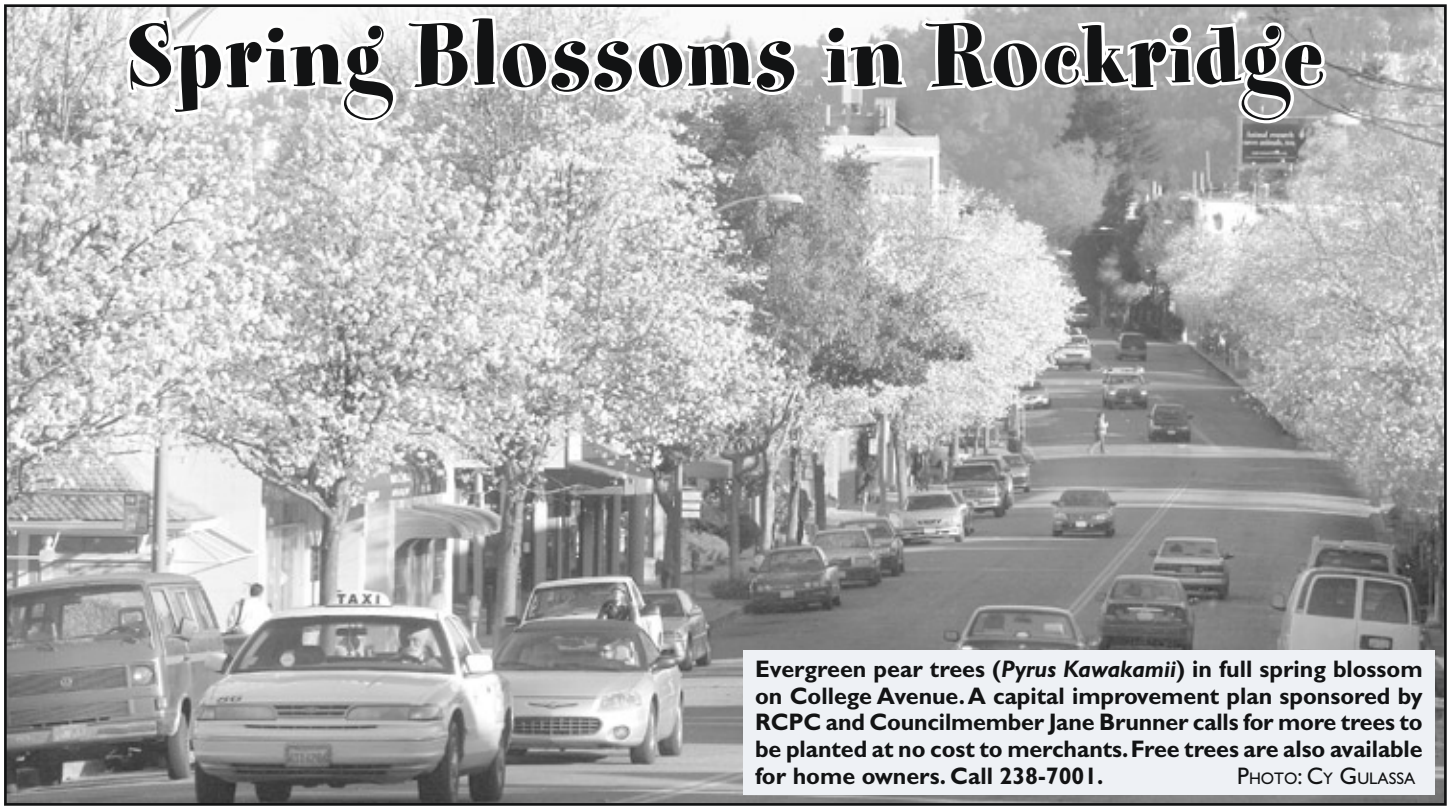
THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

VOL. 20 ■ NO. 4 ■ ISSUE NO. 211 ■ April 2, 2005 CIRCULATION: 5,100 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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

Spring Blossoms in Rockridge



Evergreen pear trees (*Pyrus Kawakamii*) in full spring blossom on College Avenue. A capital improvement plan sponsored by RCPC and Councilmember Jane Brunner calls for more trees to be planted at no cost to merchants. Free trees are also available for home owners. Call 238-7001. PHOTO: CY GULASSA

RCPC Board Election: Nine Vie for Six Seats

Meet and vote for candidates at RCPC Town Hall Meeting

The nine candidates for the six seats on the Rockridge Community Planning Council Board of Directors will share their views of Rockridge and their qualifications for the Board at the April Town Hall Meeting, Thursday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room of the Rockridge Library. Voting will take place at this meeting and on Saturday, April 23, in front of the Rockridge Library from 11-1 p.m. See candidates' statements and photos, pages 4 and 5.

agenda: RCPC Town Hall Meeting

A Glimpse Into Oakland's Past

by Deborah Weinstein

You've heard the stories of the streetcars that used to run through the Oakland streets, including College Avenue, but have you ever seen photos? Do you know what Oakland looked like in the 1800s before the roads were paved? Join our April Town Hall meeting to view fascinating comparisons of Oakland then and now, compiled by renowned Rockridge-based photographer Bill Caldwell in his book, *Oakland — A Photographic Journey.*

Caldwell will share images from his book as well as rare photos he has collected

▸ GLIMPSE INTO OAKLAND'S PAST, PAGE 5

Thursday, April 21, 7:30 pm.
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College Avenue at Manila,
Community Room (Upstairs)

■ **Politics & History**

✓ **Politics:** Meet, greet and vote for the nine candidates vying for seats on the Rockridge Community Planning Council Board of Directors. ▸ See candidate's statements and photos, pages 4 and 5.

✓ **History:** Oakland, Then and Now. Renowned Rockridge-based photographer Bill Caldwell will take us on a nostalgic slide show of Oakland today with contrasting photos of the same locations from the last two centuries. The new collection contains rare images from an all-too-forgotten past. Come, witness history, see a reality show of the past. Details at left.

Join the Kitchen Tour Excitement And Help Your Neighborhood

It's time to get your kitchen on the Rockridge Tour

The 2005 Rockridge Kitchen Tour Committee has had the pleasure of viewing a number of stunning kitchens since the selection process began last December. For our neighbors who spent weeks or even months cooking on a camp stove in the garage or washing dishes in the bathroom sink, the sacrifice has more than paid off. We look forward to a spectacular Kitchen Tour on October 2.



Kitchen Tour volunteers lend time and energy to help make the RCPC fund-raising event a success. In return, they get early access to Tour kitchens — such as the one pictured above — and a Tour pass.

The continuing success of the Kitchen Tour is due not only to the magnificent kitchens on display, but to the enthusiastic volunteers who lend their time, energy and specials skills to this biennial event. Many of our volunteers return year after year to be part of the excitement.

This year we have openings on the publicity, photography, food, flower and raffle committees. We are also looking for docents to show off Rockridge's finest kitchens. All our volunteers will be treated to a ticket to the show. But perhaps the most gratifying reward is knowing that, as a Kitchen Tour volunteer, you've helped raise the funds that allow RCPC to advocate for health, safety and quality of life in Rockridge. Volunteering is also a great way to meet your neighbors and feel connected to your community. If you have a few hours to contribute, we have a place for you!

To volunteer for the Kitchen Tour committees, or to make a last-minute recommendation of a special kitchen, contact Jennifer Edmister at toejrb@earthlink.net or call 644-4228. To volunteer as a docent, call Nancy Sale at 655-4625.

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Friday: 12 – 5:30 p.m.
Sunday: **CLOSED**
Library program 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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- Do you have questions about newsletter distribution?
- Would you like to volunteer to be a *Rockridge News* block captain?

Contact us at one of the following addresses or telephone numbers:
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NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING/DEADLINES
Publication date of the next issue is
☛ May 7, 2005
☛ May deadline is April 21.
Advertising rates are $22/column inch. Six-month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at 653-3210, or e-mail joellis1@hotmail.com.
(RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad that it deems inappropriate.)

The Zoning Counter

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

Many applications that require conditional use permits have 7- to 10-day public comment periods. For the most up-to-date information about applications on file at the city, go online. Here's how:

1) Go to the City's home page: www.oaklandnet.com;
2) Select Department: Community Economic Development, scroll to Planning and Zoning;
3) Hit "GO";
4) Click on "Recent Applications to the City."

5715-5717 Keith Avenue

Proposal: Three unit condominium conversion
Applicant: Kevin Weatherman
Contact Person/Phone: 290-9647
Owner: James Kilpatrick
Planning Permits Required: Tentative Parcel Map for condominium conversion.
Case Planner: Pete Vollman at 238-6167 or pvollman@oaklandnet.com

6426 Benvenue Avenue

(Misidentified on announcement as "6426 Benevue St")
Proposal: To revise the roof design on a previously approved rear addition to a four-plex.
Applicant: Bill Coburn
Contact Person/Phone: 510/893-8826
Owner: Morteza Javaheri
Planning Permits Required: Regular Design Review for an addition to a residential structure
Historic Status: Potential Designated Historic Property (PDHP);
Survey rating: D1+
Case Planner: Robert D. Merkamp at 238-6283 or rmerkamp@oaklandnet.com

Seismic Retrofit for Claremont Water Tunnel

Controlled detonations blast through hills

by Claire Wahrhaftig-Isaacs


Photo courtesy of EBMUD

If alarm horns start sounding while you are driving near Chabot Road and Golden Gate, don't panic. The horns alert neighbors that controlled blasts will occur within five minutes in the Claremont Water Tunnel project.

Residents of upper Chabot and the hills west of Tunnel Road have received frequent telephone and mail notices to expect "controlled detonations" since EBMUD started its blasting back in November. Such attention to the environment and public notice to the community are required by terms of the project's Environmental Impact Report (EIR). But the detonations are so well controlled that many neighbors report not hearing them at all.

The boring under the East Bay hills is a significant part of the major retrofit EBMUD is doing to its entire water system. According to Charles Hardy, Public Affairs Director of EBMUD — the Claremont Water Tunnel — the "crown jewel" of the local water system, is being upgraded to avoid service disruption by an earthquake. Work started last summer and is scheduled for completion by June of 2006.

The Claremont Water Tunnel project is a major component of the redesigned water system envisioned by EBMUD, which in turn was created by an act of the California State Legislature in the 1920s. The Tunnel exits the hills in the west just above the former Rock Le Fleche School Reformatory, carrying as much as 175 million gallons a day 3.4 miles from Orinda. The water originates in high Sierra streams, is collected in Pardee Dam, and then is channeled through a series of aqueducts to Walnut Creek and Orinda, where it is treated. Gravity brings it down from the Oakland/Berkeley Hills. Finally, it is distributed to 800,000 residential and business customers, in an area extending from Richmond almost to Castro Valley. What was once snowmelt is the life blood of the East Bay.

The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake was the "milestone event" that demonstrated the old system's vulnerability. To prepare for another catastrophe, the EBMUD Board

Water Tunnel Retrofit, page 10





Candidates for RCPC's Board of Directors Election

Anyone 18 or older who lives within RCPC boundaries is eligible to vote. See www.rockridge.org for a map of Rockridge boundaries. (Bring proof of address, such as a driver's license.)

Adrienne DeAngelo

Colby Street



I have lived in Rockridge since 1989, first as a renter and now as a homeowner. I love Rockridge for its diversity, vitality and small-town feel, yet the benefits of city living. I had my first taste of community activism last year when a retail development project landed on my doorstep. I organized a community group and defeated the proposed development. Although I am not opposed to development, the project would have opened our residential street to increased congestion and traffic safety issues. As a result of neighborhood efforts, the City Planning Commission has approved lower impact uses for that space. It was the RCPC that encouraged me to share my concerns. I look forward to giving others a voice and helping shape the future of Rockridge.

Kent Deverell

Chabot Crest



A San Francisco small business owner since 1996, I currently live in the Northeastern corner of Rockridge with my wife Alison, two-year old son Wyatt, and soon-to-be baby daughter. A Bay Area native and life-long Bay Area resident, we moved to Rockridge from San Francisco three years ago for its sense of community, diversity, and easy access to transportation. We cherish the dynamic urban fabric of the neighborhood, and the good friends we have made. As an RCPC board member, I hope to have a positive influence on the inevitable growth and change in the area. Particular interests lie in strengthening the community through stronger neighborhood ties, improving schools, improving safety, and maintaining the diversity that makes Rockridge what it is through sane, sustainable, transportation-supported mixed-use development.

Jennifer Edmister

Manila Avenue



I joined the RCPC Board of Directors in December, 2003, to put my enthusiasm for Rockridge to good use. After spending nearly ten years in the neighborhood, we were thrilled to start our family here. Now, as a FROG Park regular, and a wagon-toting shopper on College Ave., I have an even greater appreciation for the quality of life here. Through RCPC, I can help ensure that Rockridge remains a healthy, vibrant neighborhood where we can all live, walk, and send our children to school. I am excited to be the chairperson of the 2005 Rockridge Kitchen Tour. If I am re-elected, the Kitchen Tour, RCPC's primary fundraiser, will continue to be my top priority. As a former real estate litigation attorney, I also look forward to continuing to work with RCPC's Land Use Committee.

Daniel Ferdelman

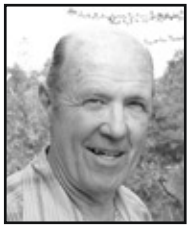
Claremont Avenue



I ran for the RCPC Board in 2001 to give back to the community in the field of my profession and passion, Architecture and Planning. I have served two terms on the Land Use Committee and RCPC Board, most recently as Co-Chair, and have been a part of some great projects, including FROGPark, and some bad decisions (opposing a Montessori daycare). All along, I believe I and the RCPC Board have had the best interests of the neighborhood in mind. If elected, I would like to push forward with capital improvements in the neighborhood (see March issue of *The Rockridge News*) while also addressing some of the long-term issues related to its sustainability and diversity. I have been a seven-year resident and renter in Rockridge with my wife, Marina, and most recently my seven-month old daughter, Rosa.

Jimmy Halloran

Boyd Avenue



I am interested in becoming an RCPC Board member because I have serious concerns about the current budget deficit in Oakland. As I understand it, the City must bridge a $31 million gap. There will be no easy fix. All local communities have been asked to establish priorities to save what is most important. I believe that even if Oakland does float some bonds, services and programs will require re-evaluation and some will probably be cut back. We will need to explore options and employ problem-solving techniques. My interest is to assist in resolving conflicts that will inevitably arise. I plan to help to move our neighborhood toward reaching the goals that have been established by the leaders of our community.

Hiroko M. Kurihara

62nd Street



I've been lucky to live in Rockridge for the past seven years. Next September my daughter, Denali, will start Kindergarten at Peralta Elementary. My professional background is in community economic development

and more recently I started a socially responsible, Rockridge-based blanket making company. I've been on the RCPC Board for the past two years and have been Chair of the Land Use Committee, which has advocated for Rockridge residents by reviewing Conditional Use Permit applications, shaping residential design review guidelines and completing a land use survey. We've also developed good working relationships with the Rockridge merchants association and City Planning officials. Our committee meets regularly and has a strong core group of committed and gifted people. This coming year we'll be engaging all stakeholders in our community in a neighborhood planning process that will inform our approach to creating a more sustainable and equitable neighborhood. I look forward to continuing!

Steve Meyer
Broadway



My interest in RCPC stems from my desire to be more active in and contribute to this great community, and to ensure that all of the many things (such as the library, fantastic restaurants, parks, diverse housing stock and architectural character of our neighborhoods, schools, Market Hall, shops, and BART, to name a few) that many of us now take for granted remain for all current and future generations to enjoy. My specific areas of interest include addressing traffic concerns, preserving and improving our schools and parks, getting more trees planted, and keeping our community safe. I would very much like the opportunity to serve on the RCPC board so that I may help to preserve and strengthen the Rockridge community for all residents.

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Jessica Pitt
James Avenue



I am very excited to run for a second term on the RCPC Board. Currently, I serve as an RCPC Vice-Chair. I have also been an active member of the Land Use Committee, where I have been very involved in designing and implementing a participatory community planning process that will result in an updated neighborhood plan for Rockridge. In addition, I have been a frequent contributor to *The Rockridge News*. I am running for re-election because I would like to continue the work I started during my first term. I want to see the planning process through to completion and move forward on other community priorities, such as establishing a community center in Rockridge. I would like to continue to use my skills as a professional urban planner to contribute to our neighborhood and improve the quality of life for Rockridge residents.

Robert C. Wiles
Florio Street



I appreciate the opportunity to be a voice for the Rockridge community. Raised in Rockridge of the 1960s and back after a few years on the other side of the Caldecott, I believe this area is defined by more than the College Avenue strip. Watching the changes here and hearing the debates in public meetings encouraged me to join the Land Use Committee. I would like to take a more active role in the future of our area on the Board and I ask your support in helping keep our community vibrant and welcoming.

Glimpse Into Oakland's Past from page 1

since its publication in 2003. Each picture comparison has been selected for its ability to tell a story about a particular part of the city. In some areas of Oakland, the changes have been dramatic; in others, subtle changes illustrate the historic relevance of many of our city's landmarks.

Caldwell's focus is on landmark buildings, old Oakland, Lake Merritt, the Port, Oakland's professional sports teams and neighborhoods, as well as transportation advances and the ways in which leisure time has been spent for the past 150 years.

Paperback copies of Caldwell's book will be available for purchase. Please come for a rear-window view into our collective past.

The meeting will begin with a statement of qualifications from each of the nine candidates for the RCPC Board of Directors. Be sure to vote — they will working with the community to design Rockridge's future.



Horse Railway A car of the Broadway & Piedmont Horse Railway. This five-foot-gauge railway was organized in 1876. The line began at Seventh and Washington Streets, and took passengers six miles round-trip along Broadway to Piedmont Avenue and Mountain View Cemetery.

From *Oakland, A Photographic Journey* by Bill Caldwell. Used with permission of the author. (Visit www. oaklandphotojourney.com.)

Where is Dr. Ward's Recovery Plan for Oakland Schools?

After 20 months of control, Dr. Ward has yet to reveal his recovery plan for Oakland Public Schools, says Hamill

by Kerry Hamill, District One School Board Member



Kerry Hamill, District One School Board Member, represents Rockridge and North Oakland.

Many school board members agreed that the Oakland School District needed help when we learned in September, 2002, that our financial systems were in such disarray that the district could no longer determine its own bottom line. Eight months later, the state concluded we were $57 million in debt from two years of overspending.

The district received a $100 million line of credit in a bailout, which included the assignment of a state-appointed administrator in June, 2003. In arguing for total control over the Oakland system, State Superintendent of Public School Jack O'Connell promised to stabilize the district quickly, and within three months have his designee, Dr. Randy Ward, present a Recovery Plan to the community, which would then be circulated for input and buy-in. The Plan was to be a roadmap to guide the district through its toughest chapter. It was to outline major district reorganization strategies and identify what it would take to get the maligned district to financial solvency and stability.

Twenty-two months later, Ward makes veiled references to the plan but has not released it. He attends community meetings about it and School Board retreats on the subject – but does not hand out copies. He has been required to seek plan approval from the County Office on Education, the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) and experts in school finance hired by FCMAT. Now the plan rests with O'Connell, who has embargoed it from release.

In the meantime, Ward continues to launch one controversial initiative after another without talking in any detail about their budgetary impact or demonstrating how they will improve the system.

For example, Ward will soon announce "radical changes" for the 13 schools named as failing under the Bush Administration's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA). Located mainly in central and east Oakland, these schools are overcrowded and serve a population of overwhelmingly non-English speakers, who are required to take their achievement tests in English. Ward last November gave the school staff six weeks to draft proposals that promised dramatic improvement quickly.

Five of the schools submitted plans acceptable to Ward, and they will have another year to boost test scores. Ward's solution for the remaining eight schools is to convert them to charter schools. Teachers at all eight are fighting this plan and have refused to sign an agreement to allow conversion, potentially blocking any move by Ward for next year. What discourages teachers and parents is that neither Ward nor his staff have diagnosed specific causes of the schools' poor performances or prescribed educational strategies for improvement.

I have repeatedly asked Ward to look at successes within the public school network here and model dramatic reforms on lessons learned. Examples are out there. During the four years I have been on the School Board, the demand for better schools has been relentless. Thousands of parents want better choices and programs for their children. I was instrumental in creating the district's uniform reading program and teacher training module that have doubled the number of students reading at grade level over four years. I helped create successful parent-involvement programs. New educational innovations, including some charters and new small alternative schools, have netted exciting results. Proven strategies like these need to be refined and made a part of any reform plan.

A system of more independent charter schools is no solution. Oakland has 17 non-union charter schools, which educate 10 percent of the

▸ SCHOOLS PLAN STALLS, CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



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Schools Plan Stalls

from previous page

district's children. With a few exceptions, students do NOT perform to a higher educational standard in most of them, as rankings from last year's state tests demonstrate. Some of the city's most successful charter providers are eager to work within the school district and our collective bargaining agreements, provided that they are given flexibility to select their own staff and have a distance from some central office "mandates." This strategy makes good sense and should be implemented across the district.

To date we have no blueprint that defines the many elements involved in implementing sweeping changes for the district. There are more than 6,000 new housing units planned or under construction in Oakland, yet we have no multi-year enrollment projections to help plan for potential new students. We have a chaotic and reactionary environment that continues to breed mistrust.

On another front, Ward is threatening to shift the school district's 30,000-student Adult Education program to the Peralta Community College District. Adult Education has been in and out of financial trouble over the years and, in the past, has drained money from our K-12 program. (It is currently supporting itself.)

Ward is in contract negotiations with teachers, pushing for concessions he believes to be essential for financial stability. It may be that threatening to dump Adult Education is simply a bargaining ploy. But since he has been asked to consider adopting the program, Elihu Harris of the Peralta Community College District is visiting Sacramento, begging legislators for millions in additional money to pay for the conversion – just in case Ward agrees to the transfer. No analysis has been prepared about the shift's potential impact on the thousands of immigrants and older residents who aspire to improve their lives by enrolling in the program.

In sum, the "recovery" of this district requires analysis and integrated planning centered on the main ingredients of a successful school—great principals, excellent teaching and active parent participation.

How we do things is as important as what we do. Ward's haphazard and confrontational style inhibits success and builds resistance to reform. I had hoped that after two-and-a-half years of miserable cuts, downsizing and the loss of 9,500 students, we could spend the next few months discussing recovery. Instead of providing inspired leadership and guiding a maligned school district back to solvency, Ward prefers to act like a general in search of war. His boss, Superintendent O'Connell, seems to have defaulted on his oversight of a district he demanded to control. Call O'Connell at 916/319-0800 and ask where our recovery plan is.

API Ratings for North Oakland Schools

North Oakland Elementary Schools	Number of students tested	Academic Performance Number	API rank	Similar school rank
Oakland Public Elementary Schools				
Chabot Elementary School	298	896	10	10
Emerson Elementary School	172	648	2	7
Golden Gate Elementary	110	545	1	1
Hillcrest Elementary	188	907	10	7
Peralta Elementary	114	785	7	10
Kaiser Elementary	148	825	9	10
Santa Fe Elementary School	179	629	2	3
Washington Elementary School	117	610	1	3
Piedmont Avenue Elementary	188	683	4	4
Oakland Charter Elementary Schools				
Growing Children	46	464	1	N/A
American Indian Public Charter	112	813	9	10
North Oakland Community Charter	28	902	10	N/A
Lighthouse Community Charter School	97	635	2	N/A
Monarch Academy	225	625	2	5
Huerta Learning Academy	158	567	1	2
East Bay Conservation Corps Charter	103	730	5	6
Rheems Academy	250	634	2	5

The API is a numeric scale that ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1000. The State has set 800 as the API score that schools should strive to meet. The API reports include a "similar schools rank," which shows where a school ranks academically compared to 100 other state schools with similar demographics.



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5340 Broadway Terr.	2/2	$499,000	$575,000	3/15/05
6108 Harwood Ave.	3/1	$825,000	$1,020,890	3/15/05

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Hop to It At FROGPark!

Earth Day cleanup scheduled

FROGPark needs your help on Earth Day, Saturday, April 23, from 9a.m. to noon at our spring Community Work Day.

This is everyone's opportunity to be a FROGPark supporter. As community members, we built these playgrounds with our own hands, and that's how we maintain them. We sweep, rake, collect trash and do other family-friendly tasks each spring (and do major maintenance in the fall). Bring children of all ages; there's something for everyone to do.

Come to the Hardy Park or Redondo play structures with your work gloves and, if you have them, a garden rake, broom and hand whisk. Mark your belongings to distinguish them from others. Come for an hour or the whole day, whatever you can do. Cold beverages and water will be provided for all volunteers.

We also need six adults to volunteer as Captains to answer questions and guide the work as needed. No special tool skills required. Please call Howard Ferrier at 653-6463 for a spot on the team of Captains.

FROG depends on the support of everyone who uses and enjoys our community parks. Mark your calendar, spread the word and come lend a hand.

Artists: Public Art Opportunity in Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt

by Jennifer Cooper, FROG

Last summer, Friends of the Rockridge Greenbelt (FROG) secured $40,000 of Measure DD funds for interpretive art along the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt supplementing City of Oakland funds and other private funds raised by FROG. Oakland's Public Art Program, in conjunction with FROG, is seeking artists to design art for the Greenbelt that will complement scheduled Phase II improvements.

The art project's goal is to help orient park users to the Greenbelt via creative and playful identification markers and sculptures highlighting park features such as the creek, entrances, and connections.

An informational meeting will be held Thursday, April 14, 7 p.m., at the Rockridge Library for interested artists and community members. Submissions are due no later than 5 p.m. on April 29. Call Roberta Babcock, 238-2155, or visit www.oaklandculturalarts.org for a Request for Qualifications. The top three artists or artist teams will each be awarded a stipend of $1,000 to develop a proposal. Proposals will be on display and available at public meetings in June and July; final selections will be completed in August.

Preference will be given to artists who reside or work in Oakland.

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Winter Rains Bring Runaway Weeds; Earthday Volunteers Needed to Catch Them

by Susan Montauk

For those who derive a certain satisfaction in taming the wild, Earthday 2005 offers opportunities to put weeding and pruning talents to the test. Following are two projects to choose from on Saturday, April 23, from 9 to noon. The sign-in for both is at the DMV parking lot at Miles and Cavour where some tools are provided; but if you have favorite pruning or weeding tools, bring them along (put your name on them.)

We break at noon for a delicious lunch of garlic bread and pasta—both basil pesto (vegetarian) and red meat-sauce—provided by the Colombo Club. Contributions of side dishes of green salads and fruit salads will be appreciated. The DMV Neighbors Association will provide drinks and dessert.

Earth Day Projects

■ **DMV Creek Cleanup**: The area along the creek between Clarke and Clifton Streets needs help. A handout at the sign-in table will list activities such as picking up trash, piling up green waste, digging a channel in the creek (bring boots!) and cutting back ivy around trees. Rakes, loppers and wheelbarrows are especially useful to bring. Call Margaret, 655-1767.

■ **51st Street Public Way and median strip** between Telegraph and Lawton. Bring your weeding tools and paper pinchers for the lilies, daffodils, weeds and litter in the median strip. The public way on the north side of the street needs hacking, whacking, pruning, and cutting. Tree limb saws come in handy. A map of the work areas will be available at the sign-in table.

Ongoing Project: Manila Ave Gardeners

Neighbors whose homes are in the vicinity of the Claremont Country Club golf course are forming a group to work with the club's gardeners to plant drought-tolerant or low maintenance plants along the edge of the course. Those interested in planning and planting the strip and creating a neighborhood garden may contact Norma Solarz at solarz@mindspring.com.

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Most sellers and buyers realize the present market is generating multiple offers on many properties. Sellers are delighted by this trend and buyers are becoming frustrated and turned off. **Sellers:** Learn how to best market and price your property to generate the most favorable response. **Buyers:** Learn how be in top contention with your offer.

Please contact me by email or phone for the guide on: **Multiple Offers in a Competitive Real Estate Market.**

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Real Estate Reports and Info at: www.HomesEastBay.info

The Greater Rockridge NCPC (Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council) combines Oakland Police beats 12Y and 13X and meets the third Tuesday of each month. At these meetings, current crime trends and police activities are reviewed, and priority concerns are established and relayed to the OPD beat officers. The table at right presents some recent Rockridge-area crime statistics.

To participate or bring problems to our attention, join us at the next meeting. See Calendar, page 15, and visit the NCPC web site at www.rockridgencpc.com/about.html for meeting information.

Crimes Reported March 7-15, 2005

Beat 12Y

3/7/2005	9 PM	6400 Benvenue Avenue	Auto Theft
3/9/2005	3 PM	5700 College Avenue	Disturbing the Peace
3/9/2005	6 PM	5141 Miles Avenue	Petty Theft
3/10/2005	7 PM	5756 Claremont Avenue	Auto Burglary
3/11/2005	7 PM	5530 College Avenue	Vandalism
3/12/2005	1 PM	6201 College Avenue	Forgery
3/12/2005	6 PM	5300 Claremont Avenue	Vandalism
3/13/2005	10 PM	Chabot Rd & Golden Gate	Auto Burglary

Beat 13X

3/8/2005	11 AM	5840 St Paul Court	Residential Burglary
3/9/2005	6 AM	5295 Broadway Terrace	Commercial Burglary
3/9/2005	2 PM	123 Golden Gate Avenue	Burglary
3/12/2005	7 PM	5511 Golden Gate Avenue	Assault

Water Tunnel Retrofit, *from page 3*

in 1994 approved $189 million for seismic improvements, including $31 million for the tunnel project and $5 million for design.

The purpose of the seismic upgrade is to prevent an interruption in water delivery in the event of a major quake. The 9-foot Claremont Water Tunnel crosses the Hayward Fault 130 feet below Tunnel Road. That 1500 foot section is extremely vulnerable to the 66% likelihood of a quake measuring 7.0 in the next 30 years. A shutdown for repairs could cause up to a six-month disruption that would require severe water rationing, reduced fire fighting capacity, and cause huge economic losses estimated in the millions.

According to Chief Project Director David Tsztoo, the old tunnel was underreinforced when it was constructed. Its current supports, made of steel and timber, are too few and too far between. Furthermore, the pipe itself does not fit snugly in the tunnel; voids have developed around it which would allow huge shifting to occur in the event of earth movement.

There are two components to the retrofit and upgrade. The first is to relocate the section most vulnerable to harm by blasting a by-pass through the hill. Since less water is required in the winter months, it was possible for EBMUD to reroute customers' water and schedule boring and blasting from last November through February, 2005. Tsztoo says to think of this as a heart artery by-pass, leapfrogging the vulnerable part.

The second phase is to fill the voids, or space between the pipe and the tunnel itself. A new kind of extremely strong grout has recently been developed which will be injected into these voids. The tunnel itself is flat on the bottom, round on the sides and top. Probes revealed voids as large as a foot as well as many small cracks and holes that need repair. The injected grout will fill these spaces and greatly strengthen the tunnel against movement.

So, when those polite men with signs and orange vests direct you to stop or slow, inconveniencing you slightly while driving up Chabot Road, you might reflect on the enormity of this project. It employs hundreds of workers in dozens of specialties and vocations so water will flow freely in the years ahead without disrutptions to our daily routines.

If you have any questions, phone the informative and accessible Community Liason Donna Kerger at 287-0165. She and her staff have worked tirelessly to prevent all but minimal inconveniences.

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FROG Update

Heartfelt Thanks to FROG Phase Two Donors

by Theresa Nelson, RCPC Board Member and FROG Liaison

The FROG Committee offers its heartfelt gratitude to the community for its generous donations to the Phase Two campaign.

Last spring, we planned to raise $25,000 to fund needed Phase Two elements. Through mid-March 2005, we received $37,015 from individual donors and businesses, enough to exceed the goal and secure two additional matching gifts totaling $5,000 from the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC). This brought the campaign total to $42,015, enough to fund critical park items as well as provide maintenance (including the portable toilet) for the next few years.

With the final drawings undergoing City review and the design/build team pinning down the final budget numbers, the stage is set for construction to begin in a few months. FROG representatives met with City staff, Friends of Oakland Parks & Recreation and the design/build team to review final changes and details of the plans, and generate the following list of items to fund as part of Phase Two:

- Bike racks by ball courts & Hardy Plaza
- Additional benches
- Swings
- Informational kiosk and donor recognition signage
- Seating wall and enhanced paving at Hardy Plaza
- Additional trees
- Additional small picnic table at Hardy Plaza

In next month's article, we expect to present the final drawings and a full list of some of the items to be built as part of Phase Two.

Like Phase One and the Big Build of 2001, Phase Two would not be possible without community volunteers and ongoing financial support. We are grateful to everyone who gave to this campaign, and to all those who volunteer their time, expertise and energy for maintenance days and other special projects. *Thank you!*

FROG Park Phase Two Donors

(*Note: where donors wished their gifts acknowledged in honor of another person, only the honoree is listed.*)

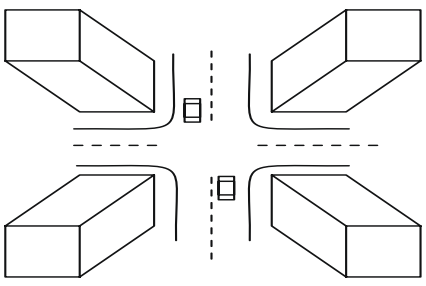
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Councilmember Brunner Discusses Priorities for Rockridge

by Jessica Pitt

The March Town Hall Meeting was an opportunity to educate community members about the City budget process, the expected $27 million shortfall, and help City Councilmember Jane Brunner decide on neighborhood priorities, tentatively identified as: parks and open space; street tree planting and trimming; recreation centers; libraries; preserving direct services (such as senior centers), and hiring a grant writer for the city.

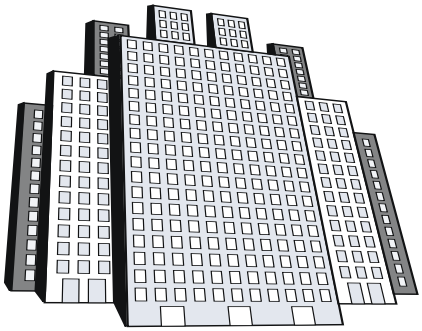
Four members of the City's Budget Advisory Committee at the meeting provided an overview of the budget process, which outlined the major sources of city revenue and expenditures and the budget outlook for 2005-2007. If you would like to share your budget priorities with Councilmember Brunner, please contact her office at: 238-7001.

Budget Advisory Committee members:

Jessica Pitt	Benjamin Fay
Iris Winogrond	Maeve Elise Brown

RCPC Land Use Committee Meeting Times Change

The RCPC Land Use committee has changed its monthly meeting time to the second Monday of the week. Location rotates. For more information, contact Chair Hiroko Kurihara at 384.0557 or h2Oakland@sbcglobal.net.



Claremont Festival to Benefit Arts Programs

On Saturday, May 21, from 10 to 1p.m., the Claremont Middle School PTA will hold its first-ever Spring Fling, a combination rummage sale, community marketplace and silent auction to benefit the school's art programs. The event will also feature student and community talent on stage. Through Spring Fling, PTA hopes to meet more of Claremont's neighbors, raise more funds for the school's visual arts program and implement new drama and music programs.

Ways to participate: ❶ Donate an item for the silent auction or buy booth space to sell your food or wares (call Bonnie Trinclisti at 547-2313); ❷ Donate good-quality used clothing, books, or household goods to the PTA rummage sale booth (call Nitza Lopez at 420-7022); ❸ Perform on the community stage (call Jack McGuire at 654-5187).

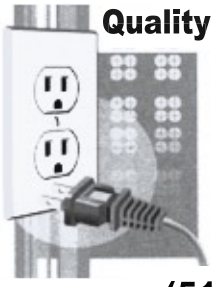
The festival will be held at the school, 5750 College Avenue. All are welcome.

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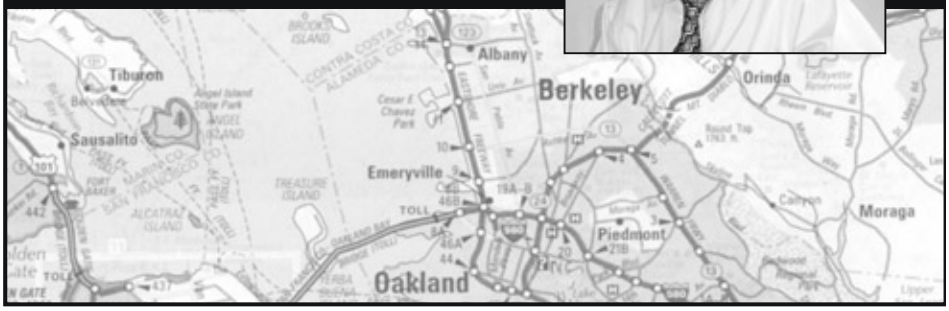
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The Rockridge Muse

by Ortrun Niesar

Don't Know Much About Our History...

History gives a community its special character, but we often ignore it as we rush about our daily routines. Of course we have a history, we say, as we point proudly to our Craftsman homes. But the essence of history lives in the memory of our friends and neighbors and is vulnerable to time. Our elders who have lived here for decades are gradually disappearing, and with them the remarkable stories that unfolded in Rockridge in the 20th century. Some were historic, some catastrophic, many merely personal. All of them have enriched our community life and should be preserved for the benefit of future generations.

So, we would like to start an Oral History Project for Rockridge this year, and we are looking for a few good people to join us. We are organizing a one-day workshop with oral history authority Gail Kurtz in late April or May, date to be determined. Anyone interested in oral history, whether family or community oriented, will find this workshop valuable. Ms. Kurtz, who lives in Berkeley, has conducted projects and workshops both locally and nationally for many years. She is currently working with members of the Berkeley Historical Society to get their project off the ground. Please contact me at 652-6664 or oniesar@aol.com soon so that we can set a date and place. There is a shared cost involved.

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Pro Arts Spring Gala

Pro Arts' Annual Open Studios will open with its fundraiser gala and preview exhibition on Thursday, April 28, from 6-9 p.m., at its beautiful new gallery located at 550 Second Street in Jack London Square. Almost 500 East Bay artists, including numerous Rockridge residents, participate in this event each year. They welcome your support of this great nonprofit organization designed to promote the visual arts and artists in the East Bay. Call 763-4361 for information or visit www.proartsgallery.org. Tickets for the gala need to be purchased in advance.

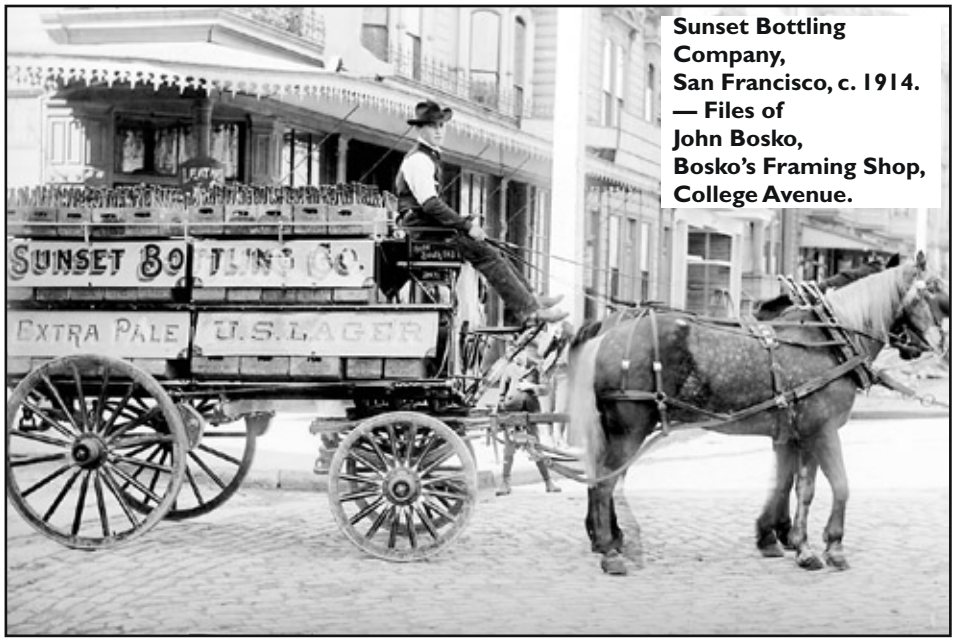
Being Something: Living "Young" and Growing "Old" in Oakland

How appropriate the name of this stage production is to our theme this month. Oakland's Opera Piccola (Youth Theater) and Stagebridge (Senior Theater) will be combining forces to present a new play focusing on the dynamics of living young and growing old in Oakland. The play/musical was written by nationally known playwright Anne Galjour and others based on oral interviews with local youth and seniors. It is being directed by award winning stage director Ellen Chang of San Francisco.

The play will run at the Oakland Metro, corner of Second Street and Broadway in Jack London Square Thursday, April 21, through Sunday, May 1. Call Stagebridge 444-4745 or go to www.stagebridge.org for ticket information.

Rockridge Photography Show 2005

Plans are underway for this year's annual photography exhibition scheduled to take place October 1-30. If you would like to participate this year, please call Lydia Gans at 658-4445, or e-mail lydiagans@juno.com. Non-photographers, if you have organizing skills and the time, we need you too! Join a group of enthusiastic camera buffs, be in on the fun and lend us a hand to get the show on the walls.



Sunset Bottling Company, San Francisco, c. 1914. — Files of John Bosko, Bosko's Framing Shop, College Avenue.

RN classifieds

Your Message Could Be Here
Your 36-word message: $18 (phone number counts as one word). Mail to: **RN Classifieds**, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618. *May deadline is April 21.*
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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.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Compiled by Jo Ellis

Councilmember Brunner's Community Advisory Meeting

First Saturday every other month, 10am to noon.Saturday, **April 2 topic: Oakland City Budget**. A special meeting on Bushrod Park and the surrounding neighborhoods will be held in April. Call 238-7001 for date and time. **No May meeting**. Peralta Elementary School, 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz Ave., just east of Telegraph). For information on all District One issues, call 238-7001 or www.oaklandnet.com (the site for all City-related information).

The Greater Rockridge N'hood Crime Prevention Council

Residents and business members of NCPC's 12Y and 13X areas are invited to voice their concerns about crime and public safety. Steering Committee meets 3rd Tuesday each month, 7 to 8:30pm at Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph Avenue.

Rockridge Branch Library

For Children:

- Toddler Story Time: 1st and 2nd Saturdays, 10:30am: 4/2, 4/9, 5/7.
- Pre-School Story Time: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays,10:30am: 4/6, 4/20, 5/4.
- Pajama Story Time: 2nd and 4th Tuesday, 7pm: 4/12, 4/26.

Special Events:

- **BOOK SWAP**. Saturday, April 9, 2:30 to 3:45pm. In preparation for National Library Week (April 10 to 16) and Turn Off Your TV Week (April 25 to May 1), kids and parents are invited to bring as many used books as they want to part with to trade with others. Bring a layout mat or blanket. Light snacks provided. All ages welcome, especially ages 5 to 15. For more inf. call Erica: 597-5017.
- **CRITTER TALES**. Wednesday, April 13, 11am. Guest readers from the Oakland Zoo will tell stories about animals and talk about what's new at the zoo. Geared toward pre-schoolers, but all ages welcome.

For Adults:

- Lawyers in the Library: **Free legal advice**. First Tuesday of each month: 6 to 8pm. Advance sign-up starts 5pm.
- Hanna Somatic Education with Abby Rose: last 2 of 6 Monday evenings, April 4 and April 11 from 6:30 to 7:45pm. FREE series of workshops teaching the Hanna Somatic Program for relief of chronic pain. Wear loose clothing and bring a mat. Participants must be able to lie on the floor. Call Linda at 597-5017 for more information.
- Workshop on Relieving Stress, taught by Kate Schrup. April 12, 6:45 to 7:45pm.
- Digital Photography: An introductory presentation by Paul Soregh. Tuesday, April 26, 6 to 7:30pm.
- TAX INFORMATION: Rockridge Branch Library has State and Federal tax forms available but does not offer tax assistance.

Art Exhibits

In The Gallery:

- Works by Gladys Eaton, through April.
- Ryl Brock Wilson: May 2nd to May 31st. Collages, prints and textiles. Artist reception with light refreshments on May 2 from 6 to 7pm, followed by slide show and lecture.

In The Display Case:

- Marilyn MacGregor, ceramics.

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

Library Hours:

Monday and Tuesday, 12:30 to 8pm
Weds, Thurs and Saturday 10am to 5:30pm
Friday, 12 to 5:30pm • **CLOSED** Sundays.

Diesel Book/Poetry Readings

All events are FREE and open to the public.

- Thursday, 4/7, 7:30pm. National Poetry Month: reading by local poets.
- Monday, 4/11, 7:30pm. **Amnesty International** Monthly Meeting: All welcome.
- Wednesday, 4/13, 7:30pm. **Daniel Alarcon**: *War by Candlelight*.
- Thursday, 4/21, 7:30pm. **Camille Paglia**: *Break, Blow, Burn*.
- Wednesday, 4/27, 7pm. Members of Oakland Fire Dept; **Geoffrey Hunter**: slide show from Oakland Fire Department and **Zach Unger**: *Working Fire: The Making of an Accidental Fireman*.
- Thursday, 4/28, 11:30am. **Quincy Troupe** (2002 Poet Laureate of California): *Little Stevie Wonder*.
- Wednesday, 5/4, 7:30pm. Readings from poetry anthology *Van Gogh's Ear*.

5433 College Ave. Call 653-9965 for more information , or www.dieselbookstore.com.

Book Signing & Recipe Tasting

Pamela Sheldon Johns will sign books and present comparison tastings of recipes from her new book in the Italian Artisan cookbook series, *Prosciutto, Pancetta, Salame: Cooking With the Cured Meats from Italy*. Saturday, April 9, 11am to 1pm at The Pasta Shop, Rockridge Market Hall, 5655 College Avenue. For more information: 547-4005.

Art Exhibition at Curves

Free and open to the public. **Art and Transformation**: collages, prints and textiles by Ryl Brock Wilson, April 1 to May 31. Artist reception April 19, 8 to 9:15pm with lecture and slide show. Light refreshments served. Curves Rockridge, Market Hall lower level. For more information: 655-8808.

Hopalong Animal Rescue

Open your heart and your home to a new friend. The Rockridge Dog Mobile will be at Rockridge Pet Food Express, 5144 Broadway, Saturday, April 9, noon to 3pm. Adoption applications for may be submitted at the mobile. Contact Hopalong Animal Rescue at 267-1915 ext 500 or Info@Hopalong.org.

Writers Support/Critique Group

ALL writers welcome. Bring 8 copies of 5 pages of your prose for on-site reading/discussion, www.berkeleywritersclub.org/. Rockridge Branch Library, April 16, 1:30 - 5pm.Call 482-0265 or Writefox@aol.com.

Activities & Events for Seniors

- **College Avenue Adult Center**: Light exercise, socializing, travel programs and music. Hot lunch at noon for $2. Every Wednesday from 9:30am to 1:30pm. College Ave. Presbyterian Church, 5955 College Ave. For field trips and Summer Camps for Seniors, call Kathy at 531-6724.
- **North Oakland Multi-Purpose Senior Center:** *Free help with taxes until 4/12. Call for appointment. *Sign up for trips to Monterey on 4/21, and the Asparagus Festival in Stockton on 4/23. Center Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:45am to 4:45pm. 5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. 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 + $2.25; $4 for those under age 60). Call 597- 5085 for details about membership, newsletter, classes/events and opportunities to become a volunteer.

Elder Care Support Group

Free for family and friends caring for older adults. Third Wednesday of each month, 4 -5:30pm at the Alta Bates Medical Center, Herrick Campus, 2001 Dwight Way, Berkeley. 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.

Volunteers Needed

- **American Red Cross Blood Services** is holding a volunteer orientation from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at its office 6230 Claremont Avenue, Oakland for all East Bay locations. Volunteers are needed to call previous donors, offer refreshments, make deliveries to hospitals and assist with community outreach. Advance sign-up required. For more information: 510/594-5165.
- **Alameda County Community Food Bank**. All welcome, including groups and kids age 10 or older. Assist in the warehouse or office; staff the Hunger Hotline, the Food Bank's toll-free food referral service. Hotline shifts Mon-Fri, 9am-12pm and 1-4pm. Call Volunteer Mgr. Mary Schoen: 834-FOOD(3663) or www.accfb.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 5th graders, one-on-one or in small groups, on math, reading and writing skills; time commitment of at least one hour per week. Located at 410 Alcatraz Ave. (cross St. Colby). Contact Julia Kassissieh, Director: 655-0540 or director@noccs.org.



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