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

Are You A Community Activist? Rockridge Needs You!

RCPC seeks Board candidates

by Deborah Weinstein, RCPC Vice Chair

Is there something about Rockridge that you would like to change? Serving on the Board of the Rockridge Community Planning Council will enable you to work on a solution. RCPC will hold its annual election in April for five Board Directors, each of whom serves a two-year term. The Board consists of one appointed and ten elected directors. Candidates must be 18 years of age, reside within RCPC boundaries and indicate their intention to run for office by March 18. (A map and description of RCPC boundaries is available online at www.rockridge.org.)



RCPC Boardmembers gathered recently at a planning meeting to review the goals and progress of the organization and to consider issues facing Rockridge.

Candidates for the RCPC Board are invited to submit a photo and a 125-word statement describing their interest in running for the board. Statements and photos must be received by March 18 for publication in the April issue of *The Rockridge News*. Please include your address and phone number. Mail hard copies to RCPC, 5245 College Ave, PMB 311, Oakland, CA, 94618. Electronic copies can be sent via e-mail to deborahlweinstein@yahoo.com.

Candidates will speak and voting will take place at the April 15 RCPC General Meeting at the Rockridge Library, 7:30 p.m.

Since 1986, RCPC has been representing Rockridge to the City of Oakland on matters that affect the community. RCPC acts as a community steward on issues from land use and zoning to traffic and crime. A description of RCPC's work in the community is available online at www.rockridge.org.

For further information, call the RCPC voicemail at 644-4228.

agenda: RCPC General Meeting

Thursday, March 18, 7:30 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library
Community Room
5366 College Avenue at Manila

- **Rockridge Merchants Describe New Association (RDA)**
- **RCPC Land Use Study Update**

• **RDA Chair Louise Rothman Reimer** will talk about the Rockridge District Association, a self-funded organization of local merchants, and describe its latest projects, including capital improvements, parking and UnderBART. She will also discuss ways RCPC and RDA can collaborate on community projects.

• **UC Berkeley graduate students** will join a working group to discuss the current status and future direction of RCPC's Land Use Study. For more information about the study, call Hiroko Kurihara at 510/384-0557.

Shaping the Future of Claremont Middle School

Former school troubleshooter now school principal

by Doug White

For David Chambliss, becoming principal of Claremont was a logical step after being hired as a specialist to improve the middle school's test scores.

Chambliss first worked at Claremont in 1999/2000 as an independent analyst with RPP International, an organization commissioned by the California Department of Education to evaluate Claremont's low scores on state standardized tests in English and math. With some of the same teachers who now work for him, Chambliss developed an improvement plan which, over the past two years, helped students boost performance.

As his job took him to other cities, Mr. Chambliss questioned why he was not spending more time on reform in his own city of Oakland.

"At lunch one day, I asked myself, 'Why am I in central Oregon?'" he recalled. I had a

Principal, page 8



David Chambliss, Claremont Middle School Principal.
Photo: Cy Gulassa

"I realized that I needed to go back and be with one school, in my town, making my town better."



Rockridge News Editor Cy Gulassa on duty in Baja.
Photo by Kirk Van Moon

Reflections on The Rockridge Rod and Gun Club

While economists debate the merits of sending jobs abroad, *The Rockridge News* was among the first to outsource its editor. The newsletter has been edited in Paris, Budapest, Seattle, Chicago and, this February, San Felipe, a small fishing village on the Sea of Cortez in Baja California, where 23 family and friends celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Rockridge Rod and Gun Club.

Okay, the Rockridge Rod and Gun Club is not really a club—no dues, no rules. The name was whimsically bestowed years ago on a group of Harwood Avenue and Ivanhoe Road neighbors who, off and on for three decades, have taken spring vacations together to San Felipe to enjoy the sun, party, fish, dance, buy trinkets, and eat shrimp and fish tacos washed down with margaritas and iced Coronas. We cook under open air ramadas strung with Christmas lights, sleep on the beach, and wake to fiery, beginning-of-the-world sunrises. Breakfast? Savory burritos, tamales and empanadas hawked by the wives of fishermen.

In the early '70s the streets were dirt, the sea churned with flotillas of fishing boats and shrimp trawlers and the air was fragrant with the smell of mesquite fires. Today, San Felipe has paved roads, a malecón full of shops and eateries, licensed fishing guides, carnival parades and its own private airport. But it's still an exciting, dusty, rough-edged, foreign adventure, especially now that the kids we once hauled down bring kids of their own to hunt shells, learn street Spanish and sample *palotes*, ice cream bars in Potteresque flavors like hibiscus and tamarind.

Because of the rigors of sun and sand and the constant distraction of bikinis, I had to seek the serenity of an outdoor internet café to edit *The Rockridge News,* one that provided a beach overlook. Normally bright sun washes out laptop screens. The café's solution was a primitive sun shield, a black, papier mâché dome that looked like a marriage between a charcoal smoker and an igloo, with an opening for a Sony laptop and a pair of hands.

There were drawbacks to an otherwise idyllic working vacation. For one, the guffaws and laughter of the Rockridge club members who wandered by as I worked were disquieting, including those of grandkids Max, Rocky and Maya who quipped: "That a beehive?" "Looks like a big gum drop!" "Are you stuck in there again?" That last was a cruel rub. Just the day before I had been so intent on editing that I worked through closing time and—get this—got locked inside an outside café. The proprietor had to be summoned from supper and for days afterwards I was a reluctant town celebrity.

Despite such upsets, the Rockridge Rod and Gun Club has fostered life-long friendships and an abiding fascination for the cultures of others. No small achievement for an informal association located in a small village in the north of Oakland.



A sampling of members of the Rockridge Rod & Gun Club, 2004.
Design by Brian Gulassa

ROCKRIDGE BRANCH LIBRARY

5366 College Avenue
597-5017
New Hours:

Tuesday:	12:30 – 8 p.m.
Weds, Thurs, Sat:	10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Friday	12 – 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, Monday	CLOSED

Library details: See Calendar, page 15.

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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Cy Gulasssa ..... Editor-in-Chief
Ortrun Niesar, Claire Isaacs
Doug White ..... Writers
Barry Kaufman ..... Food
Jo Ellis ..... Advertising
Theresa Nelson ..... Neighborhood Merchant
Lydia Gans ..... Photography
Lauri Scharber ..... Advertising
Susan Montauk ..... Business Manager
Don Kinkead ..... Graphics & Layout

RCPC Board of Directors, 2003-2004

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Deborah Weinstein ..... Vice-Chair
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Annual subscriptions to ***The Rockridge News*** can be obtained by sending a check for $18, payable to *Rockridge News* Subscriptions to: *Rockridge News* Subscriptions at the address below.

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: editor@rockridge.org
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
- ☛ **April 3, 2004**
- ☛ **April deadline is March 18**

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.)*

Claremont Avenue Residents Deplore Motorists' Behavior

Calming traffic on Claremont Avenue dominated discussion at the January meeting of the RCPC Traffic and Pedestrian Safety committee. Residents along the major artery related stories ranging from tragic to nuisance, all underscoring the need for urgent action along a route with a long history of problems:

"I have had two cars totaled while they were parked on the street and watched a cyclist die – something needs to be done to slow cars down." (Timothy Jones)

"The city put the stop light in at Forest after a school crossing guard was run over and killed. We don't want to wait for another person to die before the city does something." (Fred Simmons)

"We almost started a riot trying to back our boat into the driveway." (Gisela Simon)

"I know when school is out because of all the kids yelling for cars to stop and all the cars are honking." (Monroe Teachenor)

"Claremont is a gateway to our neighborhood, but now it is more of a freeway through our neighborhood. (Kristin Wilson)

"Claremont is so wide because of the electric trolleys that used to be in the middle of the street. There is no need for this much pavement now." (Timothy Jones).

"Through much perseverance, I was able to get the crosswalks repainted near my home, but it is not enough." (Joe Chegia)

"Not everyone at the meeting necessarily agreed with my ideas for re-striping Claremont into two lanes with a central turning lane," said John Potis, traffic committee chair. "But they all agree that something needs to be done to slow cars down and increase safety for pedestrians."



RCPC Traffic Committee Chair John Potis proposes restriping Claremont as a way to calm traffic while preserving flow.

Graphic: John Potis (January 2004 Rockridge News)

In addition to considering Claremont a top priority, the committee proposed working with City Council member Jane Brunner to reduce speed and enhance safety on major Rockridge streets, distributing a flyer that explains the advantages of restriping Claremont, inventorying Rockridge traffic volumes and crash data, and pursuing the Traffic Safety Mini-Grant Program offered by the Oakland Pedestrian Safety Project.

Want to help? Want more information? Please attend the next RCPC Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Committee meeting March 22, 2004, from 7 to 9pm at the Rockridge Branch Library.





Temescal cleanup volunteers take a photo break. From left: Barbara Loomis, Miles Ave; Steve Elspas, Locksley Ave; Laura Lee Westaway, Miles Ave; Tony Freitas, Miles Ave

A Green Valentine's Day

by Jackie Hoeppner-Freitas

It took a City of Oakland bucket loader to remove all the green waste on Valentine's Day that volunteers raked up around Temescal Creek in the two blocks between Clifton and Clarke streets. The DMV Neighbor's Association (DNA) sponsored the work party as part of its quarterly cleanups under the City's Adopt-a-Creek program. The next cleanup will be the morning of Saturday, April 24, 9a.m. to noon, the day Oakland celebrates Earth Day, followed by a potluck and pasta feed at noon. There will be plenty of work to do in April cleaning up after the winter storms, so please save the day!



Dylan, Keith Avenue.

Thalia & Arien Hardy Street.



The Zoning Counter

The Zoning Counter provides Rockridge residents with an opportunity to review construction project proposals to be undertaken in their neighborhoods. While it is a compilation of recent applications filed with the Oakland Planning Department, it is not necessarily a complete or up-to-date listing. Individuals may contact the Case Planner or the Planning Department for additional information.

5327 Shafter Avenue

Proposal: Design review for a 732 square foot addition to the rear of an existing single family home.

Applicant: Anthony R Key & Amy Kitiver

Contact Person/Phone Number:
Anthony R. Key & Amy Kitiver 547-4565
Owner: Anthony R. Key & Amy Kitiver

Planning Permits Required: Special Residential Design Review for addition or alteration in the R-35 Zone and Minor Variance to allow a 4'1" side yard set back where a 5' set back is required (maintaining the same setback as existing).

Historic Status: Potential Historic Property (PDHP), ASI contributor, minor importance; Survey rating: D2+

Case Planner: Moe Hackett at 238-3979 or mhackett@oaklandnet.com

5644 Oak Grove Avenue

Proposal: To construct a second story addition to the rear of an existing single-family dwelling in order to accommodate a new master bathroom.

Applicant: Kathy Kuhner

Contact Person/Phone Number: 510/472-1986

Owner: Kathy Kuhner

Planning Permits Required: Minor Variance to build within the required side yard setback area (3'0" proposed; 5'0"), and Regular Design Review for an addition to a single-family dwelling.

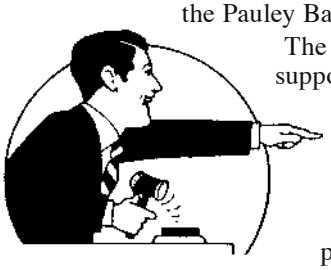
Historic Status: Potential Designated Historic Property (PDHP); Survey rating: C2+

Case Planner: Pete Vollman at 238-6167 or pvollman@oaklandnet.com

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Chabot Elementary School's Annual Spring Auction Raises Funds for Enrichment Programs

Anthony Chabot Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) invites the community to join us for an "Evening In Paradise" at the annual Spring Auction to be held on **Saturday, April 3, from 6-11 pm**. Our tropical extravaganza will be held at the Pauley Ballroom in the U.C. Berkeley student union building.



The auction is Chabot's biggest fundraiser and all proceeds support the school's enrichment programs including music, art, library resources, a computer program and a new on-site garden curriculum. The PTA also contributes to improvements in the physical plant. Chabot is the local elementary school in Rockridge and is one of the reasons this neighborhood is so desirable. We have a fabulous principal, wonderful teachers and the curriculum rivals any private school. As you know, both the city and the state are cutting education spending drastically so we rely on the local community more than ever. We gratefully appreciate any donations you can make to help us reach our goal of raising $40,000. Please contact Susie Poncelet to make a donation (e.g. an item to be auctioned, a gift certificate, or a cash contribution). Donors to this event will be listed in our program and on our website (www.chabotelementary.org).

Tickets for the event are $25 in advance and $30 at the door. To purchase tickets or for more information call Susie Poncelet at 510/985-1246 or e-mail sponcelet@earthlink.net.

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At the February RCPC Meeting

RCPC Thanks Experts for Ballot Issue Presentation

By now we all know the outcome of the March 2 election, but we can be assured that those who attended the February RCPC general meeting made better decisions in the voting booth, thanks to a spirited discussion of the issues facilitated by: Ann Spanier, head of Voter Service for the League of Women Voters of Oakland; Justin Horner, chief of staff for councilmember Jane Brunner; Pat Dilks, Chair of National Women's Political Caucus Alameda North; and RCPC board members Susan Montauk, Mike Taylor and Deborah Weinstein. Also present was Melanie Shelby, contestant for Oakland City Council At-Large seat.

Be a *Rockridge News* Block Captain; Help Get the News Out

One-hundred-fifty-two volunteers hand deliver *The Rockridge News* to the doors of the 5000 residents and the merchants in our neighborhood, one of the many reasons Rockridge is such a strong and vital community.

Would you like to share the fun? Do you have 20 minutes a month to devote to your community? As a Block Captain, you will receive a bundle of newsletters and a distribution list at your door each month (except in August, when the paper is not published) that you would then deliver to neighbors.

Piece of cake? Yes! A sweet way to make a contribution to the community. Here are two available delivery routes that need volunteers:

#11F Block Captain: From 5418 College, even numbers along College up Manila, then across the street to the corner of Bryant and Manila down the odd numbers of 5400 Manila to College

#17F Block Captain: 5200 block of Locksley Avenue

Call 547-3855 or e-mail Susan at smontauk@juno.com to volunteer.




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A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, RCPC publishes its financial statement annually in *The Rockridge News*.

RCPC 2003
Financial Statement

(Cash Basis)

RCPC General Fund	
Income	
Interest Income	282
Kitchen Tour	24,499
Other Fundraising (excl. K-Tour)	1,321
RR News	31,312
Total Income	57,414
Expenses	
Insurance & Sales Tax	1,379
Office Expenses	1,590
Legal & Accounting	892
Kitchen Tour	7,527
Other Committee Activity	811
RR News	30,201
Grants	1,150
Merchandise for Fundraising	1,079
Total Expenses	44,629
Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL)	
Income	
Interest Income	71
Book Sales	2,934
Donations & Grants	5,375
Total Income	8,380
Expenses	
Office Expenses	218
Gifts to Library	12,286
Total Expenses	12,504
Friends of the Rockridge Greenbelt (FROG)	
Income	
Interest Income	204
Fundraising / Donations	1,542
Total Income	1,746
Expenses	
Office Expenses	1,094
Playground Build & Maintenance	2,739
Total Expenses	3,833
Whistlestop Account	
No activity in 2003	
Assets	
Cash Accounts	
RCPC (1)	21,886
FORL	4,532
FROG (1)	25,031
Whistlestop	955
Other Assets	
RCPC CDs	20,524
FORL CDs	56,046
FROG/Phase II Restricted Gifts	23,035
Total Assets	152,010
Liabilities	**0**

(1) Reflects journal entries to correct erroneous transfers between accounts.

(2) Excludes FROG remaining wood inventory.

RCPC tax records are on file at the Rockridge library for public review.

RCPC is the fiscal agent for FORL, FROG and Whistlestop.

Rolling Gallery

by Cy Gulassa

You've seen it cruising Rockridge streets: a low riding '69 Mustang encrusted with dolls, skulls, ghouls, lizards, horns, bullets, Betty Boop, and a thousand other artifacts that provoke humor, admiration, disgust or, on a dark night, even fear.

What is it? Affirming that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, "It's an artcar," says owner Howrad Vives, a lanky artist given to wearing waist-long dreadlocks, shades, a floppy hat and an ankle-length wool coat.

If you are looking for a great way to individualize your car—make it stand out from all the BMWs and Hummers in the company parking lot—Vives is the man to see. He'll design and build it for you or consult as you construct your own. Or for a small donation he'll chauffeur you anywhere — local pharmacy or even to the opera.

"Why bother with a cliché taxi or stretch limo when a one-of-a-kind artmobile is available?" he asks with just a hint of a grin.

The car has great advantages. In traffic jams, passengers can amuse themselves by visiting with the little creatures adorning the interior. "If it's attention you want, you'll definitely get it," Vives promises. He says drivers on freeways slow down for second and third I-don't-believe-it looks, and people stare as he gets out. "They even run after you with questions."

The Rockridge specimen is the product of a collaboration between Vives and a bunch of school kids in his daughter's class a few years ago in Saratoga. "They needed an art project and my car needed a paint job. I slathered it with gesso and invited the kids to participate, using stuff local toy stores donated."

The process wasn't haphazard. The kids first designed motifs and sketched plans before going at it, Vives said. A dual theme emerged. "The kids' work represents youth, energy and fantasy, and my mortality, something I think a lot about as I get older."

The car is so popular in Latino neighborhoods that Vives has renamed his "Carnal Cruiser" *El Carro de Los Muertos*, a kind of roving altar that celebrates with traditional whimsy the *Day of the Dead*. Vives invites kids to come to Auburn or Harwood where the car is usually parked and check it out. "Touching is okay," he says.

In addition to artcars, Vives does plasma sculpture in his San Francisco studio, examples of which are for sale on eBay. For more info: Daturico@hotmail.com.





Howrad Vives, local artist.

Artist takes his mobile exhibit on the road.

PHOTOS: CY GULASSA

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Boero Redux

A business once called "sweat shop" is reborn as up-scale retail building

A Safeway store in the '40s and a manufacturing base for over fifty years has been reborn as a handsome retail building.

by Kristil Robarts and Kimberly Leo

Many Rockridge residents remember the old commercial building on College Avenue between Manila and Kales that had darkened windows and the constant hum of sewing machines coming from the interior. Out in the back, enterprising residents would find discarded scraps of beautiful cloth that they took home and sewed into quilts and seat covers. Because many weren't sure what was going on inside, they called it a sweat shop, a place where people worked long hours for low-wage piece work. They were wrong.

The nickname stuck, much to the chagrin of Paul Boero, one of four brothers and sisters of the Boero family who owned the company. He is quick to defend the family business and its practices. Founded in 1942 by Paul's father and grandfather, the company sewed exclusively for the well-known Koret clothes company. "It was always a union shop," he said, with workers initially members of ILGWU and later UNITE. At its peak, Boero's employed 75 workers. "We were like an extended family," he said. He has fond memories as a child visiting the shop back when trolley tracks still ran down College Avenue.

The family business and associated childhood memories were some of the reasons the Boero family decided to develop the property after the company closed in 2002, when Koret moved its production offshore. The Boeros wanted to develop new retail space that would enhance the area and draw in quality retailers.



Paul Boero
Photo: Kristil Robarts

They have done just that. What was once a Safeway store in the '40s and a drab manufacturing base for over fifty years has been reborn as a handsome building designed by architect Kava Massih and built by contractor Jef Schwarck.

The spacious interiors are already home to two new businesses that opened during the holidays: Red Feather Mercantile, a home décor and gift shop with a Pacific Northwest theme (think cowboy), and Namaste: Yoga in Rockridge. Namaste offers a variety of Hatha- and Vinyasa-style classes and workshops for all levels of students.

Two others retailers opened in February: Chic, a clothing store specializing in Italian designer wear, and Ladies Workout Express, a women's workout and fitness studio. All four owners are going into business for the first time and say they are pleased and excited to join the growing family of distinguished retailers on College Avenue.



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❋ Sold at 32% over the asking price and closed in 8 days!				

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Principal

from page 1

little epiphany and realized that I needed to go back and be with one school, in my town, making my town better."

In 2001, hearing of Mr. Chambliss' decision and knowing him from his work as a program evaluator, Superintendent Dennis Chaconas hired Chambliss as assistant principal at Havenscourt Middle School. "One of the reasons that he hired me," Chambliss said, "was that through my teaching experience and work with RPP, I understood how definition of standards, means of assessment, and curriculum development all line up."

In 2002, a year before Mr. Chambliss became Claremont's principal, morale among faculty fell after a 4% pay cut and loss of 3 positions. At first viewed skeptically as just another administrator, he had to work hard to win the trust of faculty. Added to this challenge was the loss of one of its two assistant principals to budget cuts.

So that teaching could be the central focus when students returned in the fall, Principal Chambliss and Assistant Principal Carolyn Gramsdorff spent the first summer revising the staff handbook, defining new policies and procedures, and describing goals for the new year.

Above all, Chambliss said, "I wanted to put in place strong procedures for communicating with parents about the academic progress of their children." Students regularly bring home course descriptions, progress reports, counselor evaluations, and bi-weekly newsletters, all reflecting staff's commitment to teaching.

The respect Claremont students have for their teachers and their own learning is evident as one walks the halls...

One of Principal Chambliss' primary academic goals in 2003/4 is to track progress of all Claremont students who under perform. Of most immediate concern is the 20% of Claremont students who read below grade level. While the school district mandates that such students participate in the High Point Reading Program, Chambliss was able to restrict the size of these remedial classes to 25 instead of 32, thanks to the school librarian who volunteered to teach a class, and to grant money that enabled hiring an extra teacher. In place of an elective, students in High Point spend two periods of instruction each day in reading class.

To address behavioral obstacles to learning, Principal Chambliss implemented what in the school's 2002/3 site plan was called the Opportunity Room. Instead of being given an off-campus suspension, a student who disrupts a class is sent to talk with teacher Frank Williams who runs the Opportunity Room. Williams models respectful behavior by listening to the student's concerns and discussing the classroom work and situation that caused the problem. The emphasis is on creating a one-on-one learning opportunity while holding the student accountable for disruptive behavior.

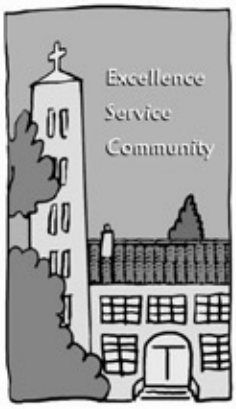
In general, the basic respect Claremont students have for their teachers and their own learning is evident as one walks the halls while classes are in session. Through open doors, one most often sees students and teachers attentively working together on the hour's lesson.

Principal David Chambliss invites readers to send questions and comments to david.chambliss@secmail.ousd.k12.ca.us.

In the April issue of The Rockridge News: *Claremont Competes with Private Schools.*

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Urgency or Emergency?

A wasp sting reveals an alternative to the emergency room

by Claire Wahrhaftig-Isaacs

A cut of the finger.
A speck in the eye.
A nasty bee stinger.
A fever too high.

A recent encounter with a yellow jacket helped me discover a wonderful medical resource right here in Rockridge—Sutter Urgent Care. Back in August, I was stung by two ground wasps while hiking in Vermont. Afraid I would have the same serious reaction I got from a bee sting more than thirty years ago, I ended up in the emergency room (ER) in Rutland. Happily my reaction was so normal that everyone concluded I had either lost my sensitivity or was immune to wasp stings.

So I didn't worry when I was stung on my own Rockridge deck three weeks later by swarming yellow jackets. Wrong again. In a few minutes my arm swelled from wrist to shoulder. By the speed of the swelling, I knew this sting was not fatal—a deadly one works much faster—but I was in severe pain. Rather than wait in a long queue in an ER, I chose Sutter Urgent Care where skilled staff allayed my anxieties and provided prompt, professional care.

When a few weeks later my husband complained of chest pains like those he experienced during a bout with pneumonia, we drove straight to Urgent Care again. We were quickly assured that he had neither pneumonia nor a heart attack, just a bad case of bronchitis. Urgent Care is a great resource for Rockridge.

Rather than treat all emergencies in the ER, Alta Bates' Emergency opened Sutter Urgent Care about a year ago specifically to deal with those problems that require immediate attention but are not serious enough to warrant ER, and your own doctor is not available for advice. The clinic is located at 5700 Telegraph, but the entrance is around the corner on 57th Street, with ample free parking. It's clean, comfortable, well lighted and underused because so few know about it. Right now, the clinic averages only 11 patients per day.

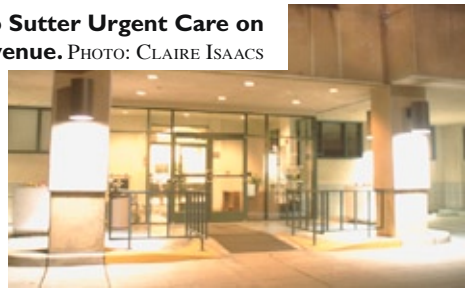
According to Dr. Joseph Medina, who rotates duties with Dr. Yenka Alonge and Dr. David Hyerde, patients can be treated for a variety of urgent needs from eye and ear infections, chest pains and allergies to respiratory and kidney problems. Staff also treat sexually transmitted diseases and can do sutures, prescribe medicine refills, and order on-site blood tests in the facility's lab. According to technician Ondra Pyles, an X-ray machine will soon be available.

Dr. Medina, who has worked for 20 years in an ER in San Jose, is a true believer in urgent care medicine because it is efficient, effective and saves doctors, patients and hospitals time and money. No referrals are necessary, but patients are encouraged afterwards to see their regular doctor who will receive a detailed report. Like any emergency clinic, Sutter Urgent Care is obliged to see any patient who requests treatment. They take nearly all insurance plans and HMOs, plus Medi-cal and Medicare. Be prepared to fill out a medical history and list your current meds.

If your problem is life-threatening, you should call 911 for an ambulance. Anyone arriving at Urgent Care with extremely serious problems will be transported to the nearest ER.

Hours are weekdays 5-9 p.m.; weekends and holidays 3-9 p.m. For further information call 204-2750. Spread the word—this clinic is a real boon to the Rockridge community.

Isaacs can be reached at RNews@rockridge.org



Entrance to Sutter Urgent Care on Telegraph Avenue. PHOTO: CLAIRE ISAACS

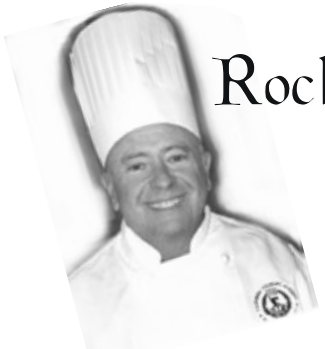
Oakland Voters Form New Yahoo! Group

In response to increasing demand for community discussion about legislation and civic issues affecting Oakland residents, a new on-line group has been formed to foster and promote these conversations. The group's membership is open to all; please consider joining at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/oakland_voters. You may choose to receive either individual or summary e-mails from the group, or you can log in to read messages when you choose. Your opinion can make a difference and community leaders are listening!

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Rockridge Cornucopia

Barry A. Kaufman

A Chicken in Every Pot and a Car in Every Garage.

In case you haven't noticed, the presidential election season has started. As best as I can determine, only one presidential candidate ever used food and cooking as his campaign slogan. That was Herbert Hoover in 1928 – "A chicken in every pot and a car in every garage." Forget the cars; keep the chicken. Whether it is a stew, a soup or a braise, I love one-pot chicken meals.

It seems that every culture has a standard one-pot chicken dish: Italy– *Chicken Cacciatora*; Hungry– *Chicken Paprikash*; France — *Coq au Vin*; Morocco– *Chicken Tagine*; France– *Poule au Pot* or China– *Steamed Chicken*.

According to the Food Lovers Companion, prior to Herbert Hoover, France's King Henry IV stated in his coronation speech that he hoped each peasant in his realm would have "a chicken in his pot every Sunday." It may surprise many people, but prior to World War II, chicken was available only to the affluent and to chicken farmers. Hoover's call for a chicken in every pot was a dream for most Americans. Can you hear John Kerry or George Bush calling for Chateaubriand every Sunday as the rallying cry for economic reform?

Slow-cooked chicken is a one-pot marvel in which chicken pieces and a variety of vegetables, herbs, and spices are poached or steamed in a liquid of water, wine or broth. While the chicken slowly cooks, the bird becomes very tender and juicy and picks up all the flavors of the other ingredients. And the magic of the dish is that it gets better every day. During the winter months, I try to cook a chicken in the pot meal on most Sundays. Served over rice, the dish just keeps getting better during the week.

The premise of chicken-in-the-pot cooking relies on a very simple logic: a steady building of flavors, one on top of the other, as opposed to more complex component cooking where you have to use several pots and pans to create mini-recipes that you combine for the final dish. In one-pot chicken cooking, everything happens in one place. In most cases, the chicken is cut up into quarters or eighths, browned in oil and set aside. Aromatic vegetables, herbs and spices are added to the cooking liquid which may be either water, wine, stock or a combination of all three. Bring to a boil and simmer until done. Serve over rice or broad noodles. What could be simpler? In all cases it is the particular combination of herbs, spices and vegetables that provide the ethnic flavor.

From a culinary history perspective, I'm sure that right after direct grilling over fire, cooking chicken in a pot with local herbs has long been part of the human culinary experience. Consider the famous Italian dish chicken cacciatora. *Alla cacciatora* means "hunter-style." The basic preparation is always the same: chicken, garlic, onions, tomatoes, white wine and oregano. I also like to add brown mushrooms. If you are so inclined, any alla cacciatora recipe could be used for cooking rabbit.

What follows is one of the least complicated recipes I know — to be perfectly honest; there is nothing innovative about it. But results are just great. The chicken and mushrooms both have an amazing capacity to pick up the flavors of the wine and tomatoes. Enjoy with a glass of Italian red wine and crusty bread.

Chicken In Hunter-Style Sauce (Chicken Cacciatora)

Ingredients

- ☐ 3 tomatoes, fresh or canned imported plum tomatoes, cut up with their juices
- ☐ Coarse salt and pepper
- ☐ 3-4 pounds chicken cut into 8 pieces, or 8 chicken thighs, with skin removed
- ☐ ¼ cup olive oil
- ☐ 1 medium yellow onion peeled and cut into 8 wedges
- ☐ 3 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
- ☐ 2 cups dry white wine
- ☐ 1 pound small brown mushrooms
- ☐ ½ cup fresh oregano leaves

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°
2. Season chicken pieces with salt and pepper
3. Heat olive oil in a heavy, enamel-bottom ovenproof pot over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking. Add chicken pieces and brown well, 4-5 minutes per side. Using a slotted spoon or tongs, transfer the chicken to a plate and set aside.
4. Add the onion wedges and garlic to the pot and cook, stirring until softened (about 6 minutes). Add the tomatoes, toss well, cook for 1 minute. Add the wine, mushrooms and oregano.
5. Return the chicken pieces to pot. Bring to a boil. Transfer to oven. Cook until done; about 40 minutes.
6. To serve, divide chicken among 4 plates with a bed of rice or broad noodles, spooning vegetables over each portion.

Barry Kaufman is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. His e-mail is kaufman42@earthlink.net. Barry is available for private cooking classes and fundraising events.



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Chimes Pharmacy: College Avenue Institution

by Jacqueline Tasch

In 1941, you could grab a shake or a sundae at Chimes Pharmacy's soda fountain while you waited for owner Clyde Howes to fill your prescription. You could also take home a book from the circulating library at the rear of the store and a bottle of brandy to sip while you read it.

By the time John Gelinas went to work at the pharmacy in 1966, the soda fountain, the library and the liquor had disappeared, and Cy Cardiff was the owner. A high school student working part-time for Cardiff, John tooled around Rockridge on his bike delivering prescriptions and other packages. Back then, there were half a dozen drugstores up and down College Avenue and on nearby thoroughfares.

Today, John is the owner-pharmacist of Chimes, which he bought from Cardiff in 1986, the year his second child, Ashley, was born, and Chimes is the only neighborhood drugstore.

Returning to Rockridge and a retail pharmacy after years in pharmacy school and working other places suited John just fine. "I see people I know all the time," he says. "I went to Chabot Elementary School with some of my customers, and I see other customers grow up. Their mothers come in pregnant, then with newborns, and later I see the teenagers."



Chimes occupied the site located at today's Ovation clothing shop; when he returned as pharmacist, the drugstore was in its present space, but twice the size. To cut his rent, John put up the wall that created what is now Body Options.

Records suggest that the Chimes pharmacy was on College Avenue as early as 1909. The first location was at the corner of Alcatraz, where A Cuppa Tea now stands, just over the line into Berkeley.

Since then, the store has been creeping up the street toward the Oakland boundary. By the time John became delivery boy, Until he came up against calculus, John had the idea that he might be an architect when he grew up. On his occasional days off, he likes doing small carpentry projects around the house, but he's happy with his eventual career choice. "I can't imagine what else I would do," he says.

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In Memoriam Melinda Levine

North Oakland lost a beloved member of its community in late January. Melinda Levine—artist, editor, writer, activist wife of former Oakland school board member Ken Rice and mother of Morgan Rice—died January 27 after a ten-month battle with leukemia.

She was fondly remembered at a celebration service February 7 at Peralta Elementary School, a fitting venue since it was there that many of the 180 people in attendance first met Melinda. "The 'We Love Melinda Fan Club' is enormous," wrote her husband in words that were delivered at the memorial by daughter Morgan. Indeed, love was evident in the many tributes that eloquently praised her passion for art, her dedication to community and global causes, and her extraordinary ability to see the best in people and make them believe in themselves. Throughout her illness, she never lost her sense of humor.

Born in Buffalo, New York, Melinda was working on her Ph.D. in English when she dropped out to become a union organizer in Boston, where she met fellow activist Ken Rice. The couple married and moved to Berkeley in 1977, and within a year they had purchased their two-story home on 61st Street. Melinda worked as a book and magazine editor and writer while Ken set up his professional architectural photography business in their home. Their daughter, Morgan, was born in 1983.



***Bluebird*, by Melinda Levine**

When their daughter entered Peralta Elementary School, the Rices became involved in school politics and were active members of the Peralta Parent Teacher Group. At Melinda's urging, Ken ran for the Oakland School Board in 1996 and was elected District One representative.

Melinda produced books on art, gardening, and design. In the mid-1990s, with little professional training, she began a career as artist, designing colorful cut-paper collage illustrations that appear in many children's books— the exuberant images jump off the pages. She also designed the street banners along Telegraph Avenue, and a popular political poster featuring Congresswoman Barbara Lee's opposition to President Bush's post 9/11 policies

Ken and Melinda collaborated on a book titled "Living Rooms." He contributed many of the photos; she provided the text and color. Her most ambitious project was her last, a perpetual calendar published by Syracuse Cultural Workers. Titled "Rebels and Radicals for World Music," it features cut-paper illustrations of 13 singers and songwriters, including Pete Seeger, Odetta, Paul Robeson, and Violetta.

Melinda lives on in her wonderful art, in her generous spirit of community, and in the many, many hearts of those whom she loved.

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Zoom, Zoom, Zoom.

The Neighborhood Merchant

By Theresa Nelson



Photo: Don Kinkead

Rockridge Two Wheels
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Rockridge Two Wheels owner Darragh Howard stands ready near one of his sleek machines.

Photo: Lydia Gans

There's no two ways about it, scooters are fun. And Rockridge Two Wheels offers some of the most stylish, fuel-efficient and just plain exciting scooters anywhere. It's a trip back to the days of *La Dolce Vita* but with modern, high-tech machines and real performance.

Entering this sliver of a store, you'll see a charming restoration of an old auto repair annex, with whitewashed brick walls, a 100-year-old hand-cut wooden floor, and retro store fixtures of custom aluminum. What really catches your eye, though, are the colors, the sleek black, blue, and cherry red of rows of retro scooters.

Owner Darragh Howard said that Rockridge Two Wheels is one of the only places where you can buy all three leading brands: Piaggio, Aprilia and Kymco. Most other dealers carry only one line, but here you can compare and find the scooter that's right for you.

Outside the U.S.A., scooters are everywhere because of their fuel efficiency and ease of parking. Their popularity in the states is increasing, said Darragh. "Couples buy one as a second vehicle, students zip to school on them and commuters use them to get to BART (scooter parking is free). Some seniors use scooters for primary transportation." All the scooters Darragh sells carry two people, and he commutes to Rockridge from San Francisco every day on his own Piaggio 200cc, which goes up to 90 mph and get 70 miles per gallon. An added plus — you cross the bridge through the carpool lane toll-free, and in traffic jams scoot between cars.

What's the difference between a scooter and a motorcycle? Darragh said the differences are blurring as scooters get beefed up and smaller motorcycles become popular. The main difference is that scooters have a step-through area for your legs, and all the models have automatic transmissions; just twist the grip and go. With motorcycles, the gas tank and engine are in the center so you have to swing your leg over and shift manually. Some models have a glove compartment and roomy storage under the seat, including a cell phone charger. In general, scooters are geared toward convenience and usability, and motorcycles more toward performance. Scooters range from $1,800-6,300, and motorcycles such as the Kymco Venox 250cc retail for $3,850. He also carries Ego electric bikes, which plug into the wall to charge and can go 20 mph for 20 miles.

In addition to scooters, electric bikes and small motorcycles, Darragh carries a full line of equipment for riders, from helmets and sunglasses to stylish jackets from Firstgear. The shop also repairs scooters. Darragh, who has a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Dublin College of Technology, first tried careers in software sales and imported cars, then decided to pursue his passion for scooters which he acquired working for his uncle's scooter shop in Dublin, Ireland. He opened in June, 2002, and said business has been good: "scooters are somewhat recession-proof because they are much more affordable than a car."

The next time you stroll down College, stop in for a test drive, and imagine yourself zooming around Paris or Rome — or Rockridge — on a sleek new scooter!

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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 every other month, 10am to noon. Peralta Elementary School: 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz Ave., just east of Telegraph).
April topics: Trees, design review and zoning update. More information at 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.

The Greater Rockridge N'hood Crime Prevention Council

Steering Committee meets 3rd Tuesday each month, 7 to 8:30pm., Fire Station #8 community room, 463 51st Street. Residents and business members of NCPCs 12Y and 13X areas are invited to voice their concerns about crime and public safety.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

For Children:

- Toddler Story Time: Saturday, 10:30am: 3/6,3/13,4/3,4/10.
- Pre-School Story Hour: Wednesday, 10:30 & 11am: 3/3,3/17,4/7.
- Pajama Story Time: Tuesday, 7pm: 3/9, 3/23, 4/13.

For Adults:

- Lawyers in the Library: Free legal advice. First Tuesday of each month, from 6 to 8pm. Advance sign-up 5pm.

Library Hours:
Tuesday, 12:30 to 8pm
Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday 10am to 5:30pm
Friday, 12 to 5:30pm
Sunday and Monday: **Closed**

Rockridge Toastmasters

Every Tuesday, 7pm, Veterans Building, 200 Grand Ave., Oakland. Improve public speaking skills in a friendly and supportive environment. For information: Mary, 531-8790 or e-mail info@rockridgetoastmasters.org

Writer's Support/Critique Group

Rockridge Branch Library, Saturday, March 20, 1:30 to 5pm. ALL writers welcome. Bring 9 copies of 5 pages of your prose for on-site reading/discussion. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch (www.berkeleywritersclub.org/). For more information: 482-0265 or Writefox@aol.com

Diesel Book/Poetry Readings

5433 College Ave. All events are FREE and open to the public.

- Sunday, 3/7, 2pm, a Celebration of International Women's Day. Whitney Chadwick and Tirza True Latimer read from *The Modern Woman Revisited: Paris Between the Wars*. Also, representatives of The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom will provide information and answer questions.
- Monday, 3/8, 7:30pm, Amnesty International monthly meeting.
- Sunday, 3/21, 2pm, readings celebrating the 3rd annual issue of *Nocturnes*, an Oakland-based journal, and its 1st CD. Music by Richard Chance.
- Wednesday, 3/24, 7:30pm, Jeffrey Meyers: *Somerset Maugham: A Life*.
- Thursday, 3/25, 7:30pm, Michael Chabon: *Summerland*.
- Sunday, 3/28, 4pm, Vyvyane Loh: *Breaking the Tongue*.
- Thursday, 4/1, 7:30pm, Scoop Nisker: *Big Bang, the Buddha and the Baby Boom*.
- Monday, 4/5, 7:30pm, Paul Theroux: *Stranger at the Palazzo D'Oro*.
- Tuesday, 4/6, 7:30pm, Rebecca Solnit: *River of Shadows*.

For more inf. about readings, discussion groups and classes: 653-9965 or www.dieselbookstore.com.

Chabot Elementary School Annual Spring Auction

"Evening in Paradise" PTA fundraiser for enrichment programs: e.g. music, art, library, new on-site garden curriculum. Saturday, April 3rd , 6 to 11pm at Pauley Ballroom in the U.C. Berkeley student union building. Tickets: $25 in advance and $30 at the door. To donate an item or gift certificate to be auctioned or to make a cash donation, contact Susie Poncelet at 985-1246 or e-mail sponcelet@earthlink.net.

Photo Contest For Views of Oakland

The Glenview Performing Arts Center will choose two $50 finalists and a few "honorable mentions" and use their photos as backdrop/intermission for the show, CASINO!, which is set in Oakland and will run in May. Photos, which must be in slide form, will be judged for uniqueness, clarity and beauty and may include people or animals. There is no entry fee. Participants should send one slide per envelope, including contact information (address/phone/e-mail) to: Alan Templeton, Glenview Performing Arts Center, 1318 Glenfield Avenue, Oakland, Ca., 94602. Entries will not be accepted after April 1. Winners announced April 5. For more information call Theodore Dawson at 531-0511, or Alan Templeton at alantempca@yahoo.com.

Community Concert By The Berkeley Broadway Singers

Sunday, March 28 at 4pm. St. Augustine's Church 400 Alcatraz Ave., Oakland. Free concert of show tunes, 60s songs and other popular music. Donations appreciated. For more information call 604-5732 or see www.berkeleybroadwaysingers.org.

College Avenue Adult Center

College Ave. Presbyterian Church, 5955 College Ave. Every Wednesday, from 9:30am to 1:30pm. Light exercise, socializing, travel programs and music. Hot lunch available at noon for $2.

For 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. Center Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:45am to 4:45pm. Variety of computer classes, workshops, educational/social events, walking groups and field trips.

- Free Tax preparation help until April 15. Call 597-5085 for appt. (between 11am and 3pm).
- Sign up for trips to Asparagus Festival in April and October trip to New York to see the *Lion King*.

The Newsletter, "North Oakland Senior Times" provides a schedule of classes and a monthly menu for lunch: (suggested donation: seniors age 60 + $2 and $4 for those under age 60). Call 597- 5085 to get 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. 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 510/869-4569 or e-mail Monicalcsw@alum.calberkeley.org.

Food Drive

Alameda County Community Food Bank. Hosted by Great Clips for Hair, Rockridge Center, 5118 Broadway. Bring in non-perishable food items through the month of March and get $2 off a haircut. To become a volunteer for the Alameda County Food Bank, call Mary Schoen: 834-FOOD(3663) or www.accfb.org

Volunteers Needed

- **Oakland Elizabeth House:** A Transitional Residence for Women and Children in Rockridge.6423 Colby St., Oakland. Residential and support services for homeless and low-income women and children. Orientation and training for new volunteers. Help with childcare, homework, mentoring, field trips and house chores. Call 658-1380, ext.4, or volunteer@oakehouse.org.
- **Bambino Thrift Shop**: All Volunteer Shop benefiting Oakland Children's Hospital, 5290 College Ave. Volunteers needed Tuesdays through Saturdays. We will train you to help with pricing, selling and merchandise display. Call manager, Carol Maes: 654-9709.
- **North Oakland Community Charter School (NOCCS):** tutors to work with 1st to 4th graders, one-on-one or in small groups, on math skills, beginning reading and writing skills. Weekly time commitment of at least one hour. Located at College Ave. Presbyterian. Church, (next to Dryers ice cream). Contact Jennifer Bloom, Director: 655-0540 or teachers@noccs.org.



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