THE Rockridge News

NOTE: No Town Hall Meeting in December

www.rockridge.org

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CIRCULATION: 5,100 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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Mixed Reviews for Proposed 51st and Telegraph Development



The proposed development at 51st and Telegraph would have a ground level plaza with access to street-level retail.

GRAPHIC SUPPLIED BY DEVELOPER.

by Adrienne DeAngelo

On November 14, developer Roy Alper kicked off the second meeting on the proposed mixed-use residential development at 51st and Telegraph (called CIVIQ) by reviewing the scope of the project and following up on parking, traffic, height and affordability questions raised at a previous meeting.

Alper said that he and business partner Ron Kriss are now working with Neighborhood Housing Services to explore the feasibility of including affordable housing as a part of the proposed development's 67 units, which range from studios to two-bedroom townhouse apartments.

Alper reassured the nearly 50

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT, PAGE 10



Rockridge Cornucopia

Barry A. Kaufman

Curryin Savor

Khana Peena, a new addition to College Avenue, is the first Indian restaurant to join the family of Rockridge eateries serving world cuisines.

Along with French, Italian and Chinese food, culinarians recognize Indian cooking as one of the great world traditions. Geography, history and religion have contributed to forming India's distinct culinary customs. Religious groups within the country have strict dietary restrictions: Hindus don't eat meat, Muslims are prohibited from eating pork, and Buddhists are vegetarians. History, too, has had its influences. Goa, on India's west coast, was ruled by the Portuguese for nearly four centuries.

ROCKRIDGE CORNUCOPIA, PAGE 6

CRIME IN ROCKRIDGE

Rockridge Hit by Robbery Wave

by Janet Somers

Rockridge, North Oakland and the city as whole are in the midst of a robbery wave, according to North Oakland police commander Lt. Lawrence Green. Green said that as of mid-November (the last date for which statistics were available) year-to-date robberies were up 31% in North Oakland and 27% in Oakland. (He said overall crime was down 77% here and 2% in the city, with a reduction in car break-ins accounting for much of the decline.)



OPD Lt. Lawrence Green FILE PHOTO

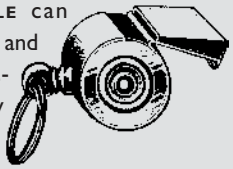
In Rockridge, there were 11 street and inhabited-home robberies during the first two weeks of November, up from only one incident during the last two weeks of October, according to crime reports available on Green's public website, www.northoaklandpolice.com.

Recent incidents have included armed and strong-armed robberies of pedestrians on College Avenue and side streets including Taft Avenue and 62nd Street, some before dark; a patron at an ATM machine who was robbed at gunpoint; a BART patron who was asked to hand over her wallet at 9 a.m. in the BART parking lot; and a home invasion robbery on Ayala Street in which two masked assailants entered a home through an unlocked front door and accosted its elderly resident, one holding him down on the ground while the other ransacked the house (he escaped through a window and sustained only minor injuries). (Police believe the victim

ROCKRIDGE CRIME WAVE, PAGE 9

Stocking Your Security Arsenal

THE WHISTLESTOP WHISTLE can provide a warning for neighbors and a call for help when trouble threatens. See page 9 for details and how to get a whistle of your own.



Do-It-Yourself Disaster Preparation

Residents of one Rockridge neighborhood plan a collective defense against major disaster with the support of a Fire Department program

by Carol Strickman

Our block of 62nd Street between Hillegass and Colby is organizing around earthquake preparation. First, several of us attended the Oakland Fire Department's excellent free programs: CORE I and CORE II. (CORE stands for Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies.) CORE I provides helpful information about family and home preparedness — the things we do individually to protect our homes. The premise of CORE II is that in a major earthquake, fire department and emergency services will be so overwhelmed that we will be our own first responders. CORE II teaches neighborhood preparedness and response: essentially, how to be our own fire department. In a major earthquake, we will have to contend not only with damage and injury from falling buildings and objects, but also with fire.

This summer, residents of the block formed a seven-member committee to plan emergency response roles. Each member agreed to be the contact person for a number of homes on the block; every home is covered. Presently, we are going door-to-door, with several goals in mind:

- informing neighbors of our efforts
- distributing an information hand-out we compiled
- assessing interest and participation level
- obtaining updated information about each household: names, phone numbers, email addresses, pet information
- identifying who has special skills and special needs
- finding a garage or other location to serve as our "command center," and
- discussing preparation activities on a family and neighborhood level.

Interest has been fairly high, with homeowners and long-term tenants more interested, in general, than newer, younger tenants. In addition, we have begun to do the following:

- start with our own families and homes to implement CORE I's preparedness ideas
- create a database of neighborhood information
- draw a map of the neighborhood, showing each residence and location of gas shut-off valves and other information
- ensure everyone knows how to shut off their gas and that gas valves are not corroded (call PG&E to repair)
- investigate the efficacy and affordability of automatic gas shut-off valves
- stock a command center with supplies
- develop a neighborhood plan following the CORE II model
- sponsor neighborhood training on family and block preparedness
- encourage neighboring blocks to similarly organize themselves

We have learned that some preparations are cheap and simple, like keeping a sturdy pair of shoes by your bed and learning why to put them on (avoid cuts from broken glass). Others are more expensive and complex. By starting with ourselves and with the simplest steps, we can bring the neighborhood along.

Our theory is that by encouraging each other to prepare and by instilling a spirit of cooperation and community, we will all be better off. The more people who have stockpiled water and flashlights, the better for everyone. The more quickly we can mobilize ourselves immediately after "the big one," go door to door to rescue people and fight fires, the better for everyone. We can't prevent an earthquake, but we can prevent some of its devastating impact on us. By thinking through a crisis in advance, as individuals and as a neighborhood, we can save lives.

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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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- Would you like to volunteer to be a *Rockridge News* block captain?

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Publication date of the next issue is
- ☛ **January 7, 2006(!)**
- ☛ **January deadline is December 19.**

Advertising rates are $22/column inch. Six-month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at 653-3210 (after noon), or e-mail joellis1@hotmail.com. ***(RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad that it deems inappropriate.)***

The Zoning Counter

6235 Buena Vista Avenue

Proposal: To legalize a newly built masonry wall and to construct a new wood fence within the front yard of an existing single-family dwelling.

Applicant: Andrea Shannon.

Contact Person/Phone No.: Andrea Shannon 510/601-5333 .

Owner: Andrea Shannon.

Planning Permits Required: Minor Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction of: 1) A 6' high masonry wall where the maximum permitted height is 3.5' high in the front setback; and 2) A 4.5' high wood fence where the maximum permitted height is 3.5' in the front setback.

Case Planner: Mike Rivera at 238-6417 or mrivera@oaklandnet.com.

5351 Lawton Avenue

Proposal: To demolish an existing single-family residence and construct a new 2,500 square-foot single-family dwelling on the property.

Applicant: Dwane Jensen.

Contact Person/Phone No: Dwane Jensen 510/836-9300.

Owner: Susan Churcher.

Planning Permits Required: Design Review for a new single-family dwelling on a vacant lot, and a Minor Variance to locate a portion of the rear deck structure within the minimum 20'-0"rear yard setback.

Historic Status: Potential Designated Historic Property (PDHP); Survey rating: D2+ (minor importance).

Case Planner: Ann Clevenger at 238-6980 or aclevenger@oaklandnet.com.

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.

For the most up-to-date information about applications on file at the city, go online at www.oaklandnet.com.

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RCPC Welcomes New Board Members

The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) is pleased to introduce the appointment of three new members to our 14-member board. Albert Hussian and Stephanie Upp have been appointed to serve until April 2006; Steve Meyer's appointed term expires April 2007. Here are their statements:

Albert Hussian
Locksley Avenue



I have lived in the Rockridge district my whole life; I have seen all the changes to this neighborhood. I am a member of College Avenue Presbyterian Church, Coordinator of The Music That Cooks concert series, and a current student at DeVry University. But most important of all, I have a sincere love for the Rockridge district of Oakland. One of my first projects as a board member will be to coordinate a community holiday concert celebration.

Steve Meyer
Broadway



As a homeowner and resident of Rockridge, my family and I have come to enjoy and appreciate all of the things that make this neighborhood truly great and unique. Currently I am coordinating an effort to increase pedestrian safety and calm traffic on Broadway. While my specific area of focus within the RCPC will include addressing traffic/pedestrian safety concerns, more broadly I look forward to working to help preserve and strengthen the Rockridge community for all current and future residents.

Stephanie Upp
65th Street



I am a new homeowner, a dog owner, a new mom who frequents FROG Park, and I take BART to work in San Francisco. Professionally, I have a background in economic development. On the RCPC board, I hope to use my professional and volunteer experience to help our community thrive. One of my first projects as a board member will be to work to bring my neighboring streets into RCPC boundaries and organize a block party.


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Green Day Rocks Rockridge

But the gravy train stops here

by Claire Isaacs Wahrhaftig

It's all Gravy's fault. For three years this kitty with the tinkling name tag has been prowling my home and purring my lap. The grey furball has attached himself to me like Velcro in the absence of his master, my neighbor. But Gravy turned out to be my own personal gravy train, a ticket to the stars.

Actually, Gravy's master IS a star. He is Mike Dirnt, bass guitar player for the numero uno rock group, "Oakland's own" Green Day. From garage group to Grammy Rock Album and Rock Single of the year to eight MTV awards, Green Day is on top these days.

I've never actually met my neighbor Mike. My beloved late husband Bill once described him as "tatooed, punctured, thin, polite, and quiet, really quite nice."

Mike always longed to live in the hills. He purchased a rundown house and turned the acreage into an admired property, constructing a soundproof rehearsal space to spare his neighbors. He enjoys his fame and prosperity in seclusion and comfort. He is a great neighbor. But, when he tours, his cat Gravy, the 'hood's Kato Kaolin housepet, snuggles with me.

After three years of teenage nieces and Gravy groupies oohing over my celebrity cat, I wanted to see Mike and Green Day in person. With four comp tickets from Mike to his concert in Carson, California near Long Beach, I worked logistics out online and onphone with family and my SoCal friends Ruth and Ken. Off I flew on October 8 to Long Beach with niece Carol and grandnieces, Berkeley High students Caitlyn, age 17, and Chelsa, 14. The afternoon of October 9, I was nervous. I imagined rabid, drug-crazed, crowds of young drunken bums running amok. We'd have to fight our way to our seats.

Actually, we didn't really have seats. We had a space on the ground right by the stage; but Guest Services graciously provided us with special chairs at the top of the stadium. And thanks to VIP stickers and yellow wrist bands, we could pass through all the security and go into the action up front, yet return to our chairs to watch the large-screen spectacle.

And what a spectacle! Blinding lights continually flashing and changing colors; fireworks bursting upstage, flames blazing downstage, smoke billowing everywhere. The players looked tiny and their screen images looked huge. Every moment was choreographed, every visual coordinated perfectly with the music and the musicians' movements.

I worked my way down to the front of the "mosh pit." I found few grunge, punk, goth, or other colorful members of the present generation, but instead, 30- and 40- somethings, with children and tweeners on their shoulders; young professionals; would-be musicians and wannabe rockers. I joined them in singing the lovely ballad, "Wake Me Up When September Ends" and cheered Greeen Day's unprintable political messages.

And then there was the S O U N D! Standing so near the stage and its immense speakers, I felt utterly bowled over by the wave of sound, it's that physical.



Caitlyn and Chelsa in Green Day gear at the concert.



Green Day's Mike Dirnt, a Rockridge resident, in concert.

Photos: Claire Isaacs Wahrhaftig

Suddenly Mike appeared before me, so close I could almost touch him, gold hair afire with red lighting, big bass stick wielded wildly, a strutting, striding, mythic figure. Next was lead singer BillyJoe, tossing his fine black hair. Upstage, drummer Tre Cool spread like a spider in his web over his drum set, an alchemist of sound. I was drawn into this vortex of energy, agility, and taunting fun. "I've been saved," I yelled to my nieces.

I think Mike is a great guy, extraordinarily talented and decent. As a neighbor, he has improved the property, cares for it, and his parties are under control.

For more interesting information, try Green Day on the Internet, which has a lot about Mike, his musical careers and adventures, his childhood and more.

And who could not respect a young group who sings: "Don't wanna be an American idiot/Don't want a nation under the new mania/And can you hear the sound of hysteria/The subliminal mindf*** America." Or, "Summer has come and passed/The innocent can never last/Wake me up when September ends."

Wake me up, Gravy. It must have been an October dream. No, it wasn't. Caity and Chelsa are still wearing those yellow wrist bands.

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Elmwood Theatre Offers Free Movies for Kids and Seniors

by Claire Isaacs Wahrhaftig



Love the movies? Our neighbors in Elmwood have cooked up a great free movie opportunity for seniors and kids, lasting through the week just before Christmas. Seniors can attend free movies at the newly renovated Elmwood Theatre each Thursday through December 22. Call 649-0530 for weekly titles, or check newspaper listings.

Parents may take their kids at 10 a.m. and 12 noon each Saturday through December 24 for films including "Sponge Bob Square Pants" on December 3; "Shrek 2," December 10; The Grinch who Stole Xmas," December 17; and "Miracle on 34th Street," December 24. The Elmwood offers the kids a popcorn and drink special for only $3. While the kids are enjoying the films, parents can shop the stores and restaurants of the Elmwood neighborhood.

To get the free tickets, stop by the Elmwood for a list of participating sponsors, then visit one of them. Sponsors range from cleaners to copy shops, restaurants to realtors, shoes to stationers, and more. No purchase necessary, but one's patronage is, of course, valued.

The Elmwood Theater is located on College Avenue just south of Ashby. The theater is a pleasure; the architecture and style have remained traditional, and the interior has a fresh, clean feel so rare in movie palaces today.

Witches, Goblins And Entertainers Parade on Halloween

by Mike Taylor



RCPC, the Rockridge District Association (RDA), local merchants, and hundreds of costumed children and parents participated in another successful Halloween parade on Sunday, October 30, a tradition that began in 1992.

Many are to be applauded for their generous contributions to the parade's success. Heading the list of thanks are Dyanna Nervis from Claremont Day Nursery for the scary storytelling and Andy Fullington for her spooky Halloween music. Other supporters who helped ensure parade success are Jennifer Kaplan from Rockridge Home; Nishan Shepard and Christian Ericksen from Rockridge Kids; RDA's Mary D'Orazi; Dreyers; College Avenue Presbyterian Church; Halloween Parade Committee members Jason McBriarity and Jennifer Vetter; and RCPC Board members Adrienne DeAngelo, Mike McDonald, Hiroko Kurihara and Deborah Weinstein. And, naturally, a hearty thanks to the hundreds of kids and their parents and grandparents who made it all worthwhile.









Rockridge Cornucopia

from page 1

Many of the residents of Goa were Jews who fled Portugal and Spain during the Inquisition. In the 16th century, Moguls came from Persia and introduced meats cooked in yogurt. British colonialists introduced the customs of high tea, mid-afternoon gin cocktails and pre-mixed spice mixtures they called curries.

All Indian cooking uses spices, but not all of the dishes are "hot." The "heat" in Indian cooking comes from hot chili peppers (not considered a spice). Chilis were introduced to India in the 16th century by the Portuguese, who brought them back from the New World.

Common spices in Indian cooking include cumin, coriander, black pepper, black and yellow mustard seeds, fennel seeds, cinnamon, cardamom, turmeric and cloves. The combination and permutations of spice blends are endless and account for the large variety of tastes in Indian dishes.

No authentic Indian recipes call for curry; a pre-mixed spice blend called curry is actually a British invention. True Indian recipes list numerous spices that often need to be roasted and ground into a mixture. As a result, all Indian chefs have their own unique blends of spices (curry) for food preparation. The only authentic spice blend used by Indian cooks is garam masala, but even that is not a standardized mixture: every Indian home has its own family garam masala recipe. The mixture is used sparingly and is generally put into the preparation towards the end of the cooking period or used as a garnish sprinkled over cooked meats and vegetables.

Khana Peena's extensive menu offers mainly Northern Indian cuisine and changes monthly. Like many authentic Indian restaurants, menu items are all a la carte, which allows diners to design their own meals. A typical Indian meal begins with a section of appetizers, or "chaats." Chaats can include samosas, meat patties, or deep fried lentil wafers know as papadams. Following the chaats, diners select a few condiments, such as raita, a lightly spiced yogurt with cucumber; a mixed vegetable pickle combination; or a chutney.

No Indian meal would be complete without a selection of "nan" (bread). Khana Peena features some 20 nans, prothas and puris (stuffed breads). Their rice dishes include the Indian classic preparation called "briyani," rice flavored with spices and selected meats, chicken or vegetables. Khana Peena offers a wide selection of vegetarian dishes that include dhals (split peas), lentils, chickpeas, potatoes and eggplant. Chicken, fish and meat entrees are prepared as stews or in a tandoori oven.

As with all great world cuisines, Indian food offers diners an infinite variety of choices. When looking at a recipe for an Indian dish, home chefs are often overwhelmed by the number of spices they need. We are fortunate to have a number of Indian groceries along University Avenue in Berkeley. I use Milan International at 990 University Avenue. They have the largest selection of bulk spices in the Bay Area. Whenever possible, buy your spices in seed form.

Here is a cilantro chutney recipe that can be served with grilled meats or chicken. It also serves as an excellent dip.

Cilantro Chutney

3 oz fresh cilantro, coarsely chopped
1 fresh hot green chili (serrano or jalapeno), seeded and coarsely chopped
1½ tablespoons lemon juice
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground cumin
Fresh ground black pepper

Combine all the ingredients in a blender or food processor, blend into a paste and serve in a small glass or ceramic bowl.

Barry is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. He is available for cooking classes. Barry's email is kaufman42@earthlink.net



Correction: An article in the November *Rockridge News* about the Peralta School yard sale (page 10) incorrectly attributed the design of an ironwork gate that was pictured in the article to Billy Hurth. The correct name is Billie Hurth, and, in her clarifying note to the editor, the artist pointed out that, "He is not a boy, he is a girl." *The Rockridge News* extends its apologies. — *Editor*

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It's Back to Ohio for the Ferdelman Family

by Mike McDonald

Rockridge said a sad goodbye recently to Dan Ferdelman and family. Ferdelman, a former RCPC Board Chair and longtime community activist, moved back "home" to Ohio with his family early last month.

Dan and his wife, Ronny, moved to Rockridge from Ohio in August 1997 so Ronny could pursue a post-doctoral fellowship at UC Berkeley. Dan had just completed his master's degree in Community Planning and Urban Design at the University of Cincinnati, and secured a job with Glenn Reynolds Design/Walker & Moody Architects, a San Francisco residential architecture firm.

After Dan and Ronny married in August 2000, Dan felt it was time to become more connected with his community. He joined the RCPC board in January 2001 and served right up until his moving van left Claremont Avenue last month.

Dan's first year on the board saw FROG park planned and built. He assisted in the building of Phase I of the park, and says: "FROG was and is the finest community effort I've ever seen. I am most proud to have been a part of it."

Dan's work with RCPC focused on land-use. He presided over many highly charged discussions, often marching down to City Hall to present RCPC's stance on zoning decisions and policy. When Children's Hospital Oakland (CHO) wanted to enlarge their campus and convert the "old Safeway" at Clifton and Claremont into a warehouse, Dan joined the CHO Advisory Board and helped shape the expansion plans to reduce the impact on the neighborhood. In the end, CHO decided against the warehouse and dropped their lease.

Other projects that Dan was intimately involved with during his almost five years on the RCPC board include: Dreyer's expansion plans, the new Cactus Tacqueria, the Boero building conversion to retail spaces, Khana Peena, the Claremont & Colby project, the Kirin restaurant proposal and, most recently, the Maison Nouveau project. Ferdelman was also a founding member and chair of the UnderBART committee and participated in the BART retrofit consultations in 2002.

Dan, Ronny and their one-year-old daughter, Rosa, are now back in Ohio, and, as Dan puts it, closer to family and more affordable environs. Ronny, having completed additional training at UCSF, has taken a job at the Ohio State University Hospital in Columbus as a pharmacist. Rosa is happy to see "baba" (grandma) every day and is learning to deal with the cold weather. Dan also is "relearning" how to deal with the cold and is enjoying being "Mr. Mom," doing a little job hunting, and settling the family into the house they just purchased in Bexley, a small community near Columbus. Their new house, a three-bedroom Tudor, was purchased for a little more than 1/3 the price of homes they looked at in Rockridge.

Dan is still gung-ho about Rockridge and says he misses his friends in the RCPC, and at Market Hall, Wally's World Market and especially the Green Bean. He says, "I miss my morning coffee. Ohio could use some latte lessons from the Green Bean!"



Former RCPC Board Chair Dan Ferdelman, wife Ronny and baby Rosa. PHOTO: CY GULASSA

In recognition of Dan's achievements, Councilmember Jane Brunner last summer declared him to be a Community Hero, a model leader who has: "vision and passion … and is conscientious, intelligent, reliable, free with his time, respectful of Rockridge's history and enthusiastic about its potential." We will all miss Dan and his family.



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5932 Manchester Dr.	2/2	$ 650,000	$ 800,000	10/27/05
5156 Shafter Ave.	2/1	$ 725,000	$ 740,000	10/28/05
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Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Works for Rockridge

Taking a bite out of crime: a look at this year's GRNCPC crime-fighting activities

by Susan Montauk, Chair, GRNCPC

The Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (GRNCPC) has had a busy year dealing with youth crimes, crime sprees, and a local drug dealer. GRNCPC volunteers often took to the streets to deliver flyers alerting neighbors to criminal activity.

■ Early in the year, Ross Street/Ross Circle/Rockwell/Florio residents were plagued with the petty theft crimes of a local youth who stole from unlocked houses. He carried a yellow bucket and offered to wash cars as his cover. GRNCPC delivered flyers with a description of the youth's MO. He has since moved out of the neighborhood.

■ Later in the year, flyers were distributed to Claremont/Martin vicinity residents to warn of a drug dealer selling on the street. After GRNCPC volunteers distributed 300 flyers in that area, e-mails and other information came in which corroborated the sightings of drug deals, gave a consistent and detailed description of the individual and identified the apartment in which this person lived — just steps from the intersection. The dealer's landlord read the flyer; the problem tenant was asked to leave the building and did so promptly, leaving North Oakland altogether.

■ In September, volunteers distributed flyers to over 800 residents in the Colby, Claremont, Alcatraz, Telegraph area after a rash of laptop burglaries. Two suspects who live in the neighborhood have been arrested but their connection to these crimes has not been established. Neighbors are on the alert and caution prevails.

In another matter, GRNCPC served as the mediator between neighbors. Colby Park residents contacted the council chair with complaints about litter and noise problems at the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) project on Colby Street. The council invited OHA representatives to attend meetings with these neighbors to discuss their complaints. Conditions have improved since OHA rebuilt a property line fence and a problem family moved out of the complex.

In July, the council addressed the burgeoning graffiti on College Avenue. In addition to purchasing cans of graffiti remover for the merchants, the GRNCPC sponsored a graffiti removal week in late July. Lampposts were repainted by Oakland Public Works and volunteers removed graffiti from parking meters, benches and buildings. Unfortunately, the graffiti returned with a vengeance. An effective anti-graffiti campaign requires an ongoing program to remove and paint out the markings as soon as they occur. GRNCPC will revisit this problem in 2006.

The GRNCPC meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7 pm in Building B at the California College of the Arts. To be truly effective the Council seeks more residents to attend these meetings to help set the police priorities for the month and to participate in crime prevention activities. Another way to be involved is to volunteer to be a GRNCPC contact person for your block.

For detailed crime statistics and more information about the GRNCPC, its monthly meetings and to learn more about our Volunteer Contact Program, see our website and contact us via www.rockridgencpc.com

Life Sentence For Killer of Lisa Smith

Marques Lott, 29, was recently sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for the murder of Rockridge resident Lisa Aline Smith, 22, on June 10, 1997. A St. Mary's College student, Smith was robbed and stabbed to death as she walked home from the BART station one evening. Lott was arrested shortly after the crime when calls he made on Smith's cell phone were traced to him.



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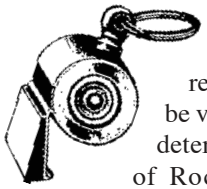
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WhistleStop: Just Put Your Lips Together and Blow

Whistlestop could save your life

by Susan Montauk



WhistleStop, our community crime prevention program, and the Oakland Police Department remind you that we must be vigilant in our efforts to deter crime on the streets of Rockridge. Since 1992 WhistleStop has sold over 1,000 whistles in Rockridge; our aim is to use those whistles to help make our neighborhood safer and more secure.

The WhistleStop concept is simple: If you see a crime being committed or you need to call for help, blow your whistle. If you hear a whistle, determine the nature and location of the problem and call 911, then blow your whistle to scare the assailant away and alert the victim and the assailant that the police have been called and help is on the way.

WhistleStop whistles should be worn with the breakaway chain as a visible deterrent to crime. A WhistleStop pack containing the whistle, chain and crime-prevention decal for your window is just $2.50 and is available for purchase in Rockridge: Contact Margaret Wahlberg at ml@chriswahlberg.com.

As Lauren Bacall famously said to Humphrey Bogart, "You remember how to whistle, don't you? Just put your lips together… and blow."

Rockridge Crime Wave

from page 1

may have been targeted by acquaintances of a homeless man he had taken in.)

Although residential burglaries were down as of mid-November, there has been a recent spate of them, especially in the Colby Park area, usually through unlocked doors and windows. One house, near Hillegass and 62nd Street, was hit twice.

OPD has conducted special operations and made several arrests. A 16-year-old juvenile who lives on the 400 block of 62nd Street, and his cohort, who lives on the 400 block of 63rd Street, were arrested for one of the Taft holdups. The juvenile was caught immediately after the incident by Officer Johnna Watson in an unmarked car, with the help of one of the two victims. (Rockridge problem-solving officer Debi Mack speculated that since he is subject to the juvenile justice system he may be back on the street. She said his alleged accomplice was not in custody at presstime and is possibly out on bail.) OPD also arrested two suspects who live in Alameda and downtown Oakland, respectively, for robberies committed near Piedmont Avenue.

The crime wave has residents uneasy and calling for more police. Several weeks ago, in an effort to reduce violent crime happening in other parts of the city, Chief Tucker removed the OPD Crime Reduction Teams (CRTs), which focus on crime prevention, from North Oakland. After a public uproar, District 1 Councilmember Jane Brunner convinced the mayor, the city manager and Tucker that removing them was a bad idea, especially during the holiday season. The CRTs now work half-time here and half-time in Montclair and are scheduled to return fulltime January 14.

Green said crime waves happen periodically. The last spike in robberies in North Oakland and also the city occurred around July. No statistics are available just for Rockridge, but some residents recall the "backyard burglar" from about two years ago.

Green advised residents to pay attention to their surroundings, carry a cellphone programmed with OPD's cellphone emergency number (777-3211), and "yell and scream" if threatened. "This is an urban environment," he said. "People need to develop an urban mentality."

Mack said the holiday season is a prime time for crooks: "Whatever beat I go to, it's the same story, just different faces," she said. "With the holidays coming up, maybe they (the criminals) just want to get mom something nice."

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Dr. Jill Martenson, Rockridge neighbor since 1999.

Proposed Development

from page 1

attendees that ample parking would be provided. Plans include 90 spaces for tenants and retail staff and one for City Car Share, but none for customers of proposed retail space fronting Telegraph Avenue.

Traffic engineer Mark Spencer of DKS Associates, hired by the developers to address traffic issues, claimed that the increase in car traffic would not significantly impact the surrounding community. Many were concerned, however, about the poorly timed intersection at the corner of Telegraph and 51st, as well as the lack of a crossing at Clarke and 51st. Alper and Kriss promised to work with the city to improve the crossings at those two junctures.

Over the course of the last several months, community members from Temescal and lower Rockridge have been collaborating with the developers about ways to extend the Temescal Creek Greenbelt from Redondo to the "gateway" intersection of Telegraph and 51st Street. While a greenbelt extension has been incorporated into the project design (cutting through the center of the new development), there is still no guarantee that the space would remain open to public pedestrian traffic in the future. The FROG Park Committee is investigating options with the development team.

The project will set a new standard in Oakland for sustainable development, according to Alper. He estimates that the project will use 75% less electricity and natural gas than developments of similar size because of the use of active and passive solar energy and sustainable building materials.

Other design elements include warm colors in various tones to help break up the size of the project, as well as a variety of textures — stone, stucco, shingles, painted board, and metal awnings — to give the building what architect Rick Williams called "a timeless nature."

While many residents were pleased with the "green" nature of the project and the more detailed architectural renderings presented at the meeting, some objected to its overall height. The proposed 65-foot tower at the gateway corner exceeds zoning height limits and the multi-story townhouses on Clarke Street would be taller than neighboring structures.

Members of the Temescal Neighborhood Association, led by local resident Jeff Norman, feel that as currently planned, the project would overwhelm the adjacent commercial district and residences and set a precedent for developers to build more six-story or higher buildings along Telegraph and Shattuck Avenues. The residential zoning that applies to the property dates from 1965 (R35, R40), while the C-28 commercial zoning is from the '90s. They all have restrictive heights substantially below what has been designed. However, the 1998 General Plan calls for Telegraph Ave to be developed as a dense transit corridor.

The developers presented their project to the Oakland Planning Commission's Design Review Committee on November 16, and, despite opposition from the Temescal Neighborhood Association, the commission praised the design. The project is tentatively scheduled to come before the Oakland Planning Commission for final approval on January 4, 2006. For more information about the project, contact Lawton Associates in Berkeley, 547-5970.

To view a three-dimensional model of the development, call Bill Lambert, 510/550-4200 ext. 512.



Ebmud Upgrade Update

Claremont Tunnel Progress

by Claire Isaacs Wahrhaftig

As of November 1, Atkinson Construction completed mining activity on the Claremont Water Tunnel seismic upgrade project until next fall. Now the tunnel will be lined with reinforced concrete 1'5" to 2'5" thick, cast inside the current excavation.

According to the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), Atkinson excavated a total of 1,970 feet, mostly by mechanical means. Some controlled blasting was required to remove a sandstone boulder which had started tearing teeth off the roadheader.

The western tunnel outlet is located at Chabot and Golden Gate Avenues, east of Chabot Elementary School. The tunnel channels water to Oakland from the Orinda side of the hills. The outflow will serve 800,000 people daily.





Photo: Don Kinkead

The Neighborhood Merchant

by Theresa Nelson

Treat Your Tootsies

Our feet take a beating, carrying us around all day, sometimes cold and often tired. So when you come across a store that pampers your tired tootsies with a relaxing pedicure and entices you with wonderful shoes, you know you've come across something special. And Tootsies on College near Market Hall does both beautifully.

Adorable, affordable shoes, fashionable accessories and relaxing pedicures are the keys to the Tootsies concept. Owner Liz Taylor believes in buying delightful, high-quality shoes in a medium-price range. She searches the major shoe shows, trying on each shoe herself (she's a size 6, same as the show samples are) to make sure it feels good.

She features a special section of sizes 5, 5-1/2 and 11, which are often hard to find in many shoe stores.

Tootsies features about 150 styles of shoes at any time, with new shoes arriving daily. Many are lines like those you'd find at Nordstrom, including Moda, Seychelles, Ralph Lauren, Nicole, Etienne Aigner, Pelle Moda and Pazzo. She also offers a growing number of girls' shoes in sizes 12-1/2 to 5, such as Keds with the trendy shaggy seams and glittery pink flats.

An Oakland native, Taylor opened Tootsies in May of this year. She spent 25 years working in retail at the buyer and executive level for groups like Gap and Long's and knew it was time for a change. She had always wanted to open her own business, building on her skills in retail. After talking with friend Nini Dake, who had opened a shoe and pedicure store in Florida called Tootsies, Liz felt it was the right opportunity for her. She looked all over the Bay Area before deciding to open in Rockridge. Nini's idea is catching on. Six other Tootsies are opening around the country, each owned by an individual woman working with Nini as consultant. "It's a sisterhood of shoe stores," says Liz, rather than a franchise, and that special feeling comes through in the store.

What will you find at Tootsies? When I visited, the burnished coppers, greens, browns and warm colors of the fall palette were in full swing, with holiday sparklers coming in. Olivia Rose Tal shoes are handmade of beautiful fabrics, like the tapestry kitten heel slide in terracotta. Dressy sandals by Laundry and Pelle Moda feature crystal trim and glittery buckles over golds, silvers, coppers, pewters and blacks.

Wedges are also big right now, with a tapestry-patterned one by Dr. Scholl that looks both cute and comfy. Beautiful flats include tailored Etienne Aigner slides in olive suede or grey flannel with black ribbon bands. Festive shoes from Apepazza feature feather and fabric decorations on subdued suedes with kitten heels. Tootsies offers cowboy boots and city boots, some with embroidery, patterned linings, or a bit of flare or detail on the heel to stand out from the crowd. Classic boots by Ralph Lauren are nearby along with cozy shearling-lined clogs and many styles of casual Skechers. And all year long, Tootsies offers resort shoes and sandals.

Along the crisp white walls, playful bags and luxurious scarves alternate with tall bookcase displays. Evening bags feature beads, feathers, silks and velvets in metallics, brights and dressy black. Tootsies also carries a locally-made line of handmade scarves and small shawls by Knotty Gypsies, with beautiful color mixes like copper with pewter, black with silver and dusky orange with olive green; and luxurious fabric scarves by Mary Frances and Eyeful. Near the pedicure area is a small jewelry display, with swingy chandelier earrings and clever magnetic bracelets that turn into a necklace or choker.



Tootsies
5525 College Avenue 595-7272
Monday - Saturday - 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Sunday - 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Pedicures are a special element of Tootsies. The staff is highly experienced, the ambiance is fun with brightly colored canopies, and the use of disposable tub liners and tools means everything is completely hygienic. On Thursday and Friday evenings, Tootsies hosts pedicure parties by reservation for groups of up to nine. Partygoers can bring their own food and beverage and enjoy a night of pedicures and private shoe shopping. Liz notes that she has a growing clientele of men who get pedicures as well.

Liz talked about how much she really likes being in Rockridge: "It's wonderful to be part of this community where local neighbors support local businesses, and local businesses support the neighborhood." (She also donates to local schools).

Judging by the reactions of shoppers in the store that day, Rockridge is glad to have Tootsies here as well

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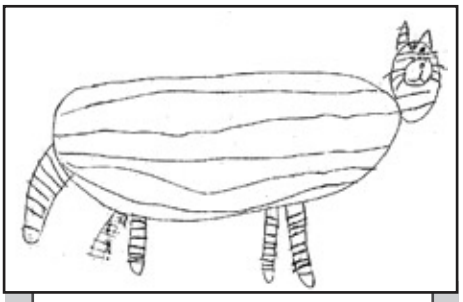
The Rockridge Muse

Shopping 'Till You're Dropping?

December is a time of the year that simply crackles with positive energy, feelings of generosity, goodwill, love and hope. It's also a time when the commercial hype of the holidays can get totally out of hand and kids and adults can wind up sitting on a heap of useless gadgets and motley plastic parts destined, sans assembly instructions, for a garage sale come spring. What a pity to throw it all out. But the alternative to what to do with all this stuff is certainly much worse: a never-ending nightmare of mounting clutter and confusion all over the house, likely to threaten your sanity in the end.

Gifts from the Heart

There are gifts I am sure you will never regret having given. They are the gifts from the heart, the gifts you make yourself. No matter how simple, inexpensive or small, you will never have to worry about these gifts disappearing in a closet somewhere or cluttering up the basement. Like little Ava Gulassa's cat. Last year three-year-old Ava drew an image of her favorite cat and grandma (Omi) Harriet stitched it together exactly like that in bright orange and white, complete with whiskers and white tips on the ears. That wonderful cat is destined for more than nine lives in Ava's arms. It will likely go to college with her someday. Gifts that your children make for you will likewise never be dishonored.



From Ava's sketch...

...to Cat's Meow! Thanks, Grandma Harriet!

PHOTO: CY GULASSA



Gifts of Time

Here are some alternatives you might consider giving this year. For children, nothing is more fun than enjoying a special event with their parents or aunts and uncles.

Take the kid to a movie (as described in an article on page 7, the Elmwood Theater offers a special free series in December) or visit the Oakland Zoo's new children's section featuring a new bat habitat and fantastic alligator display. Your young son or daughter might prefer to watch the horses at Fox Ridge Farm Stables on Redwood Road, just off Skyline Boulevard; 531-0262. Or check out MOCHA, the children's art museum, which offers afternoon drop-ins or winter camp December 19-30. Not too costly and a marvelous experience. Call MOCHA at 465-8770. At the Julia Morgan Theater, the Berkeley Ballet Theater will perform The Nutcracker on the weekends of December 9 and 16. This is an annual family treat. Call 843-4689.

Gifts of Talent And Learning

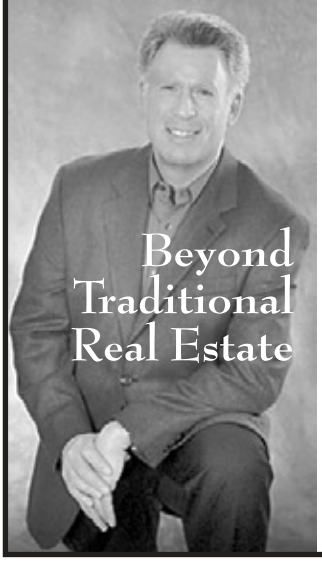
There may be someone in your life you has always wanted to take drumming or art or photography lessons. Please feel free to contact me at 652-6664 for a list of instructors you might want to contact. And, try to catch Splash Circus at the Julia Morgan when it comes around again (the last show this year si Sunday, December 4 at 2 p.m.) This is a circus for kids by very talented kids and is a huge favorite. The parent organization is Head over Heels Gymnastics and Circus School in Emeryville. The school conducts classes for children ages four and up in acting, tumbling, juggling, aerial arts, clowning, stilt walking and much more. Call 655-1265. Note: Splash Circus holds auditions for skilled young performers ages 10-18 in January 2006.

MUSE CONTINUED TOP OF NEXT PAGE

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Muse

from previous page

Gifts of Encouragement

Almost all the organizations I have mentioned above are non-profits who enrich our lives immensely all year round. All, without exception, need your financial support and participation on boards and committees. They invite you to become a passionate donor or supporter. To become involved this year, check with your accountant or estate planner for information on a set of especially favorable tax rulings that will apply to all charitable donations until December 31, 2005.

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

Holiday Extravaganza Planned by RCPC & Music that Cooks

The Rockridge Community Planning Council and Music that Cooks present the first annual Community Holiday Party, Sunday, December 18, 2-5p.m., at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church, 5951 College Avenue. Featured are a concert by three Bay Area singer/songwriters: Greg Lamboy, Christi McCarthy and Damond Moodie; and a sing-along of holiday songs and carols. Kids will have an opportunity to visit with Santa, have their photos taken and enjoy story time.

Music That Cooks is a concert series started in 2004 to help support the Friday Nite on College dinner program at the church. The concerts are monthly — usualy on the second Friday of the month. The concerts feature three local independent singer/songwriters who donate their time to the concert series. Your volunteer donation to the party will help support the Friday Night dinner program.

For more information contact Albert Hussian: MusicthatCooks@comcast.net.

Greg Lamboy: A local San Francisco-based artist, Greg puts his music where his heart is. Greg has raised funds and awareness for numerous homeless outreach groups and political campaigns. www.greglamboy.com.

Christie McCarthy: A local Berkeley-based artist, Christie is a dynamic Jazz/Rock inspired musician and has played at three prior dinner concerts. This concert will feature music from her new CD *Winter.* www.christiemccarthy.com.

Damond Moodie: A local Oakland-based artist, Damond describess his style: "Who do I sound like? I like to call it alternative acoustic soul. I play a percussive rhythm guitar and spread vocals like velvet thunder on top. It's not straight folk, rock, or soul, but an amalgamate of these sounds with some blues and jazz thrown in. www.damondmoodie.com.

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Artwork

Aliea Wallace is a talented East Coast artist living in Rockridge, now available for holiday commissions. Experienced in realistic and abstract painting/drawing and bookbinding. Call 415/272-5353 for rates. Portfolio and e-mail available at www.aliea.com.

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Highly experienced piano/voice teacher now has openings in Rockridge music studio. Classical, jazz, pop, rock styles. All ages, levels. Lisa 653-0107

Do You Need a Petsitter for the Holidays?

AT YOUR SERVICE, A Pet & Home Sitting Service provides your pets and property with care by pet loving professionals. Call 510/386-3163.

Homeowners

How much is your house worth? For a FREE, no-obligation market analysis, visit www.EastBayHomeWorth.com or leave a message at 510/981-3014.

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Treat your body & soul to a great class w/stimulating choreography & superb music w/artist Lina del Roble. $5 for 1st class when you bring a friend! 5390 Miles Ave. Sat. 10:30-12 noon. 510/658-3423.

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E-mail *Rockridge News* Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), 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. Peralta Elementary School: 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz Ave., just east of Telegraph). **No January meeting**. For information on all District One issues or events, 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. Meets 3rd Tuesday each month, 7 to 8:30pm at CCA,5212 B'way (at College Ave.), Bldg. B-4. Directions and more information: www.rockridgencpc.com.

Rockridge Branch Library

For Children:

- **Toddler Story Time**: 1st and 2nd Saturdays, 10:30am: 12/3, 12/10, 1/7
- **Pre-School Story Time**: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 10:30am: 12/7, 12/21, 1/4
- **Pajama Story Time**: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7pm: 12/8. Note: no Story Time on 12/27.

Special Event for Kids and Families:

- **Winter Family Story Time**: Tuesday, 12/13 at 7pm. All ages welcome to come—**in your pajamas**—for a cozy evening of winter stories, snowflake making and a bite of dessert.
- **Snowflake-Making** for all ages will be available from 12/14 to 1/14. Ask at the Children's Reference Desk for materials. For more details call Erica: 597-5017.

For Teens:

- **Bookwormz** (Teen Book Club): last Tuesday evening of each month from 5 to 6pm. For more information and to confirm date, call Susy: 597-5017.

For Adults:

- Reading and book signing by **Gil Smolin**, professor at UC San Francisco Medical School and author of the medical thriller, *Reign of the Rat*. Monday, 12/5, 6:30-8pm.
- **Lawyers in the Library:** Free legal advice. First Tuesday of each month: 6 to 8pm. Advance sign-up starts 5pm.

Art Exhibits:

- **Gallery**: Chris Jennings, Photography Show
- **Display case**: Kwanzaa Display

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017
LIBRARY HOURS:
Monday and Tuesday, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday 10am to 5:30pm
Friday, 12 to 5:30pm
Closed Sundays. NOTE: Closed Saturday, 12/24 through Monday, 12/26, and Monday, 1/2.

Diesel Book Readings and Events

All events are FREE and open to the public

- Tuesday, 12/13, 7pm. Book Group #3 will discuss *The Inner Circle* by **T.C. Boyle**. All welcome to attend.
- Tuesday, 12/27, 7pm. Book Group #1 will discuss *Dead Souls* by **Nicolai Gogol**. All welcome to attend.

5433 College Ave. For information about all events, book discussion groups and classes: 653-9965 or www.dieselbookstore.com.

Writers Support/Critique Group

ALL writers welcome. Bring at least 10 copies of 5 pages of your prose for on-site reading/discussion. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch (www.berkeleywritersclub.org/) Rockridge Branch Library, third Saturday of the month from 1 to 5pm. For more information: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.

Peralta School Kindergarten Events

- **School Tours**: now available Wednesdays and Thursdays .Call 879-1450 to schedule.
- **Kindergarten Open House**: Meet principal and teachers. Wednesday, January 18, 6:45pm. To **RSVP to arrange childcare** for events or for more information call 655-2737.

460 63rd Street. 879-1450 or
www.geocities.com/peraltaschool/

Chabot Elementary School Holiday Bazaar & Rummage Sale

Saturday, December 10 from 10am to 3pm. Proceeds support scholarships in the academic achievement program. Toys, jewelry, handmade crafts, new and gently used items and good food. One dollar admission includes raffle ticket for spectacular prizes. Free for children 12 and under. 6686 Chabot Road, in the school auditorium and upper yard. For more information or vendor space (limited), call Sharese Hill at 205-6712.

Art Exhibit

Oaktown: Art About Oakland and Our Communities. Watercolor, drawings, photography and paintings by five local artists. On now through December 16, Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm. Wheelchair accessible. Women's Cancer Resource Center, 5741 Telegraph Ave. For more information contact Margo Rivera-Weiss, Art Gallery Coordinator: 420-7900 x 111 or margo@wcrc.org.

California College of The Arts (CCA) Exhibition

Aesthetics of Ecology: Occupying Space for Sustainable Living: A juried exhibition featuring work by artists, designers and architects. Free and open to the public, Runs now through December 8. Presented by the CCA Alumni Council. For more inf. call 703-9595.

Sick Plant Clinic

Bring your ailing plants to the University of California Botanical Garden and **get a free diagnosis** by UC plant pathologist Dr. Robert Raabe, UC entomologist Dr. Nick Mills and their team of experts. First Saturday of every month from 9am to noon. UC Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley (above Cal Memorial Stadium in Strawberry Canyon). For more information: 643-2755 or http://botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu.

Activities and 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 Avenue Presbyterian Church, 5955 College Ave. For details about upcoming field trips, call Kathy at 531-6724.
- **North Oakland Multi-Purpose Senior Center**. **Program Highlights**: Computer classes; Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP); driver safety; trips, tours and theater outings. 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 lunch menu: (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.

Volunteers Needed

- **Second Start Adult Literacy Program**: Teach an adult to read. Free training. Nine month minimum commitment. Volunteers can meet with their students at the Rockridge Branch Library. For more information: 238-3432 or www.oaklandlibrary.org/services/SecondStart.
- **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.
- **Friends of Temescal Creek**: Monitor water quality by collecting water samples at Temescal Lake for analysis. Important for Rockridge residents because Temescal Creek runs above ground near Frog Park. Volunteers meet on the third Saturday of each month from 10am to noon. Regular commitment preferred. For more information and for where to meet, contact Friends of Temescal Creek at fotc2005@yahoo.com.
- **HEROES**: is the volunteer placement program for the Oakland Unified School District which helps to enhance the quality of educational experiences for students in the Oakland public schools. To volunteer, call 879-2908 or www.oaklandheroes.org.

U.C. Botanical Garden Special Holiday Plant Sale

Rare and unusual plants propagated from the Garden's global collection. Includes large-scale cacti, succulents and orchids. Also: indoor and outdoor containers, books and art. Proceeds benefit the non-profit research garden and museum. Friday, December 2 through Monday, December 12 (except Tues., Dec. 6: gardens closed 1st Tues. of every month). 10:30am to 4:40pm. UC Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley (above Cal Memorial Stadium in Strawberry Canyon). For more information: 643-2755 or http://botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu.

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