THE Rockridge News

Also on the meeting agenda: Land Use Committee Update

VOL. 23 ■ NO. 4 ■ ISSUE NO. 244 ■ April 6, 2008 ■ CIRCULATION: 5,100 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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RCPC Board Vote Set for April 17 Town Hall Meeting

Meet the six RCPC board candidates, hear their statements, and vote at the RCPC Town Hall meeting in the Rockridge Branch Library, Thursday, April 17, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Rockridge residents may also vote on Saturday, April 19, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at the library's entrance. Anyone 18 or older with evidence of residence within RCPC boundaries (a driver's license, or utility bill) is eligible to vote. (Boundaries: see http://rockridge.org.) Candidate statements and photos, page 3.

Preserving the Landscape of Childhood



Storyteller Gay Ducey, center, swapped stories with attendees at the March RCPC Town Hall meeting. PHOTO: DON KINKEAD

Storyteller Gay Ducey Featured at March RCPC Meeting

by Don Kinkead, editor

"It is easy to forget the landscape of childhood," so family members must pass on family stories — positive and negative — to the coming generations and anchor that landscape in memory, said storyteller Gay Ducey at the March RCPC Town Hall meeting.

Ducey, invited by RCPC to speak on the importance of stories in family and community life, described how storytelling provides cautionary tales, family history and a sense of humor that can bind communities and families to a greater sense of self. "Stories are also a way to become acquainted with deceased relatives," thus keeping their history alive and providing further self-awareness, she said. To demonstrate how easy storytelling can be for anyone, Ducey invited audience members to pair off and tell each other a story from their own childhood. A subsequent show of hands confirmed Ducey's point: storytelling is fun and feels good.

Gay Ducey is the children's librarian at the Rockridge Branch Library and staff trainer for story-readers for Oakland Head Start programs. She has appeared at storytelling festivals throughout the United States, Ireland and Canada. Her repertoire includes traditional tales as well as personal recollections of growing up in the South.

▸ Gay Ducey, page 4

Agenda: RCPC April Town Hall Meeting

Thursday, April 17, 7:30 p.m., Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College Avenue at Manila, Community Room

- **RCPC Board Election:** Vote for candidates for the RCPC board of directors. Vote at the meeting or on Saturday, April 19, at the Rockridge Branch Library, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **LWV Discusses June Ballot:** A representative from the League of Women Voters (LWV) will discuss state and local propositions on the June ballot. Two state propositions are on the subject of eminent domain which is of great interest to Rockridge residents."
- **NCPC Has New Leadership:** Meet the new NCPC steering committee and hear an update on crime and new approaches to crime prevention by Rockridge community policing organization.
- **FORL Election:** The Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL) will elect new board members at the April 17 RCPC meeting. The candidates for a two-year term are David Brown, Karen Carlson (Incumbent), Kristine Carraway (Incumbent), Dorothy Hackearth, Jane McDermott, Jenny Scholten (Incumbent), and Kathy Shaw.



Safeway's first proposal was to build a 55,000 sq.ft. store on the 1.8 acre site with parking on a second level, replacing the present 23,000 sq.ft. store and ground level parking. Arrow shows present storefront on each graphic for point of view.



Site overview, left: Google Earth©; Storefront: Rockridge News file photo.

Safeway Revises Store Plans; 'Concerned Neighbors' Meet

by Rockridge News staff from material provided by Rockridge neighbors Nancy McKay and Susan Shawl

Addressing a crowd of more than 100 local residents gathered at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church, Rockridge neighbor Nancy McKay weilded a spindly 4-foot ruler like a classroom-pointer as she discussed architectural drawings and explained that Safeway intends to demolish the existing

▸ Safeway, page 10

Will the Lights Go Out?

by Susan Montauk, Oakland Parks Coalition

Oakland property owners will soon receive a ballot for voting on a proposed increase in the Landscape and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD) assessment rate. The LLAD, established in 1989, annually assesses properties that receive direct benefit from the maintenance of public improvements such as landscaping, park and recreation facilities, and street lighting. The assessments, which are included in the property tax bill, provide funds for the operation and maintenance of important city infrastructure. There has not been an increase in the assessment rate since 1993. Property owners turned down an increase proposed in 2006. Since the current proposal was first floated, the Internet has been buzzing with protests from citizens fed up with being asked to pay more for services; misinformation is traveling like wildfire.



Before property owners mark their ballots, they should know the facts behind the "new" LLAD. Park, lighting, and street tree maintenance services, delineated in a number of reports (for example: http://clerkwebsvr1.oaklandnet.com/attachments/18401.pdf and http://clerkwebsvr1.oaklandnet.com/attachments/18730.pdf), currently cost the LLAD $27 million a year, yet the district collects only $18 million. Meanwhile, the City has added more than 300 acres of open space and parks, planted 10,000 more trees, and installed 3,200 more street lights while the costs of fuel, water, supplies, and staff have increased dramatically.

Over the years, the City has been able to plug the finance gap with rising real estate taxes – especially transfer taxes; but this year's real estate transfer taxes fell $20 million short of budget projections. Given the present stagnant or declining real estate values, there will be no more windfalls in the foreseeable future. Yet, revenue needs keep increasing.

The proposed LLAD increase would add $70 annually to the average single-family-residence tax bill in 2008-09. Funds generated by the assessment can only be used by the LLAD; they cannot be transferred to the General Fund or any other account. There is a cost-of-living increase built into this proposal – an element missing from the 1993 measure – which will help keep up with inflation and avoid the growing funding gap the City now faces. In addition, accountability measures built into the LLAD include: litter pick-up at least weekly; 95% of fields and lawns mowed within 10 business days; graffiti removed within 48 hours once reported; 90% of waste receptacles emptied before they overflow; and street lights repaired within 3 to 5 business days following report to Oakland's Public Works Agency (PWA) call center. All LLAD-funded PWA vehicles will be Global Positioning System (GPS) enabled after the measure takes effect.

Oakland property owners should make their decision with the facts in mind. If the rate increase does not pass, either the City will have to find a new source of funding, or services will be cut, parks will likely be closed, and the lights will grow dimmer.

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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 (RCPC), a nonprofit 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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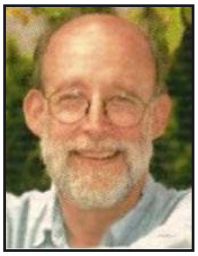
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Election 2008: RCPC Board Candidates

Stuart Flashman
Ocean View Drive



Since moving to Rockridge in 1992, I've run my environmental and land use law practice from my house, just off College Ave. As resident and business owner, I see Rockridge issues daily. My appointment to the RCPC Board last summer, and to chair the Land Use Committee two months ago, have provided even deeper understanding of what's needed to keep this a healthy, functioning community.

Rockridge depends on its C-31 commercial zoning to keep College Avenue vibrant but human-scaled. There's always pressure to "build up." Our zoning protects us from overbuilding. Some development will occur, but with our limited infrastructure, careful planning is a must.

Aside from helping to protect Rockridge's unique character, I also want to improve public safety and help our local schools.

Annette Floystrup
Birch Court

I have lived in Rockridge since 1955, and seen its evolution from a thriving transit-oriented community centered on the Key System streetcars in the 1950s to one centered on BART today.



I have previously served on the RCPC board, and participated in the 11 year process that got the Rockridge library built. I am a strong supporter of the pedestrian scale and orientation of the retail corridor on College Avenue.

I am deeply committed to developing a new collective project in Rockridge involving the wider community in conservation and collective action. I hope to serve the community again, as it has been my privilege to do the past two years. I believe that I bring the important element of institutional memory to the board.

Jonathan Gabel
Ocean View Drive



My primary purpose in running for the RCPC Board is to help maintain the special character of our neighborhood, which depends strongly on keeping land use and zoning as they are now. Also, in a time of budget deficits at every level of government, I want to work with the City of Oakland to see that its limited resources are used most efficiently.

I have lived in Rockridge since 1975 and have been active mainly on issues involving my immediate neighborhood. For example, I organized permit parking in a large area between College Avenue and Broadway, south of the BART station. Presently, I am participating in the effort to stop the large proposed increase in parking permit fees.

Joan Martin
Birch Court



As a Rockridge homeowner and resident for almost five years, I have enjoyed the benefits of the hard work of the RCPC Board. Because of their diligence in keeping the neighborhood pedestrian- and merchant-friendly, my wife and I, our friends and neighbors are rewarded with a well planned, combo urban/suburban lifestyle.

While I bring an undergraduate degree in Public Administration and Conflict Resolution, my graduate degree and subsequent work life have been geared toward finance and business. I would be honored to bring my skill set to the Board and our community and to be of service. If needed, I would be happy to help act as a financial steward for RCPC. I am neither pro- nor anti-change or development but rather thoughtful and fair-minded, and with this spirit will analyze and help decide issues brought forward.

I respectfully offer myself as a Candidate to the RCPC Board.

Candidates, page 5

Meet the candidates and hear their statements at the RCPC Town Hall Meeting, Thursday, April 17, at the library. Vote April 17 at the meeting or Saturday, April 19, in front of the library.

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Letters to the Editor

The Rockridge News welcomes letters to the editor. Your name, address, phone number and e-mail address and city/neighborhood must be included for verification. Only your name will appear with your letter. Letters may be edited for clarity and brevity.

Parking Permit Fee Increase – I Support It

Editor:

I'm writing in support of the proposed increase in the fee for residential parking permits. The cost of maintaining city streets has certainly gone up — materials, personnel, etc. The proposed price is a very modest amount of money once a year — a $35 increase. That's less than $3 per month. In one of the most affluent communities in Oakland, I think we can all afford $3 a month to help maintain our city streets and to acknowledge the incredible privilege of living in this beautiful, convenient neighborhood.

I notice that the same issue of Rockridge News has an article showing that Rockridge home values have increased 47% over the last 5 years, equivalent to $326,000 for the median-priced home. On College Avenue, there is a steady flow of people offering cash for expensive prepared foods, gourmet coffees, designer housewares and so on. Let's support the city without grousing and continue to invest in the infrastructure that we depend on every day.

— Carolyn Brown

No Need for Parking Permit Fee Increase

Editor:

I am writing to let you know my housemate and I are adamantly opposed to any increase in the parking permit fees. There is absolutely no demonstrated need for an increase in fees for a program that cannot be expensive to administer. If the Council is looking for ways to save money, then consider reducing the street cleaning to once per month in this neighborhood.

— Gary Barg

Limited Information About Safeway Plans

Editor:

I see that the Safeway people gave a presentation to the RCPC Board, but are unwilling to make this information available to everyone else. I hope this sort of limitation of information access will not continue. The RCPC Board can help with this by not encouraging such limited distribution.

— Doug Faunt

Ed. Note concerning the availability of information about Safeway plans: Safeway did make a presentation to an RCPC-sponsored public meeting. The subsequent presentation to the RCPC board was for the purpose of eliciting feedback from the board, with respect to the preliminary concepts prepared by Safeway in response to the earlier public comment. The board made clear that it was still concerned about the potential incompatibility of the plans with College Avenue's C-31 zoning, as well as other design elements. RCPC encourages Safeway to present its revised plans to the public as soon as possible to obtain more public feedback. (See Land Use Committee Update, page 5.)

'Silent Spring' Comes Home to Roost?

Editor:

Where have all the Steller's Jays gone? Has anyone else noticed a decline in their presence in your neighborhood?

For years I've had a plethora of these chatty, raucous characters twittering about. They love the oak trees and acorns around my home in the hills. This year, all is silent. I miss the chattering and squawking of these intelligent birds; I have noticed only a couple, one at a time, in the past month.

Searching the Internet, I have not been able to find anything about missing Steller's Jays. Anyone else notice this?

Have we truly reached that "Silent Spring" of Rachel Carson's prophecy?

— Claire Isaacs Wahrhaftig

Gay Ducey, from page 1

Following Ducey's presentation, RCPC Land Use Committee chair Stuart Flashman reported on the status of several development projects in the Rockridge area. His report appears on page 5.

The RCPC board develops and presents monthly programs to inform the Rockridge community about local resources, neighborhood issues, and board activities. The meetings are publicized in The Rockrdge News and are open to the public. To suggest a topic, e-mail rcpcchair@rockridge.org

RCPC E-Mail List: Timely Information Direct to You

The RCPC is happy to announce that an e-mail tree has been established to notify you about upcoming events on the RCPC calendar, including RCPC Town Hall meetings and Land Use Committee meetings.

To join this e-mail notification system, simply send your e-mail address to source@rockridge.org and you'll be added to our list. You can expect to receive no more than three e-mails a month and your information will be kept confidential. E-mail addresses provided will not be shared and will be used by the RCPC for official notifications only.



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Candidates

from page 3

Doug Patton
Ocean View Drive



My family and I have lived in Rockridge since 1965. At that time College Avenue was mostly boarded-up storefront buildings, and the area seemed depressed and not going anywhere. Since then it has been exciting watching the area develop into a first-class residential and friendly commercial area. It is apparent that things are changing, and pressures are increasing to make changes that could, if we are not vigilant, significantly impair the livability of Rockridge. While some changes will occur, we need to insure that changes only improve the area, and do not result in overdevelopment resulting in a negative impact on our community. My interest in serving on the Board is to help do whatever is necessary to keep Rockridge as a prime residential experience.

Kathy Taylor
Manor Crest



I am eager to participate in the RCPC. My family and I recently re-located to Rockridge. We deliberately selected this neighborhood for our home because of its vibrant commercial district and spirited residents. I have a Master's degree in landscape architecture and a keen interest in urban design and public space. I feel strongly that designers have a responsibility to help create and sustain unique communities such as ours.

As a designer, a new resident, and a renter, I believe I offer a unique and important voice to add to the leadership of the community. I have a great passion for our neighborhood and I am very interested in its ongoing success. It would be a sincere pleasure to help shape the future of Rockridge.

RCPC Land Use Committee

Updates: Hauser and Safeway Projects, 5175 Broadway, 5666 Telegraph

Land Use Committee Meeting: Wednesday, April 23, 7 p.m., Rockridge Branch Library

by Stuart Flashman, committee chair

■ Committee Notes

This has been a relatively quiet month for the RCPC Land Use Committee (LUC). Although several major projects are pending, there are no significant changes to report. The status of several current projects follows:

■ Hauser/Creekside Residential/ Mixed-use Project (Global Video Site, 5132 Telegraph)

There are still no revised plans available, although the project is apparently being redesigned. The City is working on a draft environmental impact report; there is no firm date for its release.

■ College Avenue Safeway Rebuild, 6310 College Avenue at Claremont

Safeway has apparently done a major project redesign. LUC representatives have been assured informally that the design submitted to the City with Safeway's pre-application was nothing more than a placeholder. Reportedly, the new design will be far more consistent with the site's C-31 zoning. Safeway will release a new set of designs some time in the next couple of months. RCPC will announce a community meeting once they are released. A neighborhood meeting was held on March 18 at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church. (Article, page 1.) One virtually unanimous conclusion of attendees at the meeting was that the proposed 55,000 to 62,000 sq. ft. store was far too big. RCPC is following this project closely.

■ 5666 Telegraph Residential Project

As noted in March's LUC Update, the Planning Commission denied an appeal on this project. A lawsuit has now been filed challenging the City's approval.

■ 5175 Broadway Residential/ Mixed-use Project

After being rejected by the Planning Commission last month, this project is scheduled for design review before the Planning Commission on April 9. (The agenda and staff report will be available at: http://www.oaklandnet.com/government/ceda/revised/planningzoning/Commission/default.html.) The developer has scheduled a public meeting for April 7 from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. in an upstairs meeting room at the Rockridge Branch Library. Contact the developer's consultant, Lucy Armentrout, 220-6445 or e-mail lucy@plananddev.com. The Land Use Committee recently received final drawings; the rendering is reproduced below. Due to the delayed receipt of the material, no committee response could be made. The short time available for public review of the final plans is disappointing.

5175 Broadway Project



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Rockridge Cornucopia

Barry A. Kaufman

Breakfast Time

When traveling through Southeast Asia, one of the first things you might notice is that there are no defined dining times that match our Western conception of breakfast, lunch, and dinner. People seem to eat all day with little attention to specific foods that are served in any given hour. On our first day in Hanoi, I came down to breakfast at our hotel where "breakfast" was included in our daily rate. The menu was divided into "typical" Western breakfast items and traditional Vietnamese fare. My eyes were immediately drawn to *pho ga*. *Pho* is the Vietnamese national street food noodle soup and *ga* means chicken. Chicken noodle soup for breakfast? I had been dreaming of having *pho* on the streets of Hanoi and here it was for breakfast! My partner ordered a more standard Western breakfast, but I went for the *pho ga*. I noticed our waiter going out of the restaurant with a large bowl. Within minutes he was back with a steaming bowl of *pho ga* from a Vietnamese street food vender outside our hotel. With all due respect to pancakes, bacon, and eggs over easy, this was the best breakfast I've ever had.

It is common knowledge that "breakfast" literally means to break the fast. However, the traditional American breakfast is a unique culinary institution. Like so many culinary traditions, the American breakfast represents a collage of our melting pot immigrant history: British and Irish eggs and bacon, German sausages, ham and potato pancakes, Jewish bagels and lox, French omelets, Belgian waffles, and Scottish and Irish oatmeal, other cereals, and biscuits.

Compare the traditional American breakfast with other global cuisines. In China, a bowl of rice porridge – known as *jook* or *congee* – with tea is a typical breakfast. The "continental breakfast" for most of Europe consists of a cup of strong coffee (espresso or cappuccino) and toast or a small pastry. The continental breakfast is a staple in countries where the mid-day meal is the big meal of the day – light breakfast, big lunch, and light supper. In Latin America, leftovers and corn dishes, *chilaquiles*, *tamales*, *empañadas*, and *pupusas* are standard breakfast fare.

Since the middle of the 18th century, regional specialties have come to define the American breakfast. Southern or low-country breakfasts are a unique American culinary tradition – grits, hash, scrapple, Dutch baby, smoked ham, and Hoppin' John. When traveling in the Southwest, I enjoy a breakfast of green chili with Native American *sopaipillas* – fried dough with honey.

The weekend brunch is a modern American invention. According to food historians, the concept started with Mother's Day for the upper class. What better way to celebrate our hard-working mothers than to transport the working Mom into the status of the leisure-class, elite mother – breakfast in bed and sleeping-in late. But a meal that began as a tribute to moms came to be a meal that challenged the church for the primacy on Sunday morning. By eliminating the need to get up early on Sunday, brunch would create a new Sunday tradition. Although the day-to-day American breakfast is apt to be a quick coffee and a pastry, we all look forward to a more relaxed weekend and vacation American-style "big breakfast."

On any given Sunday, breakfast and brunch restaurants are packed with families waiting in line for their lazy, yummy breakfast.

In Rockridge, we are fortunate to have some of the best Sunday breakfast/brunch restaurants in the Bay Area. Somerset is perhaps the most innovative brunch restaurant on College Avenue. Combining European, Latin American, and American breakfast traditions, Somerset is a Bay Area brunch destination. Barclay's Restaurant and Pub, best known for its brewpub fare, serves an outstanding stick-to-your-ribs Sunday brunch. And, of course, our very own Rockridge Café continues a long-standing down-home Sunday morning breakfast of the best French toast, pancakes, and eggs any style.

This month's recipe is adapted from Bette's Oceanview Diner located at Berkeley's 4th Street shopping center.

Ricotta-Lemon Pancakes

Ingredients

3 eggs, separated
¼ cup flour
¾ cup ricotta cheese
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon lemon zest, finely chopped
Vegetable oil

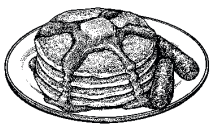
Instructions

Beat egg yolks until thick and pale. Stir in ricotta. Add flour, salt, and lemon zest, stirring just to combine. Put egg whites in a bowl and beat until stiff but not dry. Gently fold egg whites into batter until just combined.

Lightly oil a griddle over medium heat. Portion batter with a 2-ounce ladle onto hot griddle, leaving space between pancakes. Cook until bubbles cover surface of pancakes and undersides are golden brown, about 2 minutes. Gently turn pancakes and cook until second side is golden brown, about 2 minutes. Serve with crème fraîche, sour cream, or jam.

Yields 12-16 3-inch pancakes

Barry Kaufman is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. Barry is available for cooking classes. His email is kaufman42@earthlink.net





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Once Upon a Time...

I can still hear my daughter Kirsten, then age three, chanting in a lovely singsong way, "onaposatime...." It was the way all stories started when we were young. We didn't quite know what that meant, except that it was a long, long time ago. And that was quite believable because it seemed that only old people told stories. Probably they were the only ones who had the time to do so. How lucky we are that they did. Who can ever forget those precious hours when Grandma or a favorite maiden aunt would gather you into her arms and begin telling, in a magical tone of voice reserved for these occasions, stories of adventures that happened long ago to shadowy people in far-away countries? It was not only the story but the sound of the telling, the rhythm, that would transport you to those places that seemed to be located in the mysterious depth of some ancient communal memory.

The Rockridge Muse

by Ortrun Niesar

Fast forward to now, in our busy tech world where we don't even have time to cook a proper meal. Do we have time for remembering stories, and do we even know how to go about telling one? I don't mean just reading a story. I mean actually telling one with all the bells and whistles passed down by practitioners of oral traditions dating back to the dawn of time.

Storytelling Events and Resources

We live in a community that has provided fertile ground for storytellers. If you heard Gay Ducey at the March RCPC meeting, you heard one of the best. Gay will be one of the workshop leaders at the upcoming Bay Area Storytelling Festival, May 17-18 at Kennedy Grove Regional Park in El Sobrante (www.bayareastorytelling.org). At the festival you will hear – live – some of the country's best storytellers. The event is organized by the Storytelling Association of Alta California (www.storySAAC.org). The association is also a resource for finding storytellers for hire for private events.

Closer to home, storytellers gather at "Tell it on Tuesdays" every fourth Tuesday from 7-9:30 p.m. at Julia Morgan Theater, 2640 College Avenue, Berkeley.

At Stagebridge (First Congregational Church, 2501 Harrison Street, Oakland) storytelling is taught Thursdays and Fridays at 10 a.m. (510/444-4755). Stagebridge also trains seniors in improvisation and theater arts. They recently mounted an original musical production of Patricia Polacco's delightful children's story "Chicken Sunday." The play is now making the rounds of East Bay K-6 schools. Patricia, a master storyteller, grew up on Ocean View Drive, and draws many of her stories from her own childhood experiences. Patricia has moved to Michigan, but you can follow her story at www.PatriciaPolacco.com. Her key advice on how to become a good storyteller? Turn off the TV and learn to listen to the voices around you until you, too, can hear again the magic of "once upon a time...."

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Rockridge Sales Spring Forward in March

Close Date	BR	Bth	Address	Orig Price	LP	SP
3/3/2008	3	1	502 Forest St	$499,900	$494,900	$550,000
3/3/2008	3	3	5849 Buena Vista	1,450,000	$1,200,000	$1,100,000
3/5/2008	3	2	6221 Chabot Rd	$1,395,000	$1,395,000	$1,600,000
3/5/2008	2	2	327 Hudson St	$699,000	$699,000	$675,000
3/6/2008	3	2	5842 Virmar Ave	$895,000	$895,000	$933,000
3/12/2008	4	3	6450 Regent St	$779,000	$739,000	$715,000
3/12/2008	4	2	6500 Chabot Rd	$985,000	$985,000	$1,103,000
3/13/2008	3	2	6110 Colby St	$484,900	$484,900	$525,000
3/21/2008	2	2	5340 Broadway Ter	$615,000	$615,000	$595,000

In March the average List/Sell is 104%; March sales closed sold with an average market time of 30 days; 1/3 of the listings that sold in March required a price reduction

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East Bay MUD Asks, 'Got Water?'

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC boardmember and East Bay MUD Community Liaison committee member

Longtime East Bay residents may remember the early 1990s when East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) prepared a Water Supply Management Plan (WSMP) to figure out how it would provide water to its customers for the next 30 years. (Full disclosure: I was an EBMUD board member during most of that process, and board vice-president when it was finally approved in 1993.) Now, 14 years later, much of that plan has been implemented. EBMUD has now moved its planning horizon out and is working on WSMP 2040.

WSMP 1993 had its share of controversy. The most contentious item was Buckhorn Reservoir, a reservoir proposed for the East Bay Hills southwest of Moraga to store water from the American River as drought protection. However, when filled, it would have submerged hundreds of acres of oak woodlands. The reservoir was later eliminated from the WSMP because of its expense and the environmental damage it would cause. Instead, EBMUD traded American River water for water from the Sacramento River and, with Sacramento County, is now building a regional water treatment facility that will provide drought protection. The other major part of WSMP 1993, cooperative groundwater storage in San Joaquin County, was never implemented. The San Joaquin County water agencies were too suspicious of their big-city partner to join in the proposal.

The new plan, like WSMP 1993, is looking to a combination, or "portfolio" of options to meet expected customer water demand, including demand during a drought. Options being considered include new conservation measures, expanded water recycling, water transfers from other water districts, and new storage facilities. The most controversial proposal puts Buckhorn Reservoir back on the table. Will it be part of the final proposal? Probably not; its environmental costs are still high. However, Buckhorn backers (and there are plenty, particularly east of the Hills) claim it's the best large storage option west of the Delta. This could be important to EBMUD customers if flooding in the San Joaquin Delta were to destroy the aqueducts that carry water from Pardee Dam on the Mokelumne River, EBMUD's major water source.

EBMUD staff and consultants are currently developing 12 portfolios for evaluation by the EBMUD board and the public. The board will reduce those options to six at a public workshop on April 22. After more detailed evaluation of the final six, a preferred option will be selected at a public workshop on June 24. (Both workshops will be held at EBMUD's offices at 375 11th Street in downtown Oakland, and will begin at 8 a.m.) EBMUD will then prepare an environmental impact report evaluating its major options, with a final decision on a water supply plan scheduled for late 2008.

Look for lots of fireworks between now and then.

What Was that Ballot in the Mail?

County Mosquito District seeks supplemental funding.

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC boardmember and Oakland Trustee, Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District

Since mid-March, the Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District (ACMAD) has been mailing ballots to Oakland property owners so they can vote on a new special assessment.

ACMAD is a governmental agency set up in the 1930s by Alameda County voters to control mosquitoes. The District treats ponds (natural and ornamental), marshes, tree holes, and other potential mosquito breeding sources such as storm drain catch basins.

The District's treatment techniques are designed to kill only mosquitoes, and it has been especially careful in wetlands, which are major mosquito breeding areas. ACMAD prides itself on being environmentally conscious and benign. The agency regularly receives permits from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which ensures that its operations don't harm the sensitive species that inhabit marshes.

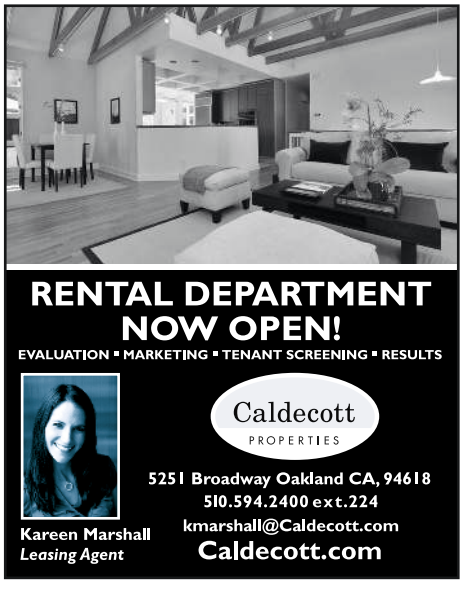
Why are property owners being asked to vote now?

Since its beginning, ACMAD's main source of funds was a small allocation from county property taxes. Until 1977, that was more than enough to keep the district running. After Prop. 13 passed, however, the district had to cut its operations and lay off employees. Mosquito control suffered.

In 1982, voters approved a small special tax that supported ACMAD's operations until the mid-1990s, when the Legislature transferred roughly 30% of all property tax revenue from other agencies to the schools. ACMAD had no alternate revenue sources to make up the difference. With the advent of West Nile Virus about four years ago, the District was forced to beef up its operations to meet the threat. The proposed special assessment ($5 per year per single-family residence) is intended to fund the district properly.

Until recently, such assessments didn't require voter approval. However, Proposition 218 requires that all assessments be approved by a majority vote of affected property owners. Since only property owners

Mosquitoes, page 11





FROG Park Corner

A monthly update on what's happening at the best community-built and maintained park in Oakland



Spring is Here and it's Time To Get Things Flowing!

Are you looking for a local Earthday activity to join? Give a look at FROG-Park. You can help beautify and clean up FROGPark on April 19 from 9AM to 1PM. Participants will clean the creek bed and the playgrounds, clear trash and fertilize plants. Look for activity captains at the Hardy and Redondo playgrounds who will help you find the best way to help. Families are welcome and water and snacks will be provided. Hop to it!

To get more deeply involved with FROG projects such as year-long creek flow, public art and the new bathroom, contact Jennifer Cooper, chair, at Jennifer@live-work.com

FROGNotes:

- Plans for the bathroom continue to develop and evolve. Watch for further announcements.
- Park enthusiasts may look forward to the creek returning after the clean up.





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Celebrate Earth Day 2008

Come on down to the Temescal Creek Clean-up!

Saturday, April 19, 2008, 9 am 'til noon

Join us! We will meet at Cavour and Redondo, across the street from the DMV parking lot. We will clean along Temescal Creek between Cavour and Clarke Streets to clear the creek bed before the city turns the creek back on for summer. Plus: litter pick up, ivy pruning, weeding.

First 50 volunteers get a free t-shirt!

What you can bring for the cleanup: tools, a wheelbarrow if you have one. The City's Public Works Department will supply gloves, garbage bags, and some tools (loppers, rakes, hoes, brooms, litter pickup sticks, etc.). If you have a favorite tool for these activities, please bring it. *Remember to label your tools.* The creek bed will be wet, so boots are recommended if you want to muck about.

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Questions? call Margaret 510/655-1767.

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A Future of Hope

Safeway

from page 1

store, incorporate the Union 76 property at College and Claremont into the site plan, and cover the entire 1.8-acre site with a new 55,000 sq. ft. store with an upper level of rooftop parking.

The plans, she said, show customer vehicles entering and exiting the rooftop parking area from Claremont Avenue, and delivery trucks entering from Claremont and exiting onto College Avenue. The new store's design would be a significant departure from that of the existing facility. Travelers heading west on Claremont would see a rooftop parking lot surmounting much of the site. The Safeway façade on College would be a continuous expanse over 400 feet long. The Claremont façade would be over 600 feet long.

Shawl and her 63rd Street neighbor Nancy McKay were dismayed by the scope of the proposed rebuilding and disappointed at the lack of available information. Organizing as "Neighbors Concerned with Safeway/College," they contacted friends and neighbors and leafleted 600 homes to announce the informational meeting held Tuesday evening, March 18. According to the flyers, the meeting was called to inform neighbors of Safeway's expansion approach, to seek support to minimize adverse neighborhood impacts, and to enroll volunteers to help as a steering group to work with the City and Safeway.

Describing the plans, Shawl and McKay worked with the only visual aids available to them: digital photographs of the preliminary plans submitted to Oakland's Planning Department. Revised plans may be available within 4 to 6 weeks, Shawl said, emphasizing that although the current plans were to be superseded, they are indicative of Safeway's overall approach to the site.

Closing the basic presentation, McKay and Shawl listed the main goals of the new group for the Safeway project: a) compliance with the spirit and intent of the C-31 zoning in effect along College Avenue; b) no roof top parking; c) pedestrian-oriented retail shopping on College; d) visually attractive design compatible with the immediate neighborhood; e) no feeder traffic on residential streets; and f) no trucks on College.

Shawl and McKay then introduced Arvi Dorsey of the Rose Garden Neighborhood Preservation Association (RGNPA) who spoke of his neighborhood's success in limiting Safeway's Grand Avenue store expansion plans 10 years ago, achieving neighborhood goals of preservation and protection. Dorsey said the neighborhood association persuaded Safeway to reduce its plans from a 55,000 sq. ft. store to one of 26,000 sq. ft. He said the neighborhood's success required hard work but was worth it.

When comments were invited, speakers pointed out that both the Grand Avenue store and the College Avenue store are within a 1.4 mile radius of the Rockridge Center Safeway – also slated for rebuilding and expansion – and presently serve as satellite stores to that much larger store. Why, they asked, would the College Avenue store then have to be as large as its current plans suggest?

Attendance included Nila Kim, Assistant to District 1 City Councilmember Jane Brunner, and Barbara Ellis of Aroner, Jewel & Ellis Partners, consultants to Safeway.

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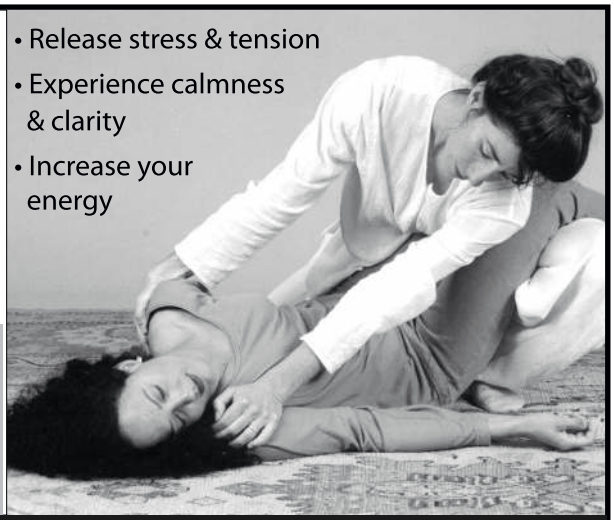
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Welcome, New Rockridge News Volunteers

Other Routes Available

The Rockridge News welcomes District Captain Dennis Richardson who took over Steve Meyer's route in March, delivering bundles to block captains along Broadway. Marge Pryle has also joined the Rockridge News volunteer family and will deliver papers to Auburn and Florio.

Long-time volunteer Janet Falk, has chalked up 20 years of service and is stepping down from her district captain position. If you can take over her route, contact Susan at smontauk@gmail.com or call 547-3855. Janet delivers bundles to 10 block captains between Claremont, College, Harwood, Ross and Mystic.

We also need a block captain to deliver door to door on route 20A – even numbers from 5900 Claremont to the Shell station – to replace Robin Patfield who has moved.

Thanks for all your help and service.

Meeting: RCPC Traffic, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee

APRIL 21, 7 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library

Jason Patton, Oakland Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager, will talk about the bike parking plan for Rockridge, the Broadway bikeway proposal, and discuss other proposed bikeway projects like Alcatraz Ave and a Rockridge-Emeryville connection (via Cavour, Vicente, 55th, and 53rd). Questions about College Avenue bicycle travel are welcome!

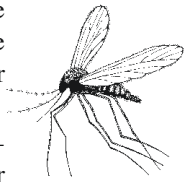
Other topics to be addressed:

Rockridge Triangle safety study. Community prioritization of proposed neighborhood pedestrian & bike improvements following conclusion of the traffic study require further City input. Jane Brunner's office would then seek funding implementing the top priorities.

Mosquitoes

from page 8

can vote, the election is by mail ballot, rather than in-person voting at the usual public polling place. If the measure receives a majority of "yes" votes, the measure passes. If not, it fails. If it fails, the District's situation will be similar to what it was after the passage of Prop. 13.



Aside from the assessment vote, you can do your part to help control mosquitoes: make sure you have no standing water where mosquitoes could breed, such as a puddle of water in the basement, or in a rain-bucket or old tire in the backyard. If you have a pond, fountain or the like, ACMAD will provide you with mosquito fish (free, including free delivery) that will keep your water mosquito-free. If you notice a mosquito problem, call the District at 510/783-7744 or e-mail them at acmad@mosquitoes.org, and they'll send a technician to deal with the problem. The District's website at http://www.mosquitoes.org also has a wealth of information about mosquitoes and their control.


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Yasai Market – a World of Delectables in a Tiny Space

by Lydia Gans

For health conscious foodies, Yasai Market on College Avenue at 63rd Street carries an amazing variety of food products in a tiny store. On both sides of the narrow aisles and along the walls, wares are stocked almost to the ceiling, everything from traditional fare such as slow-cooking oatmeal to the latest favorites like kombucha. On the sidewalk in front of the store, a gorgeous display of fruits and vegetables tempts passersby.

There is no Mr. Yasai, by the way; "yasai" means vegetable in Japanese. Nobody seems to remember when the store first opened. Old-timers in the area say it's been there "forever." The original Japanese partners sold it to its present owners, a Cambodian family, 15 years ago.

The Paks came to the United States in 1981, fleeing from the civil war in Cambodia, which had taken a heavy toll on their family. They brought their daughters, 7-year-old Bo and baby Youza. They lived for a time in Texas, then settled in the Bay Area. Here they joined with a partner in a small produce store on Lakeshore Avenue before buying Yasai Market. Now the senior Paks are back in Cambodia, and Bo and Youza run the store. Bo speaks with pride about her father. He is now Director General of higher education in Cambodia. "While raising us and running a produce store, he went to school part-time. It took him 15 or so years to get his doctorate. He had to start all over with his education. He was a law-school student back in Cambodia."

Youza talks about how she and her sister gradually were prepared to take over the business. "I was trained by my mom. She used to do all the ordering for the groceries. She slowly passed it on to me."

Talking about the produce, Bo explains, "We try to carry things that are as local as possible, but we're also price-conscious. The community is upper middle-class but there are a lot of working-class people too, and we want to meet everybody's needs. So we carry organic and that's a little bit more…." They carry commercial produce "if the price is right and it's fresh and it's good quality." They have always made it a policy to carry locally grown produce. It fits in with their background. Bo says, "In Cambodia, when we went back to visit, vegetables were from the backyard. The local market was whatever people sold on the street."



Youza Pak and Bo Pak, proprietors of Yasai Market, with Bo's daughter. Photo: Lydia Gans

For customers with limited incomes there are always bags made up of a mixture of vegetables left on the shelves at the end of the day priced at a hefty discount.

Besides the produce there are dried fruits and nuts, bins with grains and dried beans, quinoa (also quinoa pasta!), packaged sweets, condiments, oils, exotic canned and packaged foods imported from Asia, crackers, matzos ... and halvah! "We don't even know what halvah is," admits Bo. "A customer suggested it." Youza explains, "We're constantly trying to make everything here exciting, always looking for new products. We get a lot of feedback from customers, ideas for different products." On the counter is a list labeled "New Items to Check Out." Among the more than a dozen items are smoked goat cheese, seitan, amazake, licorice, fresh pho noodles, Applegate Farms natural bacon, and tofu noodles.

They also carry all sorts of dairy products, a variety of cheeses, milk, sour cream, yogurt, ice cream – foods that are nonexistent in much of Asia. "All of our desserts in Cambodia, things that are creamy, come from coconut milk," Youza says. And then there are the drinks – particularly kombucha in "all kinds of flavors," the latest fad among the health-conscious. The last, Youza says, "is so popular we're constantly refilling the shelves."

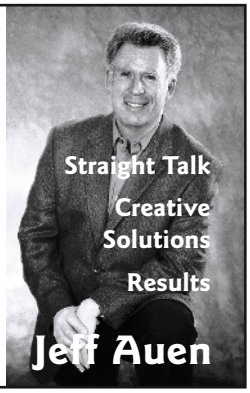
Running the market is hard work and involves long hours. Yasai is open every day from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Bo's husband Michael Heng does the produce buying at the wholesale market, and other family members also work in the store. They never really expected to be running a market, Bo says – Michael has a degree in engineering, she and Youza are both Cal graduates – but it works out for them. With two young children "it's more flexible than a regular job." And Youza, who is newly married, enjoys the work. "It's like shopping," and she says "I really like interacting with the customers."

She appreciates the ideas and suggestions from their customers. "We're not afraid to try anything once if it sounds good, if the ingredients are good." She adds, "People are always saying that if we don't sell it, then maybe you shouldn't eat it." That's a pretty good recommendation for a neighborhood market.

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Pentathlete Wants Oakland Kids to 'Think Olympic'

by Anna L. Marks

"Find out what you are passionate about and think about it everyday." That is Oakland resident Marilyn King's challenge to kids of any age. An Olympic Pentathlete, and one of the selected runners of this year's Olympic Torch in San Francisco, King foresees a metaphorical passing of the torch of what she calls Olympian Thinking.

For King, this comes down to one key practice that all athletes do, and that all kids can do too, and that is to wake up every morning and "envision their gold."

Says King, "What athletes have, over and above everything else, is something they are passionate about. When the kids move into Olympian Thinking, it takes them through a three-step process that has them stay connected to what they are most passionate about, to think more effectively, and to create a contract for action."

King knows that creating this systematic strategy works because she has already brought it to inner-city kids in Oakland at the Boys and Girls Club, the Police Activities League, and The Good Samaritan Neighborhood Center. She has even seen her program go on the road to Chicago and El Salvador.

A competitor in Munich in 1972 and Montreal in 1976, King understands the importance of shining a light on things that aren't right in the world. She is especially clear that protests can make important statements. However, King feels that boycotts of the games ultimately have a negative impact that is greater than the positive impact on the issues being addressed. She refers to the original intention of the visionary behind our modern-day Olympics, educator Pierre de Coubertin.

He saw the games as a pathway to global peace, is credited with establishing the Olympic Charter and with crafting its main guiding principle: "The purpose of the Olympic Games is to educate youth through sport for the purpose of creating a better and more peaceful world."

Following this ideal, historically, all international hostilities were halted so people could travel to see and participate in the games from around the world. Although this principle has since been diluted, it remains a crucial element of the Olympics.



◄ Park Day School student Torrey Hart takes time for a photo while interviewing King for her school newspaper. PHOTO: RICHARD HART

It is in this spirit of peace and cooperation that King brings her own Olympian Thinking to Oakland youth and is now passing the torch to the younger generation, who she believes has the power to continue the vision of achieving full potential in their own lives. King sees them able to apply what she calls "high-performance" thinking by spreading the message that they are already "wired to win."

King's Olympian Initiative program is developing partnerships with community advocates, teachers and even the hip-hop community as part of her larger initiative: "Peace is the Only Gold."

The program culminates with activities on Peace Day — a day celebrated in more than 123 countries and which recognizes people who have worked toward peace locally and globally. This year, on September 21, Oakland's Parks and Recreation Department is organizing a citywide multicultural event, to be held at San Antonio Park. All are invited to this event.

King encourages all Rockridge News readers to take a "10-Day Challenge" and apply these skills in their own lives, then send her an account of the experience. To contact King, and to learn more about her programs, visit her website at www.waybeyondsports.com.

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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

Saturday April 12, 10am to noon. Peralta Elementary School: 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz, east of Telegraph).**Meeting topic: What Makes a Great Urban Public School?** Featured speakers: **Vincent Matthews**, **Stephen Wesley**, **Sheila Jordan** and **Kerry Hamill**. Info: 238-7001, or view Brunner Report at www.oaklandnet.com (the site for all City-related information).

N'hood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

Residents and business members of NCPC's 12Y and 13X areas are invited to voice their concerns about crime and public safety. **New time and place:** Meets 4th Thursday each month, 7pm, at Rockridge Library, upstairs meeting room, 5366 College Ave. info@rockridgencpc.com.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

FOR CHILDREN:

- **Toddler Story Time: Every Saturday**, 10:30am.
- **Pre-School Story Time:** 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 10:30am: 4/16, 5/7.
- **Pajama Story Time:** 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7pm: 4/8 (see Special Event), 4/22.

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES:

- **Stories to Play With:** Tales told with puppets, paper, toys and imagination. **Hiroko Fugita**, Master Japanese storyteller, with **Fran Stallings** giving brief English synopses of the tales. Tuesday, 4/8 at 7pm.
- **Montera Middle School Jazz Club:** Spring performance, directed by **Khalil Shaheed**. Monday, 4/14, 7pm.

FOR TEENS:

- **Anime Club: Teens 13 and up**, watch and talk about anime (Japanese animation) with other teens. 2nd Tuesday of each month, 5 to 6:30pm.

FOR ADULTS:

- **Writer's Support /Critique Group:** ALL writers welcome. Third Saturday each month (4/19), 1 to 5pm. Bring 10 copies of up to 3 pages of your prose for on-site reading/discussion. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch (www.berkeleywritersclub.org.) Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.
- **Knitting Classes for Seniors** (50+): with instructor **Teri Barr**. All levels welcome. Beginners bring light color yarn and a pair of size 8 needles. If experienced, bring projects to work on. Tuesdays, 12:30-2:30pm.
- **Clear Your Clutter:** Experienced organizer **Joan Craig** shows how to reduce clutter and get organized. Monday, 4/14, 7 to 8pm.
- **Artist Reception: Opal Palmer Adisa** will discuss "The Intricacies of Cultures," her photo images from Egypt and Jamaica. Saturday, April 19, 4-6pm.
- **Mind Power Weight Loss**: Certified hypnotherapist **Catherine Walters** will discuss how to lose weight and create a new life. Saturday, 5/3, 2 to 4pm.
- **Lawyers in the Library: Free legal advice**. First Tuesday each month from 6 to 8pm. Advance sign-up starts 5pm. More information: 597-5017.

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Art Exhibits

Gallery: April: "The Intricacies of Cultures;" photographs by **Opal Palmer Adisa**.

May: Merritt College portrait class figure drawing

Lobby Display Case: April: **Vaughn Hovanesian**: photographs.

May: Rockridge Library Teen Photos

LIBRARY HOURS:
Mon. and Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed., Thurs. and Sat. 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri., 12 to 5:30pm. Closed Sundays.

Dreyer's Ice Cream Grand Opening

Ice cream lovers of all ages are invited to enjoy a **FREE SCOOP** to celebrate the long-awaited grand opening of Dreyer's new College Avenue Parlor. Saturday, 4/19, noon to 3pm. Balloon artists and face painters will entertain. 5929 College Avenue.

Amnesty International Meeting

Exchange information and ideas on action. All welcome. Monday, 4/14, 7:30pm. Diesel Bookstore, 5433 College Ave., 653-9965.

Chabot Elementary School Auction

Dinner, drinks, dancing, live and silent auctions. Proceeds support student enrichment programs. Saturday April 12, 6 to11 pm, Pauley Ballroom, UC Student Union. Tickets: $30 at the door /$26 in advance at www.chabotelementary.org. Info: Karen Cheever: 654.9052.

Claremont Middle School Fundraiser

Cocktail party and silent auction. Appetizers and drinks sponsored by Citron restaurant. Saturday, 4/26, 7 to 10pm. Hosted at the home of Ron Kriss and Sue Peck, 5810 Lawton Avenue. Donations still welcome (invitation and donation forms are available at www.claremontms.org. or contact Claudia Mills at 652-7782 or Claudia@sparkworld.com). Proceeds support art, music and gardening programs and more. Tickets: $18 at the door; drinks $2 - $6. RSVP by April 20: 652-7782 or www.claremontms.org.

Hillcrest School Carnival

Features Village Market BBQ, games, live entertainment and more. Saturday, 4/26, 11am to 3pm. Proceeds benefit Hillcrest PTA. School playground, 30 Marguerite Drive, Upper Rockridge. Info: hillcrestpta.org/walkathon.shtml or hansonds@pacbell.net.

Park Day School Benefit

Secret Gardens of the East Bay 22nd Annual Garden Tour: Tour 11 fabulous gardens. Meet with many of the garden designers; lunch on the grounds of the historic Matilda Brown Home at 370 43rd St.; Outdoor marketplace from 9am to 4pm. Proceeds benefit academic and financial assistance programs. Sunday, 4/27 9am to 5pm; rain or shine. Tickets: $50, includes a boxed lunch. Info and to purchase tickets, call 653-0317x103 or www.SecretGardenTour.org.

Jazz at the Chimes

Concert and Artist Reception featuring Grammy-nominated pianist **Taylor Eigsti** with bassist **John Schifflet** and drummer **Jason Lewis**. Benefit performance for the Jazzschool Institute for Developing Young Artists. Sunday, 4/20, 2pm. Tickets: $50 general (part tax deductible)/$25 students. Tickets through the Jazzschool, 845-5373 or www.jazzschool.inhousetickets.com. Reservations recommended. Sponsored by the Lifemark Group Arts program that features Bay Area talent. Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave. Wheelchair accessible. More info at 228-3218 or www.lifemarkgroup.com/oakland/special_events.asp. • Many events and performances celebrating **Jazz Appreciation Month**, in conjunction with the **Annual Piedmont Avenue Tulip and Art Festival**: For details and info on dates and times call 228-3218 or mdorazi@lifemarkgroup.com.

Wisteria Ways Concert Series

Eliyahu and Qadim: Modern interpretations of ancient mystical music of the Middle East. Sunday, 4/6, 3pm. 383 61st Street. Simple refreshments provided. $15-20 suggested donation for musicians (cash at the door). For reservations (highly recommended), RSVP to info@WisteriaWays.org or 655-2771.

Singers Wanted

The Distaff Singers, the Bay Area's longest-running women's choral group, is seeking new members. No auditions necessary, just the ability to match pitch. Practice Tuesdays, 7:15 to 9:15pm at St. Theresa Church on Clarewood Ave. A benefit concert in the fall supports local K-12 music programs. For more info: 547-1191 or www.distaffsingers.org.

California College of the Arts (CCA)

Spring Fair: Arts and crafts fair with unique, affordable gifts made by CCA students, alumni and staff. Ceramics, glass, jewelry, clothing and textiles, photos and paintings. Live jazz music. Saturday, 4/12, 11am to 3pm. CCA Oakland Campus (B'way and College), main walkway. Info at 594-3678.

Christensen Heller Gallery

Showing the work of local artist Patti Heimburger: California textural landscapes in mixed media through oil paint, fabric and yarn. Now through May 18. Gallery hours: Wed. – Sat., 11am to 6pm; Sunday, noon to 5pm. 5829 College Ave. Info: 655-5952 or www.christensenheller.com.

City Council & School Borad Candidates Open Forum

All candidates for District One and At-Large City Council seats, and all candidates for the Oakland School Board, have been invited to speak and answer questions in a forum setting on Saturday, 4/19, 1 to 3pm, at Faith Presbyterian Church, 49th and Webster (east of Telegraph). Light refreshments served. Sponsored by Standing Together for Accountable Neighborhood Development (STAND). additional Info: 655-3841 or www.standoakland.org

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