a shotgun, if necessary—was one way to ensure safe streets. I can buy half of that. More recently, a reader complained of the tidal wave of parking enforcement that swept through his neighborhood, leaving cars awash in tickets. Some folks on my block were caught up in the same maelstrom, so I sympathize. I'm told that even a City CarShare car got dunned.

Changing Scene

Over the several months I've been with *The Rockridge News*, some regular writers have moved on to new opportunities, and we wish them well. We are still—and always—looking for people with some writing skill who would like to contribute to the paper.

Some folks may think that writing for *The Rockridge News* means jotting down whatever is on their mind. While letters to the editor are welcome, we also need folks who are willing to become well-informed about an event or issue and share that information with their Rockridge neighbors.

We are currently looking for a college student intern—perhaps one studying journalism—who would like to cover stories for us and accept some kindly mentoring in return (i.e., it's an unpaid position). If you fit that description or know someone who does, please call.

Join the Newsletter Staff

As you saw on the front page, we are also looking for a person who is essential to our operation: a business manager. Someone who makes sure all the elements—news, advertising, printing, distribution—come together in a timely fashion. For some time now, we've been blessed in that regard with the organizational skills of Susan Montauk, who optimistically turned up on my doorstep with ten-plus years of back issues when I thought I was still considering whether I wanted to do this.

In addition to the tasks in her job description, she's been a faithful reporter/writer on a variety of issues and a great resource as I try to make my way through the wilds of Rockridge. I would say that I will sorely miss her, but she's only retiring as business manager. I expect to keep her on the job in the other areas.

And so we take a vacation. You, too, I hope—have a great time.

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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.

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Jo Ellis.....Calendar
Theresa Nelson.....Neighborhood Merchant
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Articles published in *The Rockridge News* may be reprinted only with the permission of the Editor.

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:

Editor: jatasch@mindspring.com
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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

- **September 7, 2003;**
- **September deadline is August 21.**

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 May RCPC Meeting

Second Units: Boon or Bother for Rockridge?

by Claire Isaacs

A boon for families who want to provide separate living spaces for elders, children, or friends. Or a bane on resident homeowners whose neighborhoods could fill up with renters who might lack incentives to maintain their property and have lifestyles at odds with the quiet single-family standard.

Depending on whom you listen to, either could be the result of a new state law, AB 1866, which requires cities to ease restrictions on secondary units at single-family homes: so-called granny units, in-law flats, or even separate structures.

At the June 19 General Meeting of the Rockridge Community Planning Council, newly-elected chair Daniel Ferdelman introduced three expert panelists and moderated an at-times contentious discussion of the law.

Oakland has required review and a public hearing on every application to build secondary units. Effective July 1, all that's required is a building permit and approval from a staff planner. However, the units must still conform to regulations regarding size, parking, access, fire and safety codes, and architectural compatibility with the main residence.

City of Oakland Planner Andrew Smith said that AB 1866 "takes away the city's ability to review and issue guidelines so that alterations and new structures fit into neighborhoods." However, Smith acknowledged that homeowners will find the process much easier. Only a ten-day notice to neighbors—with no option to dispute—is required to get a permit.

Lynette Lee, who directs the East Bay Asian Development Corporation, spoke in support of the changes. She believes that such units not only provide new housing in a tight market but also adapt to family lifestyle changes. Her own legal secondary unit, she said, has been home to her parents, divorced friends, and now her children. "The best thing about this option," said Lee, "is that it provides additional housing on existing land or within existing buildings at private, rather than government expense."

Third panelist Glen Jarvis is an architect and former RCPC Board member who served for six years as a member and Chair of the Oakland Planning Commission. He addressed audience concerns that primary residents might rent out their homes as well as the secondary units, becoming absentee landlords. While owners need not live on the premises in an R-35 zone (Rockridge below College), he explained, owners must occupy one unit or the other in R-30 zones (above College Avenue).

Many circumstances prevent proliferation of secondary units, Jarvis said, including construction costs, size of property, and specific access requirements. One of the latter, namely increasing the width of road required outside the property from 20 feet to 24 feet to allow for emergency traffic, will be discussed at the City Council on July 15.

The audience was particularly concerned about crowding, drug houses, and students renting whole houses in the hills. These will also be important issues related to the newly introduced AB1160, on track for a vote next year. Under this bill, owners would no longer have to occupy the primary house or secondary unit, raising concerns that houses might be rented to large numbers of individuals, leading to heavy traffic and other changes in today's quiet residential neighborhoods.

Anyone considering creating a secondary unit should review the new rules adopted by Oakland under AB1866. Log on to www.oaklandnet.com or contact Andrew Smith at asmith@oaklandnet.com, or 510/238-6414.

For information on AB1160, try www.assembly.ca.gov. Under Legislation enter "AB1160" and "Steinberg," and/or contact your Assemblypersons Loni Hancock or Wilma Chan and State Senator Don Perata.

New School Chief Has Few Answers in First Meeting

by Susan Montauk



Dr. Randy Ward, recently appointed state administrator of the Oakland Unified School District, addresses staff and parents during an introductory meeting at Oakland Tech.

PHOTO: SUSAN MONTAUK

Only three days after Randy Ward became state administrator of the Oakland Unified School District, he faced educators and parents with pressing questions about teacher layoffs and requests to save favorite programs from the fiscal axe—programs and personnel that brought some credit for recent academic progress in the Oakland school district.

Dr. Ward made few promises. "I will have to evaluate a lot of programs and departments to see if they are helping your children learn," he told the capacity crowd in Oakland Technical High School's library." "If they are [working] we want to support them."

As a result of extraordinary budgetary problems, State School Superintendent Jack O'Connell took control of the Oakland School District as part of a deal that guarantees the district a $100 million line of credit. He appointed Dr. Ward, who will have unprecedented power, serving as both chief administrator and school board, which will act in an advisory role for the duration of the state takeover.

Declining student enrollment and high absenteeism are two key problems, Dr. Ward said, since funding for the school district depends on numbers. Every student who leaves the district costs $5,000 for a total of $20 million in the last three years. For every

SCHOOL HEAD, PAGE 10

FORL Plans Thanks to Library Donors

Attention all Friends of the Rockridge Library, donors and potential donors: The 2003 FORL Donor Appreciation party will be held at the Rockridge Library in October (7pm-8:30pm on a date to be determined).

Watch for details to come in the September issue of *The Rockridge News*.

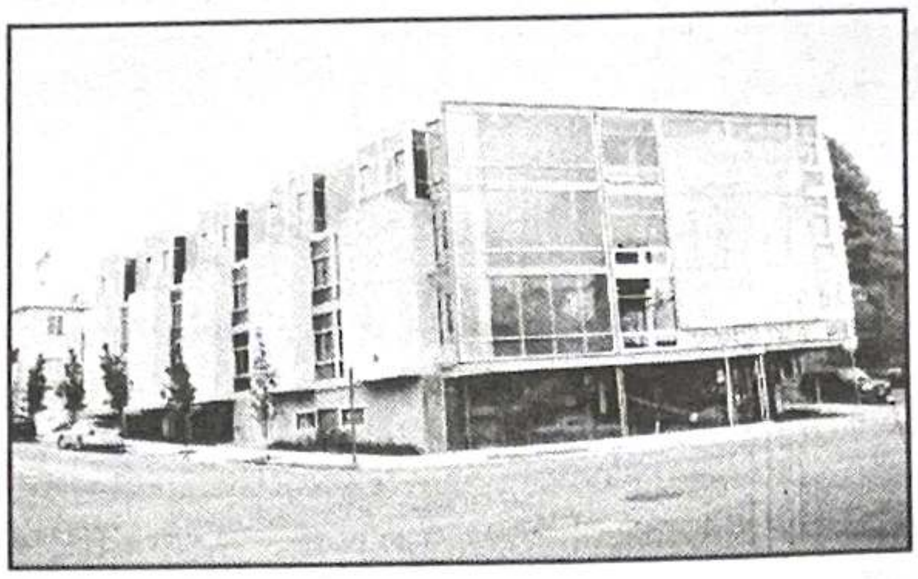
Antiwar Group Focuses on New Directions

by Lydia Gans

In the weeks before the invasion of Iraq, neighbors in Rockridge and Temescal formed North Oakland Neighbors for Peace (NONFP) to oppose the war against Iraq. The war has more or less ended, although tensions in Iraq persist, but NONFP continues to be active.

"The war is not over," one neighbor said. "The military budget is still eating up a vast amount of money and resources." Jack Gerson, one of the founders of the group, hopes to refocus the group's activities on "a vigorous fight to defend civil liberties against the Patriot Act and the detentions" as well as a "fight against the cuts in services for essential human needs." NONFP has connected with a whole array of organizations, local and national, that are hurting because of the domestic budget cuts.

NONFP has sponsored two informational presentations at Diesel Bookstore, and Alexander Cockburn is expected to speak in July. The group meets at the Rockridge Library, and some members continue Sunday evening candlelight vigils at the BART station. To learn more, email nonfp-request@yahoogroups.com.



The potential for a negative effect on parking in surrounding Rockridge neighborhoods was an important issue in discussions and planning for construction of the CCAC freshman dormitory now located at Broadway and Broadway Terrace.

PHOTO: LYDIA GANS

Car Ownership Rules for CCAC Dorm Residents Find Mixed Success

As the first academic year comes to a close, the no-car rule for residents of the new California College of Arts and Crafts freshman dormitory at Broadway and Broadway Terrace appears successful, but it may be too early to make a final assessment.

College officials report that only one freshman resident was found to have a car during the year, and that student was expelled from the dormitory for failing to comply with the rule after a warning. One other student parked nearby while visiting the dorm for lengthy periods, but that person could not be formally identified and was not disciplined.

When the dorm was built on the site of a parking lot that once held 35 to 40 cars, a primary concern of neighbors was that the drivers of these cars would fan out onto local streets, seeking parking in an already congested area. If the 127 residents of the new building had also been permitted to have cars, the problem could have worsened dramatically. As a result, the college agreed to prohibit car ownership among freshman dorm residents as a condition of zoning approval.

During the first year, the college allowed six resident assistants in the dormitory (all upper division students) to have cars without providing parking for them in the lot under the building, as all spaces were designated for staff. As a result of ongoing discussion with neighborhood representatives, the college said resident assistants will be provided with spaces in the future. This will displace an equal number of staff vehicles during the day but will decrease neighborhood parking congestion on evenings and weekends.

To enforce a no-car rule—or assess its effectiveneness—violators must be identified. CCAC promised to keep track of car ownership by freshmen residents and, as a backup, to identify possible violators by checking license plate numbers provided by neighbors. Unfortunately, the license plate reporting system has yet to perform as promised.

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Oceanus Mural Restoration Benefits From Public/Private Cooperative Effort

by Claire Isaacs





Collateral damage in a now-forgotten urban tagging war, Oceanus is to be restored this summer by the original artist and neighborhood volunteers.
PHOTOS: CLAIRE ISAACS

Neighborhood activists and city officials welcomed artist Gary Graham to the Rockridge community on Saturday, June 28, at a reception in his honor. Graham, here to restore his mural, "Oceanus," presented slides and told the history of the huge artwork he created in 1977 under the freeway at Claremont and Hudson.

Now living in Grass Valley, Graham agreed to return this summer to head up an unusual collaborative effort to clean and restore the mural. He has already recruited two professional associates, artist colleague Peter Collins and restorer Joel Blondeau. In addition, more than 30 community volunteers have signed up to help, and more are needed (see box below).

The City of Oakland is helping, too. Roberta Babcock, Assistant Director for Public Art, secured city funds for graffiti abatement to pay the artist's honorarium. The Department of Public Works will remove existing markings and seal the surface on completion. The restoration is due to begin on July and continue through July 20.

One of the first murals to be painted on a Caltrans site, the mural has been deteriorating for some years, and in recent weeks it has been the target of aggressive graffiti writers. Its appearance disturbs not only neighbors but also the hundreds of people who visit the FROGpark across the street.

Steve Costa, past President of FROG, Sally Fitzhugh, its current President, and Theresa Nelson, Vice President of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, are among the community leaders who are securing supplies and additional funds.

At a recent presentation to the Cultural Arts commission, Ben Hazard, Director of the Craft and Cultural Arts Department, said this was the kind of project that everyone from the Mayor down takes pride in – a first-rate example of public and private cooperation.

Claire Isaacs is the Public Art Advisory Committee liaison between Rockridge and the City of Oakland for the FROGPark public art effort.

Oceanus Restoration Volunteers Welcomed!

Anyone over 15 years of age with a willing heart is welcome to help with the Oceanus restoration. Those with art skills are needed for special tasks. This is a working project, not a summer recreational project, and no child care or supervision is available. For further information and to sign up, contact Kate Runyan evenings/weekends at 658-7833, or write katerunyan@sbcglobal.net



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Second Quarter Yields a 40% Increase in Sales:

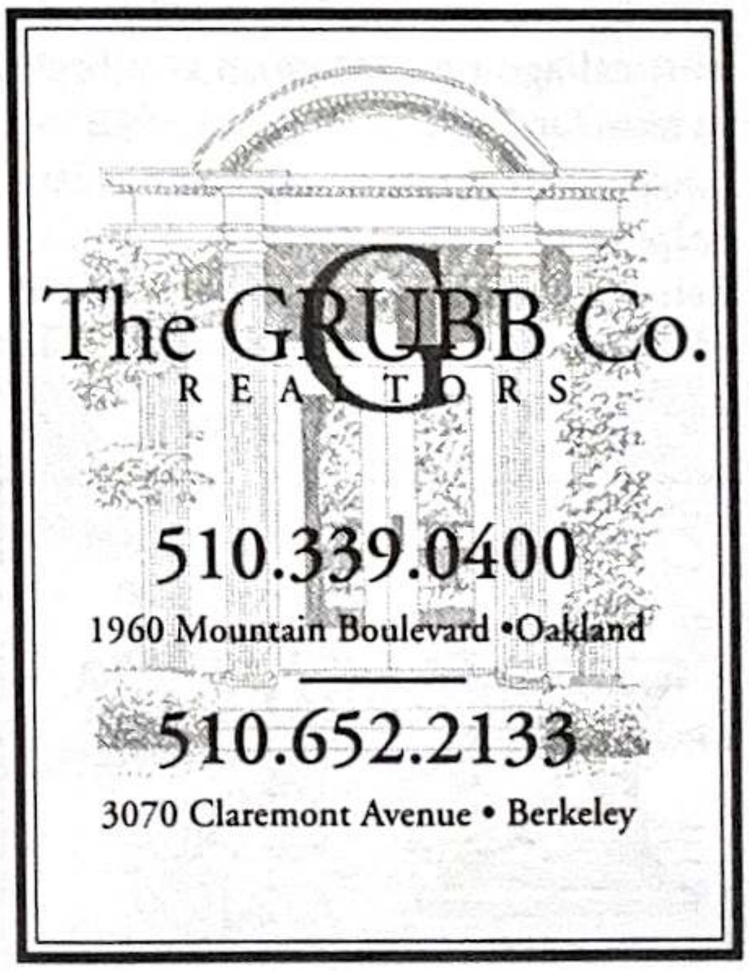
Address	*List Price*	*Selling Price*	*Close Date*
5417 Thomas	$769,000	$755,000	6/16/03
5405 Carlton	$329,000	$336,750	6/18/03
5360 Locksley	$534,000	$625,000	6/23/03
5372 Thomas	$785,000	$819,500	6/24/03
5350 Miles	$635,000	$676,000	6/25/03
5839 Presley	$825,000	$842,000	6/25/03

✔ 2nd quarter sales show the median price of a home in Rockridge has risen to $683,000—an 8% increase over the 1st quarter.

✔ Rockridge homes sold in an average of 18 days in the 2nd quarter, down from an average of 25 days in the 1st.

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

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Locksley Gardens Project to Bloom in Rockridge

If you've passed the corner of Locksley Avenue and Forest Street (where it passes under Highway 24 and the BART tracks) lately, what you've seen is not a pretty picture. Long neglected, the parcel of land owned by Caltrans is covered with ivy and bare dirt, littered with empty beer bottles, newspapers, and the occasional abandoned shopping cart.

Coming soon to the same address: Locksley Gardens, a project of enterprising local residents.

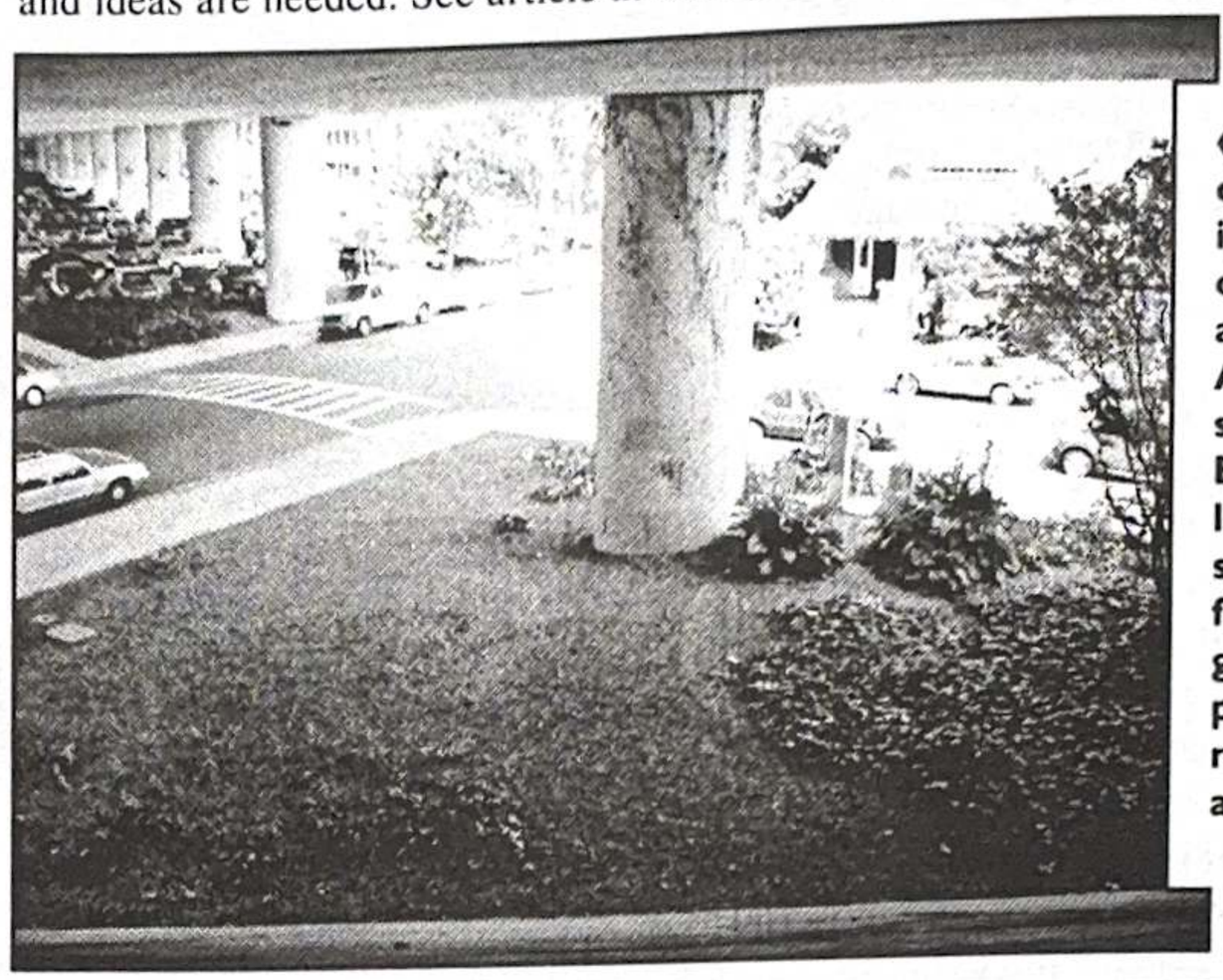
The group first started meeting to talk about neighborhood issues and to organize a block party in June. Soon after, Friends of the Locksley Gardens Project (FLGP) was formed to adopt the neglected site. Members are inspired by Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt (FROG) and their successful efforts in transforming and creating the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt.

"We are excited with what this project can bring in the way of community to our neighborhood," said Locksley Avenue resident Mike McDonald. "Not only will we be creating a beautiful place for neighbors to enjoy, but in the process, we will be getting to know our neighbors, too."

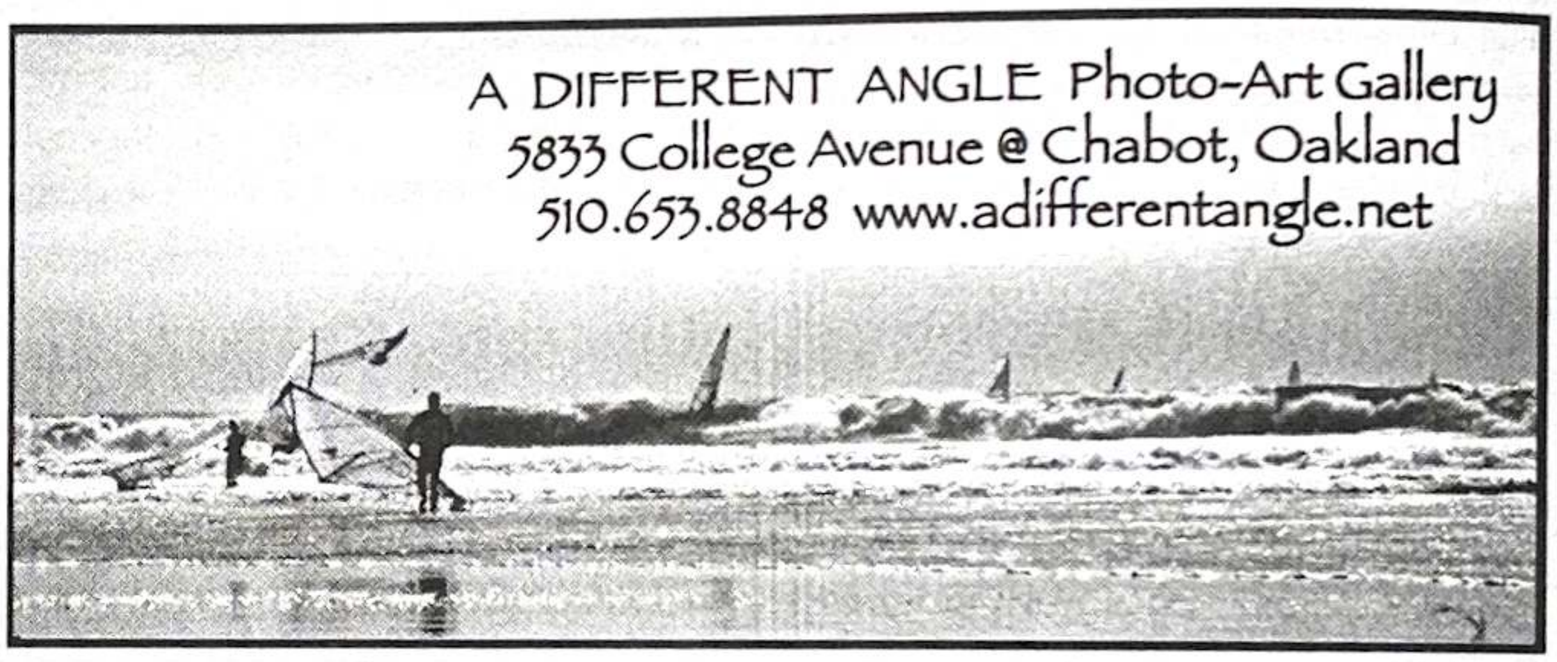
Initial response from local officials and residents has been more than positive. FLGP has initiated a dialogue with Caltrans, has been approved by Oakland Adopt-A-Spot/ Make Oakland Beautiful, and is working directly with the City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Department. At its June 5 meeting, the Rockridge Community Planning Council unanimously voted to serve as fiscal agent for the group as it begins to raise funds.

Anyone interested in lending a hand, helping with fund-raising, or simply being involved should contact Mike McDonald, at 510/772-7906 or email: mcdoak@yahoo.com.

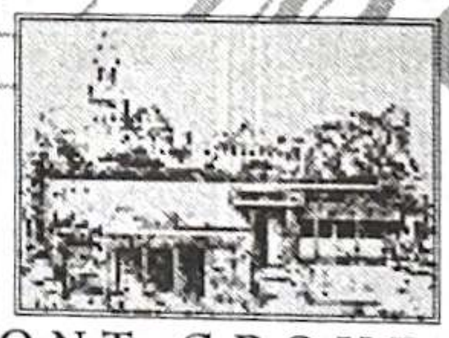
Join the fun! The first Locksley Gardens clean-up will occur Saturday, July 26, from 9am to noon, followed by a party on the 5400 block of Locksley Avenue, between Hudson and Forest. Everyone is welcome, and volunteers and ideas are needed. See article at left for additional contact information.



This forlorn corner at the intersection of Locksley and Forest Avenues — south of the BART parking lot — could soon host flourishing gardens planted and maintained by area residents.



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UnderBART Group Sets Improvement Goals—Lots of Them

by Teresa Drenick

Picture in your mind that on your next trip to the College Avenue BART station, you find:

- ❀ Signs announcing BART trains and providing transit schedules
- ❀ Colorful maps of neighborhood merchants
- ❀ Educational gardens for local school children
- ❀ More and better lighting
- ❀ A plaza with a community meeting space, game tables, and fenced-in play areas.

These visions are among the long- and short-term goals for converting the College Avenue BART station, now a dark space dividing Rockridge, into a vibrant center that welcomes residents and visitors alike.

The UnderBART committee has worked long and hard to develop these goals, meeting monthly with officials from BART and other agencies, who lend their expertise and guidance. In June, representatives of BART's seismic department presented plans for the upcoming retrofit of the Rockridge station. Although work may not begin until 2005 or 2006, the design process is under way now, and officials said they were willing to include the UnderBART committee in design and architectural decisions.

Do these ideas excite you? Join the UnderBART committee meetings the second Thursday of each month at 7:30pm in the Rockridge Library. Anyone who wants to participate is welcome. Questions may be directed to committee chair Teresa Drenick at TDrenick@aol.com.

Long before 2005, however, the committee hopes to be making improvements. Members are exploring funding opportunities and will start to develop a master plan soon. Here are some of the major ideas.

PROMOTE TRANSIT OPTIONS: a BART arrival/departure sign at street level, connecting transportation schedules, new bus and taxi seating, a larger bike rack/lock-up and posted bike trail options.

ORIENT PEOPLE TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD: a large welcome sign on both sides of the BART station, signs directing visitors to major points of interest, a large neighborhood and merchant map, a computerized information center.

IMPROVE THE BART SPACE'S RELATIONSHIP TO NATURE: educational gardens and planters maintained by school children; native plants to replace ivy; removal of eucalyptus trees, and lighting for new trees at night.

IMPROVE SAFETY AND SENSE OF SECURITY: brighter lighting day and night, breezeway improvements, prominent call boxes, illuminated crosswalks, general clean-up.

UNIFY THE TWO SIDES OF COLLEGE AVENUE: station access from both sides of the station with two distinct plazas, uniform and artistic lighting, uniform paving for sidewalks and plazas, a walkway through the parking lot.

CREATE A UNIQUE, SOPHISTICATED, AND INVITING URBAN CENTER: a large attractive clock and sundial, artistic and uniform signage, new trash cans and newsracks, an attractive, bright, and reflective color scheme, public art, a community meeting center.

CREATE AN ACTIVE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY PLAZA AT THE HEART OF ROCKRIDGE: educational displays, small square game tables and seating, new benches and seating areas, a recessed theater and staging area, a fenced play area for children, art shows, seating along the sides of the parking lots.

Chabot Elementary School Launches Website

To find out what's happening at Anthony Chabot Elementary School, Rockridge residents now have a new resource: Chabot's own website, www.chabotelementary.org. Created by parent volunteers working with school faculty and staff, the website provides information on afterschool programs, special science and reading programs, state curriculum standards, volunteer opportunities, and resources for parents and children. You can also read Chabot's newsletter online. Chabot Elementary, located at the corner of Patton Street and Chabot Road, has 429 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Ann Daniels is website copywriter.

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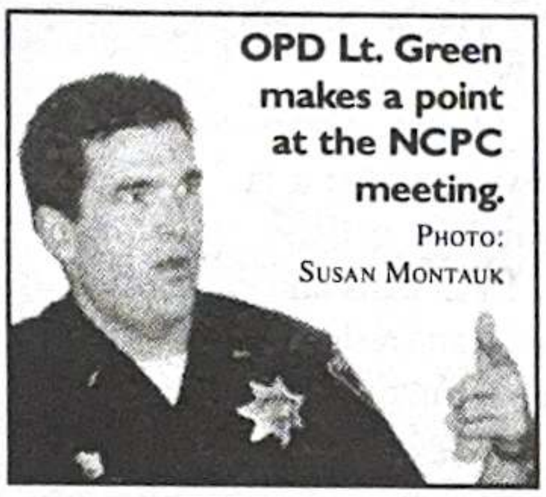
Good Neighbors Make Safer Places to Live

by Beau Woodward, and Paula Hawthorn

Ways for residents to improve community safety and plans for an exciting new project in neighboring Temescal were on the agenda at the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council's (NCPC) Town Hall Meeting May 27 at the Rockridge Library.

Lt. Lawrence Green of the Oakland Police Department told participants that Greater Rockridge is generally a safe area, with periodic rashes of residential burglaries or auto thefts and burglaries, as well as occasional commercial and street robberies. He suggested knowing your neighbors and your neighborhood and reporting activities and individuals that seem out of the ordinary or out of place to the police nonemergency number, 777-3333.

With only six officers on duty in North Oakland at any given time, the police depend on citizens to watch out for the safety and security of their neighborhoods. "Neighborhoods where people are involved and are willing to report suspicious activity, are far safer than neighborhoods where people close up, ignore what goes on in the street, and hide behind their doors," Green said. "If you call the non-emergency number, you do not have to even identify yourself—and you could avert a crime."



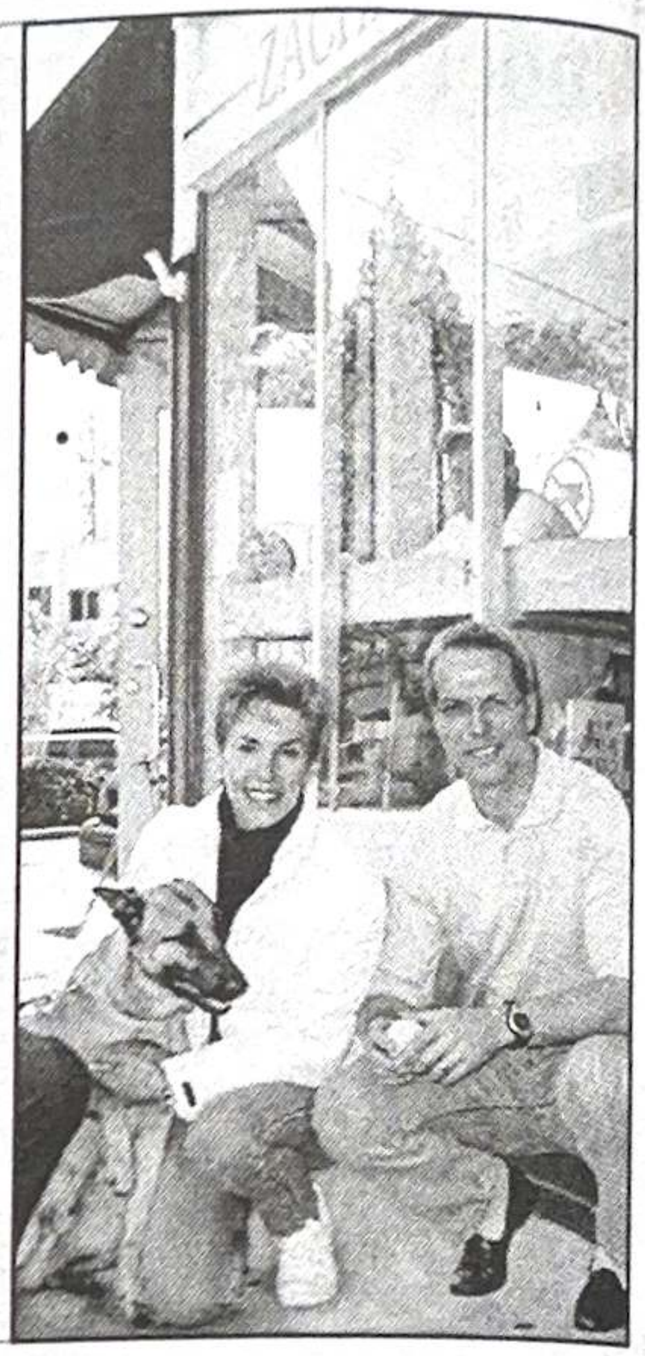
OPD Lt. Green makes a point at the NCPC meeting. PHOTO: SUSAN MONTAUK

Later, Jeff Norman and Alden Marsh described the Gateway project, a grass-roots effort to improve the Temescal neighborhood by developing the corner of Telegraph and 51st Street. Two designs were shown, both encompassing the old Pussycat theater property and the adjacent Children's Hospital parking lot. Both are a creative mix of retail and residential areas. In addition, Yeda Altes, the Neighborhood Services Coordinator who is the designated liaison between Oakland Police and Greater Rockridge, led a discussion on neighborhood priorities.

NCPCs were created by the Oakland City Council in 1996 to implement the community policing philosophy. Their purpose is to work with community residents, organizations, police officers, and city officials to identify and resolve problems in communities. For more, see http://www.oaklandauditor.com/reports/ncpcevaluation.pdf.

May You Be With The Force

Barbara Gabel and Zach Zachowski, owners of Zachary's Pizza, provided the $5,000 purchase price for this new member of the Oakland Police Department's canine unit, pictured at right. Basco, a 10-month-old Belgian Malinois and native of Holland, is now in training to work the graveyard shift in North Oakland. He replaces Enno, who retired due to age and permanent lameness and is now living with his handler's family.



Charter School Plans Work Parties

It's summertime—school is out—but folks are hard at work at the North Oakland Community Charter School (NOCCS), this year's recipient of the Rockridge Community Planning Council's Community Service Grant.

Two summer work parties are scheduled to get the school in tip-top shape for next year. These will be held from 9am-3pm on Saturday, July 12, and Saturday, August 16. Community volunteers are welcome.

NOCCS is located at 5951 College Avenue in the College Avenue Presbyterian Church.

DMV Neighbors Plan Summer Creek Cleanup

Please join the DMV Neighbors Association in the DMV parking lot at Claremont and Cavour about 9am July 19 for a Saturday morning Creek Cleanup. There's plenty of work to do—weeding, raking, picking up debris, sweeping, pruning, cutting back the ivy, and so on. The City of Oakland Public Works Environmental Services Division will supply gloves, garbage bags, and tools, but if you have your own favorite tools, label them and bring them along. Wheelbarrows are especially useful. The creek bed may be wet, so boots are recommended footwear. Coffee and morning snacks will be provided by the DMV Neighbors Association.

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Summer Treats

Summertime is traditionally the time when culture escapes into the great outdoors in a bright array of festivals and outdoor theater. Bring a sweater and a picnic, and enjoy!

Among the many offerings are wonderful musicals at the Woodminster Amphitheater on Joaquin Miller Road, phone 531-9597. "Kiss Me Kate" is scheduled for July, "Evita" for August. The Greek Theater on the Berkeley Campus will have its usual array of concerts, but this year, on its 100th anniversary, The Greek National Theater will be performing "Euripides" here in September. And, of course, the sound of Shakespeare fills the air in Berkeley's Hinkley Park and at the Bruns Memorial Amphitheatre in Orinda, phone 548-9666.

Not so long ago, in the '70s, summer even used to bring a folk circus caravan down from Oregon to Berkeley where they set up tents on the grounds of the Berkeley Adult High School on MLK Way. We would sit on the grass in the dark, mesmerized by images of Coyote looming larger than life above our heads against the canvas wall, telling tales of ruse and roguery to our utter delight. Later, we would visit with the Clydesdales grazing patiently in the dusk outside the tents. I can still smell the horses.



by Ortrun Niesar

Reading Aloud

The sound of the human voice in live performance, unamplified, is great to hear in the dark, under the stars or by a roaring fire. No need to go to summer camp for this experience. The backyard barbecue will serve as a fine venue for reading aloud or telling tales in the dark. Choose books that are meant to be heard: stories written by true tellers of tales. Kids will go for Harry Potter, naturally, but younger ones will love the stories told by Patricia Pollacco, for example, who magically wove her tales around the happenings right here in Rockridge when there was another much larger fire to contend with. Or go for the classics. Robert Fagle's recent translation of Homer's *The Iliad* is a knock-out, ideal for reading aloud outdoors, in the dark, by a flickering fire. The drama will carry you along in a way that our embedded TV reporters in Iraq never could. Honest. You can find all these books and others suitable for reading out loud at Diesel, Pendragon, and Cody's.

Why Not Write?

Summer is also a great time to take the plunge and follow your creative dream. Who will say nay? So try your hand at writing if you've always wanted to. You will need a little notebook and a pencil always by your side, a time to be alone, and a fair amount of courage, best mustered early in the morning when you have not yet had time to think about what it is you are about to do. There is a little book entitled *Lu Chi's Wen Fu* or *The Art of Writing*. Buy it. It's small enough to take with you on BART or to the beach. Read it a thousand times. Try writing at least one half-hour per day in longhand. It doesn't matter at first what you write. Just start writing. The tales will follow.

Oakland Walking Tours

Oakland Heritage Alliance and Annalee Allen have once again organized a series of exciting walking tours through Oakland's historic neighborhoods in July and August. Maps and information will be available at the Rockridge Library and in local bookstores. If you can't find one, call me and I will send you one. For more information you can also contact OHA at 763-9218.

Rockridge and You Through the Camera

Time to get out the camera and join in on the fun. Applications for The Rockridge Annual Photo Exhibit must be in by August 15. You do not have to be a professional photographer to participate, but you must live or work in and around Rockridge. The subject matter can be almost anything, as long as it reflects life in our neighborhood. Parent-and-child teams are encouraged to join. Also, anyone interested in assisting with the organization of the exhibit is most welcome. Please get in touch with Lydia Gans at 658-4445 or me for more information.

Enjoy your summer!

Ortrun Niesar can be reached at 652-6664 or oniesar@aol.com.

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School Head

from page 3

percentage point below full attendance, the district loses $1 million in aid, and attendance is presently running at 85%. While declining enrollment is difficult to reverse, Dr. Ward said, improving attendance is both possible and essential.

Dr. Ward knows the value of a good education. Three of Dr. Ward's siblings are medical doctors, one is a doctor of jurisprudence, and Dr. Ward is a Ph.D in education. For the last six years, he served as state administrator in Southern California's Compton School District, putting that district back on sound fiscal footing.

Dr. Ward admits that there is no way to balance next year's budget, but he is also concerned about the impact of cutbacks. "I'm an educator," he said. "I care about school systems.... I, too, believe that given the time we can develop something here. The idea is to show what is reality, and then build morale and build capacity in our system so kids can learn."

Restaurant

from page 1

plans available for public review at the library. Based on feedback from neighbors—and the committee offers its thanks to all who called or sent messages—the Board of Directors wrote a letter of opposition to City of Oakland Planner Robert Merkamp, the applicant, and Councilmember Jane Brunner. As plans develop, the committee will keep the community informed and involved.

As a result of the restaurant proposal, the committee decided to examine the larger issue of what types of businesses or developments are desirable in the area. Of the 81 establishments on College Avenue between the BART station and Broadway, for example, one in three serve food.

Do we have too many restaurants on College Avenue? What is the perfect balance of establishments that serve the neighborhood versus those that serve the region? What can we do to guide development? What will ensure sustainability for our neighborhood and region? How can RCPC and the Rockridge District Association work together with community members to address these issues?

If you have points of view to share, the Land Use Committee invites you to participate in a study planned for this summer. We will review land use along the length of College Avenue from Alcatraz to Broadway.

Please contact Hiroko Kurihara at 510/384-0557 or H2Oakland@sbcglobal.net if you would like to help.


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Maison Nouveau . . . What is this? Bad French?

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Kitchen Tour

from page 1

blend modern conveniences into a classic bungalow home, with a few surprising touches. As this sneak peek indicates, this is a tour you will not want to miss.

Buy Discounted Tickets Now

We are pleased to announce that Kitchen Tour ticket prices have held steady at their 2001 rates: Advance purchase tickets are available for $25, and day-of-tour tickets will be available for $30. We offer two convenient ordering methods: mail or online. To order by mail, please fill out the ticket order form on this page and enclose a check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your order. Tickets will be mailed to you within two weeks of the tour. To order online, go to www.rockridge.org, click on "Rockridge Kitchen Tour," then "Pay by Credit Card." Follow the easy payment process, and save the confirmation number you receive via email. Bring this confirmation number with you to the will-call registration desk on the day of the tour to pick up your tickets and brochure.

Though the advanced ticket price is $25 for online credit card purchases, there is a small convenience fee added to the ticket price. Given the fund-raising nature of this event, passing along this fee offers you a convenient option, while allowing RCPC to retain more funds to invest in our community. Please note that we can only process check payments for mail orders and only credit card payments for online orders.

Docents Needed

Want to see all nine kitchens for free? Sign up as a docent, and you will be invited to a pre-tour look at three of the kitchens. You will have an opportunity to visit the remaining kitchens either before or after your shift on the tour day. Docents are indispensable to the success of the tour and rotate duties between greeting guests at the door and standing by in the kitchen to provide information to guests. To be a docent, call Nancy Sale at 655-4625.

Other Volunteers Needed

Please contact any of the following committee chairs if you are interested in further volunteer opportunities:

- **Publicity:** Deborah Larson, 595-3352
- **Day-of-Tour Coordination:** Susan Montauk, 547-3855
- **Raffle Committee:** Natalie Mehta, 415/783-5467

Brochure Sponsorship

Many of our tour guests are looking for both inspiration and resources to assist them in future renovation projects. We furnish a tour brochure that offers a limited amount of advertising space—an excellent venue to publicize your kitchen or residential renovation business or services. All space must be reserved by July 15 to meet our printing deadlines. Please contact Jo Ellis at 653-3210 for information regarding ad space.

Additional information regarding this event can be found on our website at www.rockridge.org (click on "Rockridge Kitchen Tour") or by contacting RCPC at 644-4228.

2003 Rockridge Kitchen Tour
Advance Ticket Order Form

Yes! Save me a spot for the:

2003 Rockridge Kitchen Tour
Sunday, September 28, 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Please send me the following number of tickets:

_____ **tickets @ $25 ea. advance price = $** _____ **total enclosed**

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **Zip** _____

Please mail this coupon, a self-addressed stamped envelope, and your check or money order payable to:

RCPC Kitchen Tour, 5245 College Avenue PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618

Thank you! *The Rockridge Kitchen Tour Committee*

Guess the Year!

Three kitchen photos (one on the front page and the two below) are from Tours of the past and present. Try to guess the year for each. **Hint:** Tour years were 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001 and this year's tour — 2003. Answers at bottom os second column.



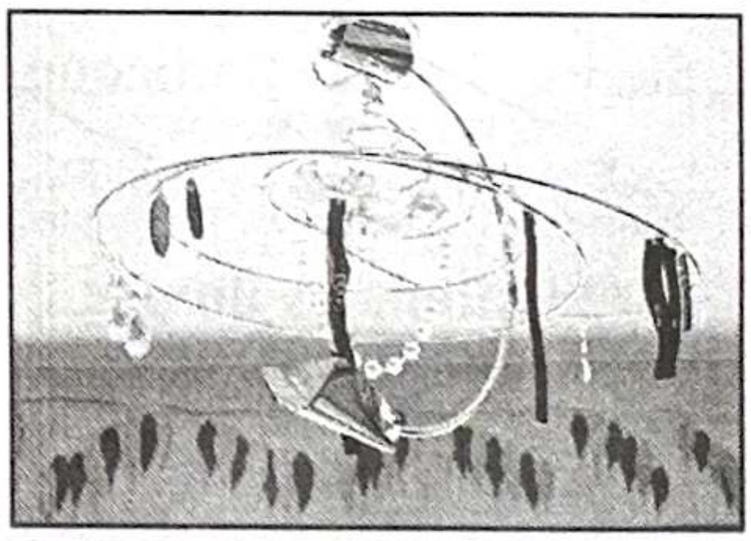


Photo Tour Years

front page: 1997— Margarido home of Dom Dimento, right, and Craig Lyall.

Top photo, right column: 2001— Colby Street home of Mariano Curat and Todd Mangini.

Lower photo, right column: 2003— Chandelier detail (watch for it on the Tour). *Photos by Susan Montauk*

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changes ON COLLEGE

by Theresa Nelson

The past months have seen many changes on College Avenue (and surrounding Rockridge streets). Here's a wrap-up of new stores and services, new names, and re-opened eateries:

New Name

Rossmano
(formerly Lunetti)
Antiques and art objects for home and garden, Daniel Rossomano, owner
5332 College Avenue, 653-4269
Open Wednesday to Friday, 11am-6pm
Saturday and Sunday, noon-6pm

New Stores

It's Your Move Games & Hobbies
William and Rue Kreber-Mapp, owners
4920 Telegraph Avenue, 649-4537
Events 547-4FUN
www.itsyourmovegames.com

Chemistry
Women's clothing & accessories
Richelle Valenzuela, owner
5337 College Avenue, 420-5834
Open Tuesday and Wednesday, 11am-6pm
Thursday-Saturday, 11am-7pm
Sunday, 11am-5pm

Cloud Nine Body Salon
Skin care, facials, waxing, etc.
Alresa Brownin, owner
5495 Claremont Avenue, 350-0634
Open 7 days/week by appointment

Suzy Q Korean Barbeque
5299 College Avenue
Open for dinner nightly at 5pm
Lunch Monday to Friday, 11am-3pm

Christopher's Burger
5295 College Avenue, 601-8828
Open daily 11am-9pm

i Vero
Hair salon, 6052 College Avenue
985-0406

Reopened

The Conga Lounge
Cocktails, light food, and banquet facility
5422 College Avenue
Thursday to Saturday, 5pm-midnight

Closed

Sergio's Trattoria
5299 College Avenue

RCPC Bylaw Amendments To be Voted on at July Meeting

The RCPC Board of Directors has recommended changes to the organization's bylaws to clarify the length of elective terms on the board and to adopt term limits for elected directors. The proposed amendments will be voted on by the members—anyone 18 or more years old with evidence of residence in Rockridge—at the meeting on July 17, 2003, at 7:30pm at the Rockridge Library.

The Board's goal in recommending the term limits provision is to encourage a flow of new volunteers, with fresh perspectives and new energy, onto the Board. The proposed amendment contains enough flexibility to assure that the Board will not be deprived of a prospective director's needed expertise at an important juncture. The Board of Directors has 11 seats, of which 10 are filled by election and one by board appointment. Half of the elective seats are filled in odd-numbered years, the other half in even-numbered years. Elections take place at the RCPC Annual Meeting which, under the Bylaws, is held on the third Thursday in April and continued to the next Saturday (the alternate polling date). Currently, the bylaws state that the term of an elected director runs for "two years." At present, any person may run for any number of terms on the board. The proposed amendments to Section 8.03 of the Bylaws would:

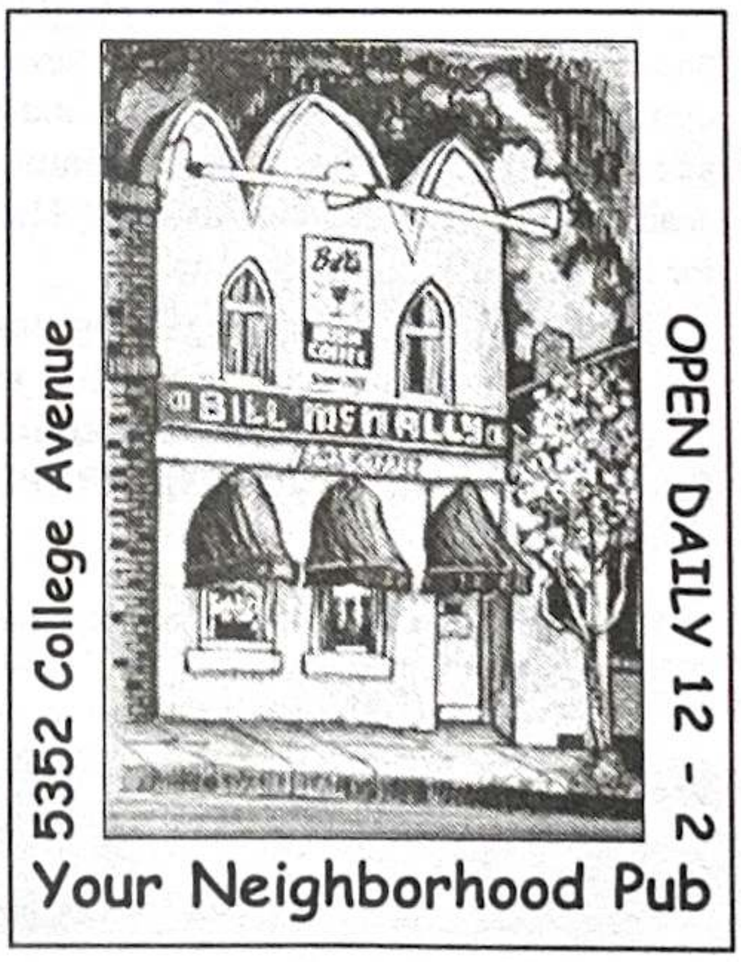
1. clarify that the term of an elected director runs to the end of the annual meeting in the second calendar year after the year in which the director was elected (without regard to whether two years have elapsed, or more than elapsed, at the time of the meeting); and

2. limit the number of elective terms which any one person may serve on the Board of Directors. No person would be eligible to be elected to more than three elective terms, consecutive or otherwise, unless, for any additional term:

• at least one annual election has already been held since the end of the person's last term of office; and

• the person's candidacy for an additional term has been approved by affirmative vote of the Board of Directors, with at least two-thirds of all directors voting in favor, or the person has received the signed, written endorsement of two-thirds of all directors.

The term limits provision would include elective terms already served before the effective date of the amendment, provided that no person's ability to complete a term currently under way would be affected. The amendment would not affect a person's ability to serve on the board as an appointee, and a person's term of service as an appointee on the board would not be counted toward the term limitation.





Neighborhood Volunteer Donates Books, Time and Expertise to the Rockridge Library

When Mariam Lomax began to need large-print books a couple of years ago, her daughter, Claire, subscribed to Doubleday's Large-Print Book Club. When Mariam's tastes in reading proved to be far broader than Doubleday's list, Claire turned to Diesel Books on College Avenue, which regularly fills their large-print orders. When Mariam finishes her books, Claire takes them to the Rockridge Library, where they are gradually enhancing a modest large-print collection.

Claire delivers the books to the library's front desk. "What's fun is the response," Claire says. "I usually have them wrapped in brown paper, and as they open the packages and examine the books, they say 'large print' with awe. It's such a kick. I've found the way to somebody's heart."

Longtime residents of Rockridge, Mariam and Claire were friends of the Rockridge Library even before there was an organization by that name. Claire once served the organizational Friends as co-chair, but most of her contributions have been informal.

For example, Claire "likes to get rid of stuff:" and when she culls her bookshelves, the discards end up at the Rockridge Library, often on the cart set aside for sales of books that don't merit a home in the permanent collection. Having taken books out of the library for years, it seems only fair to put a few back in.

Not long ago, Claire read *The War on Freedom: How and Why American Was Attacked, September 11, 2001*, by Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed, presenting a view of events not regularly seen in the Western press. After checking with the Rockridge Library, Claire bought 15 copies, which are now circulating throughout the Oakland Public Library system.

Knowing that Claire has acquired some expertise maintaining the garden at her Harwood Avenue house, the librarians asked her to help advise its landscaping team. Most visitors probably think of the wisteria around the College Avenue entrance if they associate the library with any plants at all. In fact, there is other landscaping—a generous word for the combination of weeds and overgrown or dying plant life that circles the parking lot and runs across the back of the building and along the Manila Avenue side.



Rockridge neighbor Claire Lomax helps keep books on the library's shelves.

With funds from the Rockridge Women's Club and help from a local landscaper, a restoration is in the works. "We're hoping to replace what's there with plants that are longer-lived, drought tolerant, and low maintenance," Claire says. "One of the main things we're planning is lots more stone."

Though most of Claire's connections with the library are anonymous, some are not. In January, Claire's papercraft—mobiles, collages, and wall-hangings—made a popular exhibit in the library's lobby display case. Claire also makes cards and notepapers, including very Craftsman-like notecards on brown paper featuring a map of Rockridge and stamped prints of local homes. Her exhibit will return to the library in November.

Michelle Syracuse
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Check Your...

Compiled by Jo Ellis

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.

Councilmember Jane Brunner's Community Advisory Meeting

First Saturday each month, 10am to noon. Peralta Elementary School: 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz Ave., just east of Telegraph). **Note: No meeting July, August and September.** For information on future meetings: 238-7001 or www.oaklandnet.com.

Oakland City Council Meeting

Every Tuesday, 7pm, City Hall.

Oakland Planning Commission

1st and 3rd Wednesday each month, 6:30pm, City Hall. Get agendas and details at www.oaklandnet.com.

Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council

Steering committee meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7 to 8:30pm, Fire Station #8 community room, 463 51st Street. More information: link to the NCPC webpage at www.rockridge.org.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Ave. **Summer Reading Game:** Sign up and start your reading log; finish by August 16. Kids read on their own; younger kids may have a parent read aloud. Fill in an undersea gameboard and collect prizes.

For Children:

- Toddler Story Time, Saturday at 10:30am: 7/12, 8/2, 8/9
- Pre-School Story Hours, Tuesday at 10:30 and 11am: 7/15, 8/5, 8/19
- Pajama Story Time, Wednesday at 7pm: 7/9, 7/23, 8/6, 8/20

Special Events:

- Musician Bonnie Lockhart: Wednesday, 7/16 at 7pm
- Puppet Show by Nick Barone: Wednesday, 7/30 at 7pm
- Undersea Library Treasure Hunt: Wednesday, 8/13 at 7pm
- Puppet Making with East Bay Depot: Saturday, 7/12 at 3pm
- Capoeira Dance Performance by Adigun Sipho of Angola: Saturday, 8/2 at 3pm

For Young Adults:

NOTE: Teen Advisory Council has no summer meetings. Teens may volunteer at the Library to help with the Summer Reading Program. Details: Susan Stutzman or Erica Siskind at 597-5017.

For Adults:

- **Lawyers in the Library:** Free legal advice. First Thursday of each month, (8/7), from 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 Toastmasters

Tuesdays, 7pm, Veterans Building, 200 Grand Ave., Oakland. Improve public speaking skills in a friendly and supportive environment. Call Craig, 597-0951, or e-mail www.rockridgetoastmasters.org.

Writer's Support/Critique Group

Rockridge Branch Library, 1st Saturday of the month: (8/9, 9/6) 2:30 to 5:30pm. 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 (www.berkeleywritersclub.org/) Call 482-0265 or Writefox@aol.com.

Oakland Tours Program

Free city-sponsored downtown guided walking tours on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Discover Oakland's changing skyline, landmarks, churches and high- rises. From Chinatown to Uptown, Jack London Waterfront to Preservation Park, eight different tour itineraries are repeated throughout the season. All tours start at 10am and last 90 minutes. For a 2003 tour schedule, call 238-3234 or visit www.oaklandnet.com.

Diesel Book/Poetry Readings

5433 College. **Free & open to the public.**

- Wednesday, 7/9, 7:30pm, Bill Moody: Looking for Chet Baker, a new mystery. He will also perform with his trio before and after the reading/signing.
- Sunday, 7/13, 4pm, Merin Wexler: The Porno Girl and Nathaniel Bellows: On This Day. A discussion of their individual MFA program experiences leading to published works.
- Wednesday, 7/16, 7:30pm, Alexander Cockburn, editor of Counterpunch, co-sponsored with North Oakland Neighbors for Peace and Justice will speak on The War at Home.
- Thursday, 7/17, 7:30pm, Gary Lachman: Turn Off Your Mind: The Mystic Sixties and the Dark Side of the Age of Aquarius.
- Wednesday, 7/30, 7:30pm, Kelly Slater: Pipe Dreams: A Surfer's Journey.
- Tuesday, 7/22, 7:30pm, Book Group will discuss Middlemarch by George Eliot.
- SPECIAL EVENT: BOOKS BY THE BAY Saturday, 7/19, 10am to 4pm. The 8th annual celebration of Northern California Independent Booksellers will be held at the Yerba Buena Gardens in San Francisco. Over 40 bookstores will participate and hundreds of author events will run all day.

For more information about readings, book discussion groups and classes, call 653-9965 or www.dieselbookstore.com.

Lower Rockridge Community Picnic

Saturday, July 19, 11am to 2pm., Colby Park, 61st Street at Colby. Join neighbors from the lower Rockridge area for a potluck picnic. Bring a main dish, salad, dessert or beverages for six. Plates, cups, & utensils provided. Free activities for kids. Hosted by the Lower Rockridge Parents Group. For more information, call 655-2737 or email: lowerrockridgeparents@yahoo.

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: Call 420-0196 to find out about free acoustic music performances from 7 to 9pm.

Gardening for Wildlife Program

Presented by the Aquatic Outreach Institute in partnership with Alameda County Waste Management Authority, Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and the Calfed Bay-Delta Program.

Workshops and events series: learn to landscape with native plants, improve/protect habitat for wildlife and protect water quality; hands-on activities with professional landscape designers.

- Gardening with Calif. Native Plant Workshop: July 19, 9am to 3pm at San Leandro Library
- Garden Design Workshop: August 23, 9am to 12:30pm at San Leandro Library
- 2 day volunteer work party with your local watershed group or the Calif. Native Plant Society to qualify for up to $150.00 worth of gift certificates from local native plant nurseries.

A non-refundable $25 pre-registration fee required. For more information, see web site at www.aoinstitute.org or contact Mary Malko at 510/231-9430 or mary@aoinstitute.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 Events:**

- 7/23, Picnic Summer Celebration
- 7/18, Trip to Blake Gardens in Kensington
- 8/20, Hawaiian Celebration
- 8/25 to 8/29, Attend Senior Camp at Berkeley's Tuolomne Camp.

Hot lunch available at noon for $1.75. Details about upcoming field trips and special programs, call Kathy at 531-6724.

North Oakland Multi-Purpose Senior Center

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

- Computer Classes
- Craft and sewing classes
- Walking groups and field trips.

The Newsletter, "North Oakland Senior Times" provides a full schedule of classes as well as a monthly menu for lunch: (suggested donation: seniors age 60 + $1.75 and $4.00 for those under age 60). Call 597- 5085 for details about membership, newsletter, class or appointment times, and opportunities to become a volunteer.

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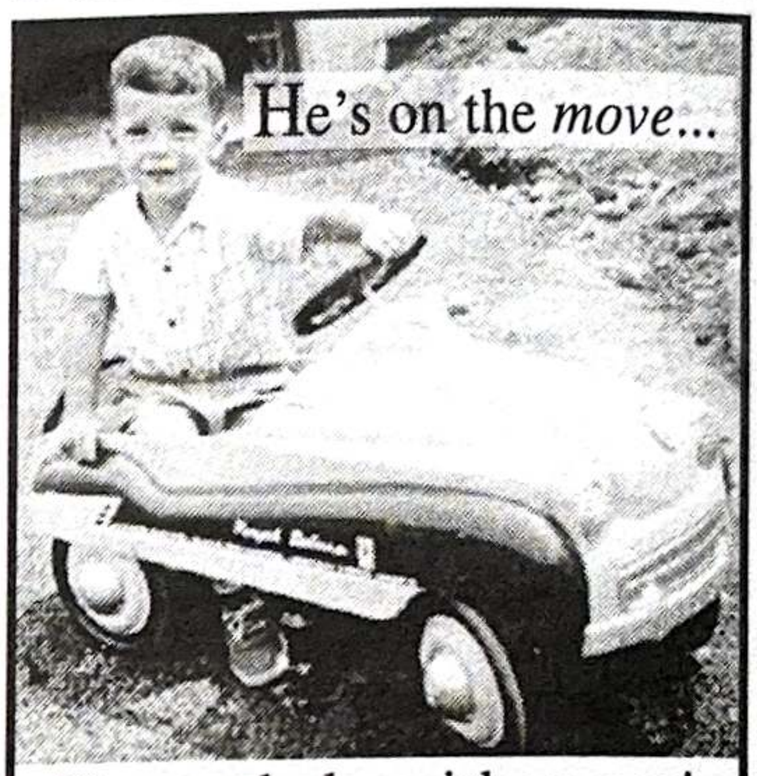
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