THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

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Sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council • 5245 College Ave. PMB 311 • Oakland, CA 94618 • 869-4200

Rockridge Out & About Street Festival

As billows of fragrant smoke wafted skyward from bar-b-que cookers ranged along College Avenue and hot sun beat down on the street, thousands of Rockridge neighbors and visitors ambled up and down the Avenue, sampling sandwiches, ice cream, music, dancers, massages, hand-made jewelry, and countless other offerings from vendors, all creating a mellow mood for the Rockridge Out & About Street Festival. The festival, sponsored by the Rockridge District Association (RDA), showcases the vibrant neighborhood that is Rockridge as well as the occasional aspiring guitar hero! TEXT AND PHOTOS: DON KINKEAD





Update on Board of Directors Positions

The RCPC board of directors has three vacant seats – two regular board seats and the appointed seat usually reserved for a Rockridge merchant or owner of commercial property. The board expects to fill the merchant slot and one of the regular vacancies at its October 1 meeting, leaving one additional slot.

If you're interested in helping RCPC maintain and improve our Rockridge community, consider applying for the vacant seat. The appointment would be from now until the April 2011 board elections. Board members are required to attend board meetings once a month. In addition, board members are expected to participate in at least one board committee (land use,

Update, page 7

RCPC Town Hall Meeting

AGENDA

October 2009

October 15, 7:30 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College at Manila
Community Room (Upstairs)

Curious about Rockridge neighborhood history and architecture? The October RCPC Town Hall meeting is for you.

- Jane Powell, noted author and lecturer on craftsman houses and their details, will talk about the diversity and historical significance of the housing stock in our neighborhood. Pictures in some of Jane's six books are from area homes.
- Rockridge neighbor Annalee Allen, author of two books on Oakland, columnist and long-time Oakland Heritage Alliance activist, will share stories about the long and interesting history of our mass transit oriented neighborhood.

The Sun Shone Brightly on the Eighth Biennial Rockridge Kitchen Tour

by Jennifer Edmister and Susan Montauk, Kitchen Tour Co-Chairs

Once again, the well-attended, well-loved Rockridge Kitchen Tour was a testament to the spirit of community that thrives in our neighborhood. Early-arriving tour guests relaxed at College Avenue cafes and restaurants before setting out to visit the nine residential kitchens in upper and lower Rockridge. Under sparkling skies, friends, neighbors, and enthusiastic guests shared a perfect late summer afternoon sipping citrus punch, nibbling brie, sampling scrumptious Great Harvest breads in the terraced garden of one of the Rockridge Boulevard homes, admiring Bay-wide views from atop the Margarido House and



Visitors peruse materials in one of the featured kitchens of the popular event.

Kitchen Tour, page 5

In My Opinion

Tough Times for Business

by Annette R. Floystrup, past chair of the Bay Area Small Business Development Corporation (now NorCal FDC), a state funded nonprofit making loan guarantees to small business in the 9 Bay Area counties. Projects funded in Oakland during her tenure include Everett & Jones and the new Yoshi's, both in Jack London Square.

Ms. Floystrup is also a Board member of the Rockridge Community Planning Council. However, the opinions expressed in this article are solely those of Ms. Floystrup and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of RCPC or its Board of Directors.

At all times, and especially hard times, small business is the engine that drives the American economy forward. As large corporations nationwide have collapsed under their own weight and risky business strategies, small-business owners have scrambled to reinvent themselves, investing even more time and energy with the fast reaction time and flexibility that small business alone can muster.

Here on College Avenue, we have seen some retail stores close due to slower sales and lack of access to credit, but fortunately, many of the apparently vacant stores on the Avenue are, in fact, under contract and pursuing permits and other requirements to open. It's a good thing, because, as Oakland is experiencing extreme budget difficulties, College Avenue is still a leading source of revenue, as it has been for the past many decades. It is the little engine that could.

All of which begs the question, why has the Rockridge District Association (RDA) chosen this time to pursue a path that would take control of the College Avenue business district out of the hands of local merchants and put it into the hands of large property owners, a path that would increase fees to our merchants? When contacted, a number of merchants were quite clear that a sizable increase of their current fees would be unsustainable.

With a bad economy and the impact of the City's disastrous parking fee changes, this is not the time to add to the merchants' burden.

See "College Avenue Tug-of-War" on page 4 for further examination of this matter.

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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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Contact the Board: chair@rockridge.org
For information: info@rockridge.org

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- Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in ***The Rockridge News***?
- Do you have questions about newsletter distribution?
- Want to volunteer to be a ***Rockridge News*** block captain?
- Would you like to write a letter to the Editor?

Contact us at one of the following:
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The Rockridge News, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618
RCPC Voicemail: 510/869-4200

Articles submitted for publication may be e-mailed to the above address. Submissions are limited to 600 words; must include the author's name, phone number, e-mail address, and city or neighborhood of residence; and are subject to editing. To reprint a *Rockridge News* article, please contact the editor.

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING/DEADLINES
Publication date of the next issue is
☛ November 7, 2009
☛ November deadline is October 22, 2009.
Advertising rates are $26/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. (Classified ad contact, page 14.)*

The Zoning Counter

The Zoning Counter is a compilation of recent applications filed with the Oakland Planning Department. Individuals may contact the case planner or the Planning Department for additional information by phone or online at www.oaklandnet.com.

5464 College Avenue

Proposal: To construct a 329 sq. ft. second-story addition to an existing commercial structure at the rear of the property containing two existing commercial structures, and to legalize an existing 120 sq. ft. addition at the ground level of the same structure. Total square feet of additions = 449. (NOTE: This application constitutes substantial changes from the one that was noticed for the same property in April, 2009, under Case # DR09073.)

Applicant (Contact): Jeff Doney

Phone Number: 415/999-8658

Planning Permits Required: Regular Design Review for additions to an existing structure; Minor Conditional Use Permit to legalize the expansion of commercial space at the ground level in the C-31 Zone.

Historic Status: Potential Designated Historic Property; Survey Rating: C2+

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

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RCPC Land Use Committee

The RCPC Land Use Committee meeting schedule for the remainder of 2009 is: Oct. 21, Nov. 24, and Dec. 23, all at 7:30pm at the Rockridge Branch Library.

Rockridge Shopping Center Rebuild (Broadway and Pleasant Valley)

by Stuart Flashman,
RCPC Land Use Committee chair

According to the City's case planner for this major project, Darin Ranelletti (238-3663, dranelletti@oaklandnet.com), Safeway, following the scathing comments at the project's July hearing before the Planning Commission, will be doing major revisions to its project plans. Nonetheless, work on the environmental impact report (EIR) for the project is proceeding. The likelihood is that any revised project proposal will show up as one of the project alternatives in the EIR. Given the size of the project, preparation of the draft EIR could take a while. A release date of sometime in early spring would seem a good likelihood, but is far from certain. Watch this space, and www.rockridge.org, for updates.

■ College Avenue Safeway Rebuild (6310 College Avenue at Claremont Avenue)

The environmental consultant group working on this project is apparently almost finished with their initial study of environmental effects. Once that's completed, the City will make a decision about whether an EIR is needed. While the City has not yet committed to preparation of an EIR, the site's size and prominent location, and the already-congested traffic situation along College Avenue make it extremely likely that one will be required. Check with RCPC's Web site at www.rockridge.org for the latest updates. The City's case planner is Peterson Vollman (238-6167, pvollman@oaklandnet.com).

■ College Preparatory School Facilities Master Plan (6100 Broadway)

City staff has approved modifications to the use permit for College Preparatory School to accommodate the school's capital improvements master plan. The plans include a new performing arts center and several new classroom buildings. Plans were modified and conditions added to address concerns brought forward by the school's neighbors. The letter approving the modified use permit will be posted on the rockridge.org Web site. The City's case planner is Leigh McCullen (238-4977, lmccullen@oaklandnet.com).

■ Citywide Zoning Update

Work on a new zoning ordinance continues to move forward. City staff has completed designing a new, simpler set of citywide zoning categories. College Avenue and Broadway (along with other similar areas like Piedmont Avenue and Montclair Village) will be in a new zoning category: CN-1, but the regulations for the new zone will be very close to, but perhaps slightly more stringent than, the existing C-31 zoning rules. Residential zoning for Rockridge will also be largely unchanged, since the general plan designates the area as a "maintain and enhance" area. The next commercial corridor technical advisory group meeting is now set for Monday, October 5, from 6–8 p.m. in hearing room 2 at City Hall, 1 Frank Ogawa Plaza. At that hearing, staff will preview the proposed citywide zoning map and discuss ideas for defining height limits in the new zoning ordinance. Please check the city Web site at www.oaklandnet.com/zoningupdate for further details.

Land Use Committee Vacancies

The RCPC Land Use Committee currently has space for a couple of additional members. The committee meets one evening a month, reviews zoning changes and land use applications for the Rockridge area, and makes recommendations to the RCPC Board of Directors. If you're interested, especially if you have some background in land use and/or urban design, your application would be welcome. Please send a short (200 word) summary of your background and statement of interest in the committee. Letters can be sent by e-mail to chair@rockridge.org or by U.S. Postal service to the RCPC mailbox (*The Rockridge News*, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618). Applications will be considered in the order received.

Land Use Meeting Agendas

Contact Stu Flashman at 652-5373 or chair@rockridge.org for a copy of the current Land Use Committee meeting agenda.

College Avenue Tug-of-War

by Annette R. Floystrup, RCPC board member

Many College Avenue merchants were surprised to learn that the board of directors of the Rockridge District Association (RDA) reactivated the attempt to dissolve the existing Business Improvement District (BID), an entity controlled by merchants, and replace it with a new Community Benefits District (CBD), an entity financially controlled by large land owners. Business owners and public opinion stalled the initial effort in 2007 as reported in the Rockridge News, October 2007. A coalition of small property owners stopped the effort at the August 11, 2009, CBD Steering Committee meeting, but the September 2009 RDA Board minutes indicate that the "pursuit for the CBD may continue."

Opposition coalition

A group of small parcel owners on College Avenue sent out a survey with information about the proposed CBD to all the affected property owners and received a 42 percent survey return rate in just two weeks. The responses represented 56 of the 139 parcels within the proposed boundaries. All responses were strongly and unanimously negative to formation of a CBD. The coalition of small parcel owners was joined in opposition to the CBD by Safeway. A representative group of property owners came to the August 11 CBD Steering Committee meeting at the Market Hall offices, and after hearing a bit about the CBD, forced a vote on whether to proceed with its formation. Representatives from Dreyer's Corporation (Nestlé SA) cast the lone vote to go forward, and the nays carried the day 12-1.

Money in the bank

The RDA, with an approximate annual income of $140,000, has an administration contract for $50,000 with their primary consultant, Marco Li Mandri, and his firm, New City America. Of the remaining funds, there are large unspent balances carried forward from previous years. In the current budget year, the surplus is $41,000, equivalent to 29% of merchant assessment fees from 2008-2009. The Lakeshore/Lake Park Business Improvement Management District, with an almost identical income of $140,230.00, had a surplus of just $913.74, or less than 1% in their 2008-2009 budget.

"In addition to local merchants, almost 200 residential rental units are also included in the proposed CBD boundaries."

Budget documents prepared by RDA Treasurer Hank Levy (Henry C. Levy & Co.) for the May 7 RDA Board Meeting, show a balance of $128,381 as of April 30. In an interview following the August 11 CBD steering committee meeting, Levy confirmed that the RDA had an approximate current balance of $100,000. One merchant benefit which could be funded and which has been discussed is tree trimming (a service that the City has put on a highly delayed schedule) so that merchant signage would be visible. Minutes from the September 2009 RDA board meeting show that the issue was raised with a price tag of $25,000, but no action was taken.

Where does the money go?

The current annual income of the RDA through BID assessments is about $140,000. At the August 11 CBD steering committee meeting, documents provided by Li Mandri proposed a new CBD budget of $317,113. Most of that increase, $82,368, would go to fund two private security guards called "ambassadors" to patrol the street six hours a day, six days a week, 52 weeks a year. An additional $80,000 is budgeted for maintenance personnel, supplies and equipment.

The projected CBD assessment income could mean a doubling of fees to most merchants, because commercial leases have pass-through clauses. This means assessments on land owners will be passed through to their merchant tenants, something that might well be problematic for many in today's economic climate. Currently, merchants pay annual BID fees between $120 and $2500 based on gross receipts. Second floor businesses, such as therapists, pay a flat fee of $60 per year.

In addition to local merchants, almost 200 residential rental units are included in the proposed CBD boundaries. CBDs make no exemptions for residential properties or nonprofits like churches, and assessment fees could be passed on in the form of higher rents. This is legal, according to Steve Edrington, Executive Director, Rental Housing Association of Northern Alameda County, even under Oakland's current rent control laws, because the assessment fees appear on property tax bills.

"The projected CBD assessment income could mean a doubling of fees to most merchants."

The Rockridge RDA BID renewal will be discussed at the October 27 CED Committee meeting. Location: City Hall, Hearing Room 1. Time: 2pm. Please check www.rockridge.org for updated information closer to that date for possible changes. Interested parties are encouraged to comment in person or by email to members of the CED committeee.

This is the first of a short series of articles exploring the role of CBDs and BIDs among Oakland merchants.

NCPC Election Results:

Chris Jackson, *Chairman*

Frank Castro, *Vice Chair*

Denise Boisvert-Jorgensen, *Treasurer*

Karen Ivy, *Secretary and Information Officer*

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RCPC Continues to Monitor BART Construction Noise

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC chair

The seismic retrofit construction work at and around the Rockridge BART station continues to advance. The work in the west-of-College Avenue parking lot and sidewalk areas is now complete, and work is extending through the east-of-College Avenue area and onto Patton Street. RCPC continues to monitor construction noise and lighting for compliance with BART's own standards.

At the start of the project, the contractor had used only canvas sheets as noise barriers. Thus, College Avenue pedestrians had been exposed to noise levels as high as 90 dBA (about the noise level of a motorcycle gunning its engine). After RCPC complained to BART, the contractor added wooden temporary noise barriers in the construction areas and noise levels dropped considerably. At this point, RCPC's observations indicate that noise levels are mostly complying with BART noise standards, but with sporadic violations. With Claremont Middle School back in session, RCPC is particularly concerned about the potential for the construction noise to disrupt classes and school activities.

The construction work will also be moving into residential areas both east and west of the BART station, where noise sensitivity is likely to be greater. If you feel that the noise levels are becoming excessive near you, you can call the BART complaint hotline at 874-7425. You should also let RCPC know, either by e-mail at chair@rockridge.org, or by phone at 869-4200. More detailed construction information is available on the BART Web site: www.bart.gov/earthquakesafety and on the RCPC Web site at www.rockridge.org.

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Kitchen Tour

from page 1

enjoying pleasant shade in the Japanese-inspired garden on Taft Avenue.

Tour attendance and fundraising goals were met A portion of the proceeds of the 2009 Rockridge Kitchen Tour will benefit Claremont Middle School, located in the heart of Rockridge. The balance of the proceeds will provide the two-year operating budget for the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation which represents the Rockridge community in matters of land use and project planning, parks and open spaces, schools, pedestrian safety and traffic.



Photos: Don Kinkead

Elegantly integrating the outdoors was the objective in many of the remodels.

RCPC thanks all those who made this event possible:

Tour co-chairs: Susan Montauk and Jennifer Edmister

Homeowners: John Beintum & Patrick O'Connell, Clarice & John Cummins, Kelly Cushner & Jeff McCarthy, Christopher Doane & Neal Shorstein, Hilary Fox & Matt Jacobs, Maxi Lilley & Eric Faurot, Jill Martensen & Mike McDonald, Brenda Twehues & Matt Boudreau, Sally West & Peter Compton

Planners: Maureen Alano, Jo Ellis, Marcia Hofer, Don Kinkead, Meredith Kaplan, Barbara Montauk, Nancy Sale, Susan Shawl, Dodie Shoemaker, and the RCPC board of directors

Tour Docents: Ann Alderman, Angela Chan, Jane Chan, Karen Cilman, Bonnie Clare, Lynn Crosby, Sherry Davis, Ann Del Simone, Ben Dhong, Linda Eby, Jon Eldan, Sue Emmons, Kristine Fowler, Bill Garcia, Kathy Garcia, John Gomes, Suzanne Grishman, Lyn Hikida, Gigi Hua, Susan Huppert, Diane Jacobson, Sari Kulberg, Sally Lappen, Melly Levy, Barbara Littwin, Dee Dee Lozier, Stephanie Masquelier, Diane Mayo, Nora Mitchell, Judith Paquette, Jennie Schact, Lisa Schiffer, Cathy Schwabe, Lisa Spearman, Debbie Stanford, Mike Taylor, Stephanie Upp, Candy Vernetti, Robin Washington, Judy Weiss, Anne Williams, David Williams, Dean Wolf, Suzanne Wolf

Margarido House Reception: B Restaurant & Bar, New Belgium Brewing, Frey Vineyards, HALL Winery

Photography: Kenneth Rice Photography

Poster Underwriting: Ron Kriss /Lawton Associates

Ticket Sales: Maison d'Etre/Fred Womack

Tour Refreshments: Great Harvest Bread Co.

Tour Ice: Eddie's Liquors

Shades of Green

by Annette R. Floystrup, RCPC board member

Two men with visions of a greener, more sustainable future have made their mark right here in Rockridge. At the September RCPC Town Hall meeting titled "Battle of the Greens," Michael McDonald, of McDonald Construction, and David Gottfried, founder of the U.S. Green Building Council, spoke with passion about their success and obsession with creating LEED Platinum certified homes for their families.

While their green vision is the same, the path to LEED Platinum led McDonald to design and construct a 4,700 sq. ft. home in the Oakland Hills burn zone, and Gottlieb to renovate a 1917 Craftsman bungalow just off College Avenue. The two homes achieved LEED point ratings within 0.5 of each other, with Gottlieb's having the overall edge due to its walkable location and small size.

Gottlieb was quick to point out that he had done all possible retrofits – and then some – in part due to a personal desire to test the various products and systems, and in part due to a self-admitted "green geekiness" factor. Among other things, he incorporated new windows, special insulation blown into the walls, under floor and attic insulation, grey water and rain water reclamation systems, a solar water heating system, solar photovoltaics that account for almost all his electrical needs, and employed green materials in the renovation. He has a wonderful Web site about the home, detailing all the products and green features at www.gottfriedhome.com/.

McDonald pulled together a team of local contractors and fabricators who used green materials and methods to build a large house without the environmental and visual impacts of a house its size. He started by carving down into the hillside and using the earth to insulate a substantial portion of the downstairs, and by doing so built a house that, in spite of its size, complied with view ordinances and zoning. The house itself is oriented to take advantage of natural light and passive solar for heating. It also boasts solar photovoltaics that cover almost all the electrical needs of the house. Sustainable materials were used throughout, and a particularly beautiful feature of the home is its rainwater catchment system – a drought-tolerant roof garden. McDonald has a comprehensive Web site featuring product and vendor lists, as well as many wonderful photos at www.margaridohouse.com.



Photo: Don Kinkead

Arm wrestling green builders spoke at the Sept Town Hall meeting. On left, builder Mike McDonald (Margarido House), right is Green Building Council founder David Gottfried, center is NPR reporter and moderator Lonny Shavelson. (McDonald and Gottfried are both Rockridge residents, Shavelson lives in Berkeley.)

Easy green: low hanging fruit

Both McDonald and Gottfried spoke to the real importance of the "low hanging fruit" of the green building movement. They agreed that the single greenest thing you can do in your home is replace your incandescent lightbulbs with compact fluorescents or LEDs. Most LED lighting is completely nontoxic as opposed to compact fluorescents which must be properly recycled due to the presence of small amounts of mercury. Additional inexpensive green upgrades include using Lo-Voc or No-Voc paints and the installation of water flow restrictors from EBMUD. When possible, replacing a 5-7 gallon flush toilet with a dual flush water saving toilet saves thousands of gallons of water a year. The new State law regulating grey water systems puts simple systems within financial reach, reducing the costs from thousands to as little as $200.

Questions from the floor centered around practical applications of green to both new construction and retrofits. McDonald emphasized that proper design *is* green and takes into account solar orientation and natural light – considerations that cost nothing when done at the design stage. Both men agreed that green was not an architectural style, and that any house style can be made greener. Certainly – the contrast between their two homes, a Craftsman bungalow and a newly built contemporary – could not be greater, and yet both are exceptionally green.

Gottfried closed by stating that the greenest thing about his house is its location in a walkable neighborhood. Rockridge is rated one of the most pedestrian-friendly areas in America as rated by Walkscore.com. Plug in your address and see how you rate.

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JOIN THE ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARADE!



Continuing our neighborhood's great, ghoulish tradition, the Rockridge District Association (RDA) and the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) invite you to celebrate Halloween on College Avenue! From noon to 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 31, participating merchants will host trick-or-treating along both sides of College Avenue, from Alcatraz to Broadway.

Meet in front of the College Avenue Presbyterian Church, 5951 College Avenue, at 11:45 a.m. At precisely noon, we'll kick off trick-or-treating, leading the first group along the Avenue. Then, at 1 p.m., we'll return for spooky storytelling and silly, scary sing-alongs.

Update

from page 1

schools, communications, transportation, parks, or public safety) and attend the monthly RCPC Town Hall meetings. Interested? Send an e-mail to chair@rockridge.org. You can also leave a voicemail message at 869-4200 or send a letter to the RCPC mail address (listed on page 2). The board expects to fill the remaining seat at its November meeting.

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Rockridge Sales Still Hot in September

Closing Date	BR/Bth	Address	Original Price	DOM	LP	SP
9/16/2009	2/2	411 Avon Street	$625,000	13	$625,000	$675,000
9/4/2009	2/1.5	424 Cavour Street	$650,000	36	$650,000	$575,000
9/3/2009	2/2	5260 James Avenue	$689,000	12	$689,000	$725,000
9/22/2009	2/1	5834 Birch Court	$699,000	18	$699,000	$761,500
8/28/2009	3/1	5470 Manila Avenue	$779,000	45	$729,000	$729,000
9/18/2009	3/2	5308 Bryant Avenue	$799,000	29	$749,000	$739,000
9/8/2009	4/1.5	353 Alcatraz Avenue	$799,000	17	$799,000	$812,025

• Over half the properties Listed in Rockridge, Sold for OVER the asking price this September, compared to only 33% last year. • The average List to Sell price was 99% in September of last year as well as September of this year. • September of '08 yielded less closings in Rockridge than September of '09. • Virtually the same market time in Rockridge now as in 2008. • There is currently a 1.3 month supply of inventory in Rockridge.

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Rockridge Cornucopia

Barry A. Kaufman

The Times They Are A-Changin'

Recently, the New York Times ran an article by Kim Severson titled "The Fickle Palate." In the piece, Kim traces recent dinner party fads and trends. She equates dinner party trends with hemlines; a way to measure who we were back then.

Each year, I attend the Fancy Food Show in San Francisco. At the trade show, gourmet food vendors show off their latest wares to attract new consumers. Last year it was salami and dry-cured Italian meats. The year before, it was row upon row of tea, and before that, visitors were inundated with salts of all kinds. My prediction for this year's event will be organ meats, particularly pig parts.

When I married some 44 years ago, a gift we received was a copy of Mary and Vincent Price's *A Treasury of Great Recipes*. The cookbook was a beautiful leather-bound collection of famous specialties of the world's foremost restaurants. The book contained actual copies of the restaurants' menus and lavish photographs. Check these prices at New York's Sardi's in 1966: shrimp cocktail, $1.50; escarole salad, $.75; roast prime rib, $4.85. As newlyweds, we started our culinary adventures with Mary and Vincent Price as our guide. We served Quiche Lorraine, fondue, clams marinara, and a standby still in our repertoire, French chocolate ice cream.

We left New York in 1969 to attend graduate school and lived a hippie lifestyle in rural Western Massachusetts. Out with Vincent and Mary and in with Mollie Katzen's *Moosewood Cookbook* and *The Enchanted Broccoli Forest*. The recipes and drawings were hand-done by Mollie. Our shopping list now included tamari soy sauce, tahini, tofu, bean sprouts, grains and legumes, and a wide range of herbs and spices. We made our own yogurt, breads and granola from Mollie's books. One year we brought our bread and granola with homemade sand candles as holiday gifts to New York families. I will never forget the looks on their faces when they opened their gift packages!

When we left New York, we also left our prime-time culinary delight – Chinese food. I was determined to learn how to cook and serve Chinese food. I purchased Gloria Bly Miller's *The Thousand Recipe Chinese Cookbook*. In those years, you couldn't find ginger, let alone some of the most basic Asian ingredients, in the local Amherst supermarket. I didn't even have a wok. So, I made a trip to New York City's Chinatown to stock up on the staples and buy my first wok and cleaver.

Over the years, we cooked our way through Gloria's cookbook. I will never forget when we tried to make moo shoo pork pancake wrappers. The pancakes are always cooked in pairs because they are too fragile to be cooked alone. Have you ever tried to separate hot paper-thin moo shoo pork pancakes? You need to have asbestos fingers and you're lucky to get 4-6 whole pancakes.

Our most famous meal for entertaining during these years was the Chinese Mongolian hot pot. In one of my Chinatown runs, I bought a firepot and other necessary accoutrements. The basic technique is simple: a large pot of simmering stock, a variety of thinly sliced meat, seafood, chicken and vegetables with an assortment of dipping sauces. Diners pick up one piece of food at a time and dip it in the stock just long enough to cook it through. Your guest then dips into the sauce of their choice and eats it with a bit of rice. The firepot is the perfect winter entertaining meal. It proceeds at a leisurely pace in a festive atmosphere and can last from two to three hours. And of course, in those communal years, who could forget the great potluck dinners?

Moving to the Bay Area in the early '80s, we were swept up into the California food revolution. Entertaining became a more formal affair with an emphasis on the foods of the Mediterranean, Mexico, and Southeast Asia. We also tended to serve dishes from countries where we had recently traveled. We went through our Vietnamese and Thai phase, Moroccan tagines with preserved lemons, and recently, Turkish cuisine.

We also still enjoy traditional American food. For Labor Day, I slow-smoked a Southern-style brisket for over five hours. Our guests enjoyed the barbeque with cole slaw, potato salad and corn bread – pretty basic but so good.

This month's recipe is from the Vincent Price cookbook. It is a constant standby in our entertaining menu. It is easy to prepare and will delight your guests.

Barry Kaufman is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. Barry is available for private cooking classes. Email: kaufman42@earthlink.net.

French Chocolate Ice Cream

(1 quart)



1/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup water
6 oz, semisweet chocolate chips
3 egg yolks
1-1/2 cups heavy cream, whipped to stiff peaks

1. In a small saucepan combine sugar and water. Bring to boil, boil rapidly for 3 minutes.
2. Into a blender put in chocolate. Add the hot syrup and blend on high speed for 20 seconds, or until chocolate is smooth.
3. Add egg yolks. Blend for 10 seconds.
4. Fold chocolate mixture into the whipped cream until fully blended. Spoon mixture into a bowl, cover with waxed paper, and freeze for 2-3 hours. This needs no stirring and will not form ice crystals.

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Chabot Elementary Fall Carnival—Sunday, October 25, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Petting Zoo, Kids' Costume Contest, Games, Food, Music, and More

The Chabot Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) will host the school's annual Fall Carnival on Sunday, October 25, from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. Because the Chabot campus is under renovation, this year's Carnival will be held at Claremont Middle School, 5750 College Avenue, across the street from the Rockridge BART station.

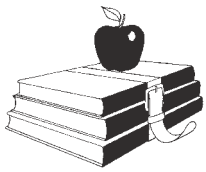
Entrance to the Chabot Fall Carnival is free, with modest prices for delicious food, games and activities for all ages. The Carnival includes booths sponsored by every classroom at Chabot. There will be activities and contests, a jumbo jumpie, basketball hoops contest, wonderful homemade food and cold beverages. We'll even have a Petting Zoo, Kids' Halloween Costume Contest, Dog Costume Contest, and a visit from our fire department!

The Chabot fall carnival is a major community event each year. The day's fun provides important financial support for Chabot's music, art, garden, and computer programs; maintains the school's library; and contributes to new playground equipment and improvements for Chabot. We invite everyone to bring their family and enjoy this beloved Rockridge tradition!

More details about the Fall Carnival are available at www.chabotelementary.org.

Chabot Hosts Board of Education Meeting

The Rockridge community is invited to attend the Board of Education meeting at Chabot School, 6686 Chabot Road, in the new multi-purpose room on Wednesday, October 28, starting at 5 pm.



Claremont Middle School Needs Office Supplies

Claremont Middle School urgently needs white copy paper and manila folders (9x12 standard size). If you are able to make a donation, please drop it off at Assistant Principal Taylor's office. If after hours, you can drop it off at Julia Marquez's house at 5433 Shafter Avenue (leave on the front porch).

Learn more:
Claremont Middle School:
www.claremontms.org/Claremontms/index.html
Chabot School:
www.chabotelementary.org/

Claremont Middle School Needs Volunteers:

Barcoding and Distributing Text Books

If you have some time during the school day, CMS urgently needs help bar-coding and distributing text books to the students. Even an hour would be most helpful. Please report to the office and ask for Mr. Taylor.

Distributing Sports Equipment at Lunchtime

The school has basketballs, hoola hoops, tennis rackets, jump ropes and more but needs volunteers to help check out the equipment and ensure its return at the end of the lunch period. Lunch is from 11:45 to 12:30, Monday through Thursday. Please contact Julia Marquez, 6th grade parent and PTA Sports Equipment Coordinator, at marquezjds@sbcglobal.net if you're interested in volunteering, once a week, once a month, or even occasionally.

Claremont Auction—October 24

Rockridge's local Oakland public middle school and Rockridge neighbor, is holding its third annual auction.

Date: October 24 at 6 p.m.
Location: Thelma Harris Gallery, 5940 College Avenue
Tickets: $10; $15 at the door (This is an adults-only event.)

We predict a frightfully good evening as we make every effort to "Scare up Some Change." Sip, socialize, and SPEND! We will have delicious fare donated from Oakland's Champa Garden, and a no-host bar whose proceeds support our programs and the 7th grade YMCA trip!

Are you a butcher? A Baker? Do you have a get-away? Consider hosting a dinner for eight at your house. We will take that vintage bottle of wine off your hands!

Gift certificates from your favorite restaurants are always popular, and you help our local businesses, too.

Last year, the hope was to bump up Claremont's API scores by 9 points. We bashed it out of the park and scores went up an amazing 91 points!

Could it be because of our dedicated teachers and staff, our state of the art media lab, library, and music programs?

All of which are supported by the Claremont PTA. And YOU!

Want to help? Please join Claremont's insanely fun auction team.

Contact Fundraising Co-Chairs:
Bonnie Trinclisti Brekke, 547-2313
Amy Vaughan Brekke, 658-4056

Please send your donations and checks to:
The Claremont PTA Auction
5750 College Ave
Oakland, CA 94618
879-2010




Photo: Don Kinkead

The Neighborhood Merchant

by Theresa Nelson

Neighborhood History: Rockridge Merchants —the Last 10 Years

The late 1990s and early part of this decade saw an explosion of new stores and businesses in Rockridge. This is the second in a series of three articles about the extraordinary diversity of merchants in the Rockridge neighborhood. All of the stores listed in this article have opened on College Avenue since 1989, and many are celebrating their five-year anniversaries.

Next month, the final article in this series will showcase the most long-term Rockridge businesses (pre-1984), and reveal the name of the Rockridge business open the longest on College Avenue.

If you see some unfamiliar names on this list, take a stroll during the warm fall weather and stop in to say hello. And for the stores you already patronize, if they have an anniversary, take a moment to congratulate them.

Since 1989:
My Own Montessori

Since 1994:
DecoArt Faux Finishes by Caroline Stern

Since 1998:
High Strung

Since 2000–2003:
À Côté (2001)
Abby Photo (2001)
California Municipal Statistics (2001)
CHIC Clothing (2003)
Child's Play (2001)
Christopher's Burgers (2002)
Conga Lounge (2003)
Cool Tops Cuts for Kids (2002)
FIT Clothing (2002)
Heartware (2002)
New Style Motherlode Studio (2001)
Market Hall Bakery (2001)
Namaste Yoga in Rockridge (2003)
redhound (2002)
Rockridge Two Wheels (2002)
See Jane Run (2000)
Serrahna (2002)
UPS Store (2003)
Vero (2002)

Since 2004:
Berkeley Kids' Room (2004)
Blick Art Materials (2004)
Hapuku Fish Market (2004)
Khana Peena Indian Cuisine (2004)
Lulu Rae Confections (2004)
Mitama Japanese Restaurant (2004)
SaHaira (2004)
Siamese Dream (2004)

Since 2005–2008:
Atomic Garden (2007)
Bisou Nail Lounge (2007)
Bittersweet Chocolate Café (2005)
The Brow Lounge (2008)
Cartridge World (2005)
Crush on College (2007)
Elizabeth H Hair Design (2008)
FedEx Kinko's (2008)
Flavors of India 9 (2007)
Hipline Dance (2008)
I2 Iranian & Italian Cuisine (2008)
i-elle (2006, but is closing now)
Inamorata (2007)
Iniam (2005)
Lucero Salon (2005)
Marilyn Jaeger Skincare Studio (2008)
The Nail Spa (2007)
Noodle Theory (2007)
Pharmaca (2007)
Phoenix Optical (2005)
Pretty Penny (2007)
Recapture Vintage Bridal (2006)
Rikyu Japanese Cuisine (2008)
Shuz of Rockridge (2006)
Somerset (2007)
Synergy (2008)
Tara's Organic Ice Cream (2008)
Takara Sushi (2008)
Tootsies 9 (2005)
Trader Joe's (2006)
Viva Diva (2005)
Water Lounge and Raw Bar (2008)
Who's Your Betty? (2006)
Wood Tavern (2007)

And new in 2009:
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Fiddlesticks
Currilicious
Restaurant Chu

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5501 College Avenue

Dapper for Men
5332 College Avenue

Galvin's Workspace Furniture
5933 College Avenue

Habit
5467 College Avenue

Milk
5833 College Avenue

Vie Vie Boutique
5831 College Avenue

Please note: if your store or business is not listed in this article or last month's article (for stores which opened in the last 25 years), please email merchant@rockridge.org with your year of opening on College Avenue, and we'll include you in the next article. Here are the businesses for which I'm still seeking the opening date:

76 Service Station at Broadway & Broadway Terrace; 77 Salon; Ag Photo; Alta Bates Showcase; Ascribe; Bambino Thrift Shop; Bank of America at College and Claremont; Bay Functional Fitness; Becky's Chinese; Bellissimo Salon; Better Homes Realty; Bing's Salon; Body Options; Caldecott Properties; Center for Holistic Health; Claremont Day Nursery; Claremont Veterinary Hospital; Cloud Nine; College Point Café; Cotton Basics; Crossroads Trading Company; Dryclean Club of America; Elegant Nail; Extreme Pizza; First Federal Savings; Galaxy Nails; Germany's Best Auto Service; The Good, the Bad and the Ugly Antiques; Hello Gorgeous; The Hut; J. Salon; Kingfish Pub; Mail Box Rentals; Marica Seafood; Massage Therapy Center; McGuire Real Estate; Mr. John's Dog Grooming; Milagro Salon; Moda Arellano Salon; Next Eyewear; Omni Painting; Pearl of Siam; Ponzo Salon; Powerform Personal Training; Red Hanger Kleaners; Right Angle Salon; Rockridge Cleaners; Rockridge Clinic East-West Healing Center; Sabuy Sabuy Thai Cuisine; Shell Station at College and Claremont; Shine Laundromat; Skincare Salon; Soi 4 Bangkok Eatery; Sports & Orthopedic Leaders SOL; Supercuts; Tarot Card Reading; Uzen Japanese Cuisine; White Rose Skincare

Correction

Athena Fischer was the photographer for the September issue of The Rockridge News item "Where in the World?"

We regret the omission.

Postal Service is cutting back on neighborhood mail boxes. Still, there are some around. How to find them?

Here's a useful Web site that will list and map the locations of all USPS blue mailboxes within a given zip code (e.g., 94618):

www.payphone-project.com/mailboxes





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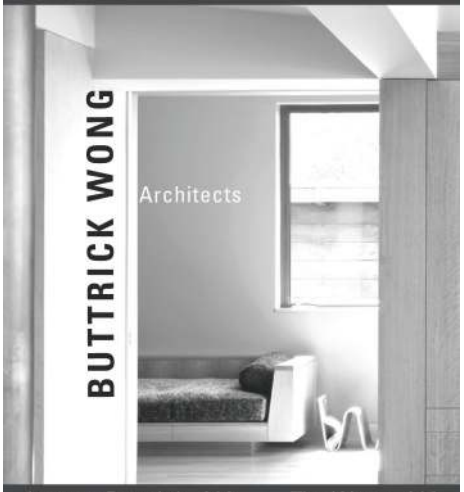


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Rockridge Neighborhood Wins Ice Cream for Block Party

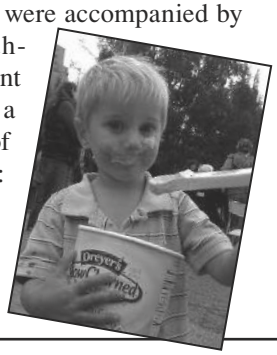
There's a lot of truth to the stereotype of the starving poet. But poetry recently fed a whole Rockridge neighborhood – by winning more than 15 quarts of free Dreyer's ice cream for a block party.

Nearly 100 neighbors on Thomas Avenue enjoyed free ice cream at their annual block party on Sunday, September 13 after resident Ilana DeBare submitted a winning poem in a nationwide contest sponsored by Oakland-based Dreyer's.

People from around the country submitted essays to the Dreyer's contest, explaining why their neighborhood deserved an ice cream block party. DeBare made her case through verse, noting that "Toddlers and seniors could share the treat of an ice cream social on our street."

In a happy coincidence, the block party coincided with the 97th birthday of Thomas Avenue resident Ernest "Bick" Bicknell, a longtime Quaker activist for peace and social justice.

So the 15 quarts of Dreyer's Slow-Churned ice cream were accompanied by a homemade birthday cake by resident Cheryl Aguilar, and a streetwide chorus of another set of verses: "Happy birthday, dear Bick."



Block Captain Needed for The Rockridge News

Do you have 20 minutes to spare each month to dedicate to your community? Here's a delivery route that just became available:

#22B Block Captain: Delivers newsletters to odd numbers along Claremont Avenue between Forest Avenue and the freeway ramp to Highway 24

Please call 547-3855 or e-mail Susan at smontauk@gmail.com to volunteer.

Why Our Neighborhood Deserves an Ice Cream Party

(Poem by Ilana DeBare that won the Dreyer's Ice Cream contest)

Our neighborhood used to be quite sedate,
Retirees and young professionals who stayed at work late.
But five years ago, it changed its tune
Thomas Avenue had a baby boom!

Now our street has dozens of kids
With strollers, trikes and Play-doh lids.
Parents chat, a beer in hand;
Teens babysit or lend a hand.



Old and young, we all remember
To come out for a block party each September.
We've got an email list and Neighborhood Watch,
A Halloween party with games and such.

But something still seemed to be lacked –
Something sweet, and cold, and snacked.
Toddlers and seniors could share the treat
Of an ice cream social on our street.

We're barely a stone's throw away.
We pass your offices every day.
We visit Dreyer's on foot, bike or bus –
But wouldn't it be great if Dreyer's came to us?

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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.

Compiled by Jo Ellis

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Council President Brunner's Community Advisory Meeting

Saturday, Oct.10, 10am to noon. **Meet Oakland's new Police Chief Anthony Batts.**

Peralta Elementary School: 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz Ave., just east of Telegraph).

For more information, see The Brunner Report at www.oaklandnet.com or call 238-7001.

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.
- **Baby and Toddler Story Time:** 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 10:30am, upstairs.
- **Pajama Story Time and Crafts:** 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7pm.

Special Events:

- **MoChA Workshop:** Sat., 10/10, 2:30 to 4pm. Make fabulous art out of recycled materials—perhaps to contribute to the annual Trash to Treasures Competition and Art Show? All ages: children under 8 bring a grown-up.
- **Halloween Story Time:** Tues., 10/27, 7pm. For all ages. Not-too-scary. Come in your costume.
- **Halloween Crafts:** Sat., 10/31, 2 to 4pm. Make spooky items: a hairy spider, worms-in-dirt and trick-or-treat bags.

FOR TEENS:

- **Rockridge Ninjas (Anime Club):** Teens watch and talk about anime. Second Tues. each month (10/13), 5 to 6:30pm, upstairs. Info: Susy, 597-5017.

FOR ADULTS – Library sponsored events:

- **Writers' Support/Critique Group:** All writers welcome. Bring 15 copies of up to 5 double-spaced pages of any prose for on-site reading/discussion. Meets 3rd Saturday each month, 1 to 5pm. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch (www.berkeleywritersclub.org.) Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.
- **Lawyers in the Library: Free** legal advice. First Tuesday each month from 6 to 8pm. Advance sign-up starts 5pm. More info: 597-5017.

OTHER MEETINGS in the Library:

- **Greater Rockridge N'hood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC):** Residents and business members can voice their concerns about crime and public safety. 4th Thursday each month, 7- 8:30pm, upstairs meeting room. Info@rockridgencpc.com or infofordenise@yahoo.com.

ART EXHIBITS: (Call to confirm dates)

Gallery:

- Oct.: **Chris Jennings:** digital photography.
- Nov.: **Oak. Public Library Staff:** group art exhibit.

Lobby Display Case:

- Oct.: **John Baldwin:** finger puppets.
- Nov.: **Oak. Public Library Staff:** group art exhibit.

LIBRARY HOURS: Note: New Library closed dates
Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed., Thurs. and Sat. 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri., 12 to 5:30pm. **Closed Sundays and Mondays**
(Library branches are no longer open on Mondays).
Also closed Fri., 10/23 and Wed. 11/11.

Diesel Book Readings and Events

All events are FREE and open to the public.

- Tues., 10/6, 7pm. **Daniel Silberberg:** *Wonderland: The Zen of Alice*.
- Thurs., 10/08, 7pm. Local author and Mills College Professor **Cornelia Nixon's** publication party for *Jarrettsville*.
- Sun., 10/11, 3pm. **Poetry Flash** with **Alison Hawthorne** and **Ann Fisher-Wirth**.
- Mon., 10/12, 7pm. **Amnesty International Meeting:** All invited to exchange ideas on action.
- Sun., 10/18, 3pm. Local author **Taije Silverman:** poetry collection, *Houses are Fields*.
- Fri., 10/23, 7pm. Publication Party for former Diesel bookseller and local HS Eng. teacher **Nina LaCour:** *Hold Still*.
- Sun., 10/25, 3pm. Book Launch party for local author of books for younger readers **Marissa Moss:** *The Pharoah's Secret*.
- Tues., 10/27, 7pm. Pulitzer Prize-winner, **Michael Chabon:** *Manhood for Amateurs: The Pleasures and Regrets of a Husband, Father, and Son* (essays).
- Thurs., 10/29, 7pm. Local author **Alan Briskin:** *The Power of Collective Wisdom: And the Trap of Collective Folly*.
- Sun., 11/1, 3pm. Poetry readings: **C.S.Giscombe:** *Prairie Style* and *Charity Ketz: The Narcoleptic Yard*.
- Thurs., 11/5, 7pm. Local author/illustrator **Chris Lane:** *Zombies: A Record of the Year of Infection*. Original illustrations will be on display.
- Sun., 11/8, 3pm. **Poetry Flash** with **Marilyn Kallet** and **Susan Cohen**.
- Wed., 11/11, 7pm. Book Launch Party for local author **Anne I. Barrows:** *Our Charlotte* (poems).

DIESEL, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave. 653-9965 or www.dieselbookstore.com.

Cookbook Signing at the Pasta Shop

Meet **Jacqueline Mallorca** author of *Gluten-Free Italian*. Sample recipes and ingredients. Sat., 10/17, 1pm to 3pm. The Pasta Shop Rockridge Market Hall, 5655 College Ave., 250-6001.

Halloween Parade on College Ave.

Sat., 10/31, from noon to 2pm. For kids of all ages. Put on your costumes and **meet at 11:45am in front of the College Ave. Presb. Church, 5951 College Ave** to join the parade. Merchants will host trick-or-treating from Alcatraz Ave. to B'way. **See details in article p. 11.**

Chabot Elementary Fall Carnival

Petting Zoo, carnival booths, kid's costume contests, bring your dog for a dog's costume contest, games, food music and more. Sunday, 10/25, 11am to 3pm. Proceeds benefit school programs & improvements. **NOTE:** Because Chabot campus is under renovation, Carnival will be held at Claremont Middle School, 5750 College Ave. **See details in article p.12.** www.chabotelementary.org.

Claremont Middle School Auction

Bid on interesting items, eat and drink and help the PTA support media, library, music programs and more. Saturday, 11/24, 6pm. Tickets: $10 advance, $15 at the door, **(adults-only event)**. Thelma Harris Gallery, 5940 College Ave. **See details and contact info in article p.12.**

Wisteria Ways Concert Series

- **Bill Evans and Megan Lynch:** Acoustic, bluegrass, grime: sing and play old-timey and original fiddle and banjo music. Sun., 11/11, 3pm. Wheelchair accessible. Hear them at www.myspace.com/billevansandmeganlynch.
- **Boulder Acoustic Society:** New Wave American Roots: blues, folk gospel and world music. Sat., 10/31, 3pm. Outdoor concert: bring something to sit on (blanket or lawn chair), hat, a picnic.

$15-20 suggested donation for musicians (cash only at the door). 383 61st Street. For reservations (recommended), RSVP to info@WisteriaWays.org or 655-2771. See upcoming events at www.WisteriaWays.org.

Women's Antique Vocal Ensemble (WAVE) 10th Anniversary Concert

Includes medieval works from Spain England and France. Joined by players of early-music instruments. Sat., 10/10, 8pm. St. Albert's Priory Chapel, 6172 Chabot Road. $10 – 20. Tickets may be purchased at the door. Info: 233-1479, www.wavewomen.org or wavewomen@netzero.net.

Community Women's Orchestra 25th Anniversary Family Concert

Featuring **Hayden**, **Bonacich** and world premier of commissioned work by local composer **Martha Stoddard**. **Special "Instrument Zoo" for children:** talk to the musicians and experience the instruments of the orchestra first hand. Sun., 11/8, 4:30pm; **reception following concert**. $10 donation at door; **children free**. Lake Merritt United Methodist Church, 1330 Lakeshore Ave. Free parking. Info: www.communitywomensorchestra.org.

Christensen Heller Gallery

Robert Rickard: metal wall art. Work is carved into aluminum and coated with other metals like copper and bronze to achieve extraordinary colors. Show runs thru Nov.1st. Hrs: Wed – Sat, 11am to 6pm; Sun., noon to 5pm. 5829 College Ave. 655-5952; www.christensenheller.com.

North Oakland Senior Center

- **Flu shot clinic: Tues., 10/27, 9am to noon.** Bring Medicare card. $3.00 suggested donation.
- **Rummage Sale: Sat., 11/7, 9am to 3pm.** Clean out your clutter (no furniture) for Indoor fundraiser. $10 per table for members; $15 non-members.

Hrs: Mon. – Fri., 8:45am to 4:45pm. 5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Closed Fri, 10/23 for mandatory shutdown. More info; 597-5085



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