THE Rockridge News

VOL. 24 ■ NO. 10 ■ ISSUE NO. 261 ■ November 7, 2009 ■ CIRCULATION: 5,100 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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Rockridge Halloween Parade a Big Hit with Little Goblins

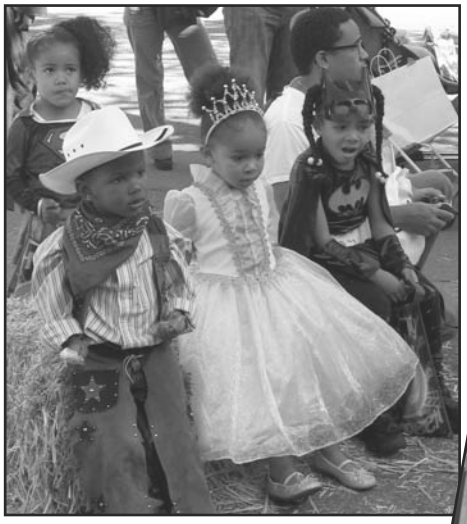
by Annette Floystrup, RCPC board member and Stuart Flashman, RCPC chair

The traditional Rockridge Halloween Parade, co-sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) and the Rockridge District Association (RDA), was a big hit with the many little ghosts, goblins, and other assorted trick-or-treaters along College Avenue. With Halloween falling on a Saturday this year, RCPC and RDA decided to have the parade on the-day-of, rather than the more usual Sunday event. The community readily adapted, with a large and enthusiastic turnout.



Among the highlights of the event (hard to pick out) was a whole family costumed as The Incredibles! – and Little Red Riding Hood with her dog costumed as The Wolf. Fun! Also in attendance were Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner and her aide, Maha

Halloween Parade, page 4





Cowboys, princesses, and superheroes joined other trick-or-treaters for Rockridge's ever popular Halloween Parade that included story telling, a visit from an ambulance crew and police officers, and music from the "guitar-playing hippie."

PHOTOS: ANNETTE FLOYSTRUP

MEETING NOTICE

Citywide Zoning Update

There will be a public workshop on proposed zoning changes:

Thursday, November 12
6 – 8 p.m.
Fruitvale-San Antonio Senior Center
3301 E. 12th Street
Suite 201

See Land Use Update on page 3 for more details.

BART Retrofit Update

by Bob Franklin, BART board member

BART is entering the last phase of its seismic upgrade contract for the Rockridge Station, retrofitting the columns in the east parking lot. This work is scheduled to last until January 2010.

Work also is beginning around the support columns by Chabot Elementary School that will take about a year to complete. Roads that cross underneath Highway 24 – Presley Way, Patton Street and Golden Gate Avenue – may be impacted in one direction.

Work will then move west of the BART station: the west parking lot, Locksley

BART Retrofit, page 13

RCPC Town Hall Meeting

AGENDA

November 2009

November 19, 2009, 7:30 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library
5366 College at Manila
Community Room (Upstairs)

Safeway Project to Move Forward

Safeway may be revising its plans for the Rockridge Shopping Center, but it appears ready to move forward with its 50,000 square foot store plus 11,000 square feet of small shops for the College Avenue Safeway store.

Come hear about those plans, the next steps in the City process, and how you can participate.

There will also be a short update on RCPC activities.

BREAKING NEWS –

Oakland will require an environmental impact report (EIR) for the College Avenue Safeway project. A Planning Commission EIR "scoping hearing" is set for Wednesday, November 18 at City Hall.

Local Architecture, History Brought to Life at Town Hall Meeting

by Annette Floystrup, RCPC board member and Stuart Flashman, RCPC chair

October's RCPC Town Hall meeting treated its attendees to a tour de force of Rockridge history and architecture. First, Rockridge's own Annalee Allen gave a brief history of Rockridge, starting with its years as a farming community, then the years following the San Francisco earthquake and fire when literally thousands of former San Francisco residents fled across the Bay and settled in Oakland. After that were the years where Rockridge continued to grow as a "streetcar suburb," part of the network of areas in the East Bay whose growth was spurred by the Key Line and Southern Pacific streetcars that brought workers to and from San Francisco, first by ferry and then by the Bay Bridge.

Local street and school names came to life as Ms. Allen told about local land owner Vicente Peralta, the youngest son of Don Luis Maria Peralta, recipient of a 44,800-acre Mexican land grant, and Anthony Chabot, the man who brought water to Rockridge by damming Temescal creek, in the process creating Lake Temescal.

Noted author Jane Powell followed with a lively presentation tracing the history of our local Craftsman architectural form, Rockridge's most popular and emblematic home style. Ms. Powell has written not just about bungalows, but about bungalow exteriors, interiors, kitchens, and even bathrooms. She explained the development of that peculiar architectural icon, starting with huts in Bangalore, India (hence, bungalow), their modification to a stylized form of housing in England, and then their spread across the country from California.

Craftsman bungalows are the only architectural form to originate on the West Coast and spread east. Nationally, they are commonly known as California bungalows. Ms. Powell noted that while a neighborhood of Pasadena on the National Historic Register has been dubbed "Bungalow Heaven," she feels that Rockridge has more and better bungalows in a cohesive neighborhood setting. She then went on to discuss, with a fascinating set of slides, various styles of bungalow and bungalow-related houses that can be found in Rockridge. Almost as much fun as Ms. Powell's comments was the reaction of audience members as they recognized houses they passed on a daily basis but hadn't fully appreciated as unique architectural treasures.

Labeled "the bad girl of bungalow writing," Jane Powell is a restoration consultant, house restorer, lecturer, and author of six books which are available at local bookstores and through her website www.bungalowkitchens.com. Annalee Allen writes a column for the Oakland Tribune and is the author of two books about Oakland.

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Friday: 12 – 5:30 p.m.
Sunday and Monday: **CLOSED**
Library program details: See Calendar, page 15.

The Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded in 1986 by Don Kinkead, is published monthly in Oakland and is sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (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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- Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in ***The Rockridge News***?
- Do you have questions about newsletter distribution?
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- Would you like to write a letter to the Editor?

Contact us at one of the following:
Editor: editor@rockridge.org
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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
☛ **December 5, 2009**
☛ **December deadline is November 19, 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.

5833 College Avenue

Proposal: To establish a new business offering eye exams and eyewear fitting and sales in an existing commercial space.

Contact Person (Owner): Peter Wilson, Wilson Associates

Phone Number: 510/654-0001

Planning Permits Required: Minor Conditional Use Permit for a new Medical Service Commercial Activity in the C-31 Zone

Historic Status: Potential Designated Historic Property; Survey rating: C3 (Secondary Importance, Not in a Historic District)

Case Planner: Holly Pearson at 510/238-3079 or hpearson@oaklandnet.com

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RCPC Land Use Committee

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

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman,
RCPC Land Use Committee chair

■ College Preparatory School Facilities Master Plan (6100 Broadway)

A group of neighbors on the streets surrounding the College Preparatory School have appealed the City's decision amending the school's use permit to increase enrollment and allow some additional buildings on the campus. Their main complaints are that the project should have required environmental review under CEQA and that the approved project is too large and intrusive. RCPC will be considering whether to take a position on the appeal. The City's case planner is Leigh McCullen (238-4977, lmccullen@oaklandnet.com).

■ Citywide Zoning Update

The City is holding two public workshops to explain the general thrust of proposed changes. While Rockridge itself will not be greatly affected, Rockridge residents may be interested and concerned about possible height increases along Telegraph Avenue and on Broadway below 51st Street. The November 7 workshop at Peralta Elementary School will have passed by now. However, a second workshop will be on Thursday, November 12 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Fruitvale-San Antonio Senior Center, 3301 E. 12th Street, Suite 201 (meeting room is on the 2nd floor) located in the Fruitvale Transit Village at the Fruitvale BART station. (Free parking is available in the BART lot.) Please check the city Web site at http://oaklandnet.com/zoningupdate for further details.

■ New Proposed Tenant in the Dreyers Building

While the space formerly occupied by Cotton & Co. has yet to be filled, there is a proposed tenant for the space formerly occupied by Galvins' Workspace Furniture. The new tenant would be Powell's Sweet Shoppe. As the name indicates, it's a candy store. This would be their second outlet; the first is located in Lafayette. The Land Use Committee reviewed this proposal, and has recommended that the Board not oppose the application. We're still waiting to hear what will happen to the important corner storefront, but with several new stores in the offing, things appear to be looking up for College Avenue retail.

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.

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Rockridge BID Renewal Postponed

by Annette R. Floystrup, RCPC board member

On October 27, the City Council's Community & Economic Development Committee (CEDC) took up renewal of the Rockridge Business Improvement District (BID) assessment. In a surprise move, city staffer Maria Rocha asked the CEDC to postpone the item after a number of College Avenue merchants and businesspeople had raised questions about the renewal. Because the item was removed at the last minute, speakers present were allowed to provide comments. The agenda item has been tentatively rescheduled for December 15, the next meeting of the CEDC. Public comment remains open until then.

The public hearing before the CEDC allows comment on whether to renew the assessment, and is also open for discussion of whether the BID's structure should be revised. Based on the hearing, the council can decide whether to renew the assessment, as well as consider whether to reorganize, renew or dissolve the BID.

Responding to a question from District 1 Councilperson Jane Brunner about the postponement, staff explained that the Rockridge District Association (RDA) had failed to provide the required legal notice for the council's public hearing on the item, then scheduled for November 17. The CEDC hearing was to approve placement of the item on that city council agenda. Responsibility for providing the notice (required before action on renewing the BID assessment), had been delegated by the City to RDA, the BID administrator. According to several merchants, notification has not occurred since 2006, although RDA's 2007 annual report to the City asserts that notice would be duly given.

With the postponement of action by the CEDC, the BID assessment for the coming year remains in limbo, although the council has never rejected or even revised a proposed assessment. On the other hand, the CEDC has never postponed action on recommending an assessment either. The Rockridge News will report on developments as they occur.

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

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Halloween Parade

from page 1

AbrahamAbraham passed out *How A Bill Becomes A Law: A Legislative Coloring Book*. AMR, the ambulance guys, gave tours of their ambulance and handed out toothbrushes, and the ambulance crew and officers from the Oakland Police Department gave out Halloween Safety tips.

Jennifer Vetter, formerly of the Friends of the Rockridge Library board, was an amazing storyteller, fascinating the kids with her stories and activities. This was her first year reading at the parade, but we hope it won't be her last. Jennifer is also a children's book author. Her book, *Down by the Station,* is available at Diesel and Pendragon. Former RCPC board member Mike Taylor reprised his role as the guitar-playing hippie on Frankenstein's back, and sang several sets beginning with a classic – The Monster Mash. He was a huge hit with parents and kids alike. Al Hussian, another former RCPC board member, did the honors with the PA system and wrangled hay bales into order for our stage seating.

RCPC thanks the many people and organizations that helped make the event happen. In addition to those already mentioned, long-time RCPC board member Annette Floystrup coordinated the event. Several other board members and former board members also helped out. Jennifer Edmister and her husband Todd, along with Mike McDonald and Jennifer Kaplan (of Rockridge Home) helped provide six hay bales that created a harvest atmosphere and places to sit. Katy Taylor and Andrew Charman helped out with setup and cleanup for the event, and Doug Patton, dressed in western garb, helped pass out trick-or treat-bags and candy.

Judging by the many appreciative comments from parents, this event remains one of the most popular things RCPC and RDA do for the community. We expect it will continue for years to come.



Letters to the Editor

The Rockridge News welcomes letters to the editor. Your name, address, phone number, 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.

Should Signs Be Allowed on the Sidewalk?

Editor:

I have found the increasing number of sandwich-board signs placed in the public sidewalk along College Avenue in the past few years to be a problem. They tend to clutter the visual space and impede normal travel, such as exiting cars or simply passing other pedestrians. Storefronts, restaurants and professional offices have been putting out these signs. Some establishments have multiple signs. It's legal, right? Actually, no. Specifically, Municipal Code section 17.104.00(J)(3)(a) states, "Signs shall not be placed in the public rights-of-way."

So why are so many signs on the sidewalk? Code Enforcement has been made aware of these signs on College since 2007, but has issued no penalties despite finding dozens of signs in violation. In January of this year, four locations were billed for violation, but in September there was no record of any billing. A September 24 letter from the City Attorney's office references the Director of Building Services (which oversees Code Enforcement) as stating that the violations had been abated. On September 25, the following day, 37 signs were documented in the public right-of-way.

What's going on with Code Enforcement? Why, particularly with the current budget crisis, would they avoid collecting a $953 fine? What of the City's liability – our liability – for neglecting these obstructions, such as with regards to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) conformance?

Rather than address the problems with Code Enforcement, the City is offering a blanket permit to allow signs on the sidewalk along College Avenue. The main argument I've heard is that signs are placed on the sidewalk elsewhere in the city, so why not here? I would ask, why aren't signs being removed elsewhere? Given the history on College, one cannot presume that they haven't been reported. The City is offering this blanket permit for the entire street at $1700, while an individual application normally costs $600.

The details of the proposed blanket permit are being discussed with the local business group, the Rockridge District Association (RDA). How do the rest of us feel about signs on the sidewalk? If the rules of our sidewalks are to be changed, do we want a chance to be in on the process? The current proposal is that, to offload from busy Code Enforcement staff, the RDA be charged with enforcement. Is this sensible, particularly given that four members of the board of directors have businesses or properties with signs – multiple signs even – often in violation of current law? Isn't having violators draft and enforce new regulations asking the fox to guard the henhouse?

Piedmont Avenue also has a growing issue with signs on the sidewalk. Should they expect a similar approach by city government? What about the rest of our city? Is it appropriate for the City to outsource law enforcement to an extra-legal entity? Why can't the City collect established fines and fund enforcement effectively? Do we prefer to solve this issue by ceding our public space to advertising? Would doing so even solve the problems with enforcement? This is a democracy – our democracy. What do you say?

– Eric Neville

Talk by Jody London, Director, District 1 Oakland Unified School District:

Academic and Fiscal Solvency of OUSD

at the November 11, 2009 meeting of the Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League.

7:45 – 9 p.m.
Piedmont Gardens
110 41st Street
11th Floor
Sky Room

Board of Directors Appoints Three New Members

by Stuart Flashman

The RCPC Board of Directors has appointed two board member to fill vacancies among its elected members. The board also appointed a new member to the "merchant" seat established by the RCPC bylaws. Short biographical sketches of the three new members are given below:

Jennifer Kaplan (Merchant seat – until May 2010)

Jennifer is the owner of Rockridge Home, a College Avenue retail store since 2003. She holds a BS from Cornell University and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. She served on the board of the Rockridge District Association from 2004 to 2007. She also has a dog, Vermont, who, she says, may be how many people in Rockridge know her best.

Michael Kan (appointment to elected seat – until April 2011)

Michael is both the most recent and most long-term denizen of Rockridge to be appointed to the board this month. Michael grew up here in Rockridge, attending Chabot Elementary School, Claremont Middle School, and Oakland Tech before heading off to college. He just recently returned to Rockridge and works as an information technology specialist at Hewlett Packard. He is also involved in real estate investment, but not in the Rockridge area.

Cesar Angobaldo (appointment to elected seat – until April 2011)

Cesar grew up far from Rockridge, in Queens, New York City. He graduated from Dartmouth College and then came west to attend graduate school at the Haas School of Business at UCB. That led to his move to Rockridge in 2001, and he's lived here since. He founded and runs a financial research firm in San Francisco.

Biking It In and Around Rockridge

THE ROCKRIDGE MUSE

by Ortrun Niesar

Come to Rockridge and you will see them everywhere; tied to trees and park benches, on grassy knolls, in driveways and on BART. You can't escape them; those pesky bicycles have usurped our urban landscape where a car culture once ruled.

This is bicycle country now and we love it. It's totally PC to own a bike: it's very green with a tiny carbon footprint, very economical to operate and a great way to tone your muscles while you move your body from point A to point B. Riding to all your destinations in Rockridge is easy, fast and cheap. Bicyclists should look for bike racks and, of course, chain their vehicles. How much better this is than having to maneuver your car through congested streets looking for a parking space, while fumbling for extra quarters at the bottom of your purse or pocket.

My husband Gerry and I have joined the revolution. We both own bikes purchased at Hank and Frank, equipped with an adequate number of gears, regulation safety gadgets and odometers. No fancy handlebars, no sleek spandex outfits for us, but helmets, of course. Out on the road on weekends we look like a couple of genuine road warriors – well, more like two adolescent adults to some. While I limit myself to recreational bike rides, Gerry has taken to riding his bike whenever he gets a chance, rain or shine.



He has clocked in well over 2,000 miles so far. He stops for red lights and for pennies on the pavement (average take per trip about 27 cents).

Good Rides

There are many compelling destinations you can visit in and around Rockridge on a bike. Steep hills and long inclines can be avoided in almost every case unless you happen to actually live on a hill or want to prove something to somebody with your physical prowess! For hardcore bicyclists in training, there are always **Old Tunnel Road**, and **Grizzly Peak** and **Skyline** boulevards. For recreational bicycling, **Jack London Square** or **Lake Merritt** are good choices.

From Rockridge, you might tool down the streets to Telegraph Avenue (has bike lanes), then travel Downtown past the **Old Fox Theater**, skirt **Frank Ogawa Plaza** and aim for the **Embarcadero**. You can do this in a matter of minutes and not break a sweat. Once there, hop off your two-wheeler and inspect the wares offered at the artisan booths set up every weekend, or tour some of the historic ships. Follow the wolf tracks for a cool drink at the **Last Chance Saloon**, Jack London's old hang-out.

On the way back, try a route through **Oakland's Chinatown**, stopping at some of the unique food markets filled with fresh fish, giant lobsters and other delicacies. (Dried shark fins can run as much as $650 a pound!) Take Broadway back up to Oakland Tech, then veer left into **Temescal** to reach Rockridge on nearly level streets.

A longer trip could be planned to Alameda (about 30 miles and a full afternoon). Enjoy a picnic at the beaches and tide pools at **Crown Beach**.

Or, if the wind is not blowing too hard, plan a trip west to Berkeley's **Aquatic Park**. From there, take the pedestrian bridge over Hwy 80, stop at the old **Sea Breeze Café** for an orange slush or hot chocolate, and then proceed to the **Marina** or over to the **Kite Flyers Meadow**. You can also ride almost all the way on prepared trails along the Bay (Golden Gate Fields area excepted), to that charming artisan community, **Point Richmond**. Figure 35 miles round trip for this jaunt, and remember that going east on your way back will add some slope to the ride, so conserve your energy for the return trip. Too tired to make it back? No problem: hop on BART. That old lady will take you home.

Happy biking.

Ortrun Niesar can be reached at oniesar@sbcglobal.net.



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Annual Thanksgiving Day Meal Offered

College Avenue Presbyterian Church, 5951 College Avenue, will host its annual Thanksgiving Day Community Meal on Thursday, November 26, as it has done for more than 15 years. The meal generally serves 200-300 people, many of whom are homeless or isolated. In past years, up to 50 volunteers from the community have come together to make this wonderful event possible. Volunteers of all ages are needed for set-up, serving, and clean-up. The event is free; all donations are gratefully accepted.



To volunteer, donate, or for more information, call Mike at 510/658-3487.

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Chabot Carnival Enjoys Its Day in the Sun

by Polly Winograd Ikonen

Chabot Elementary School held its annual Fall Carnival under the blazing sun of Sunday, October 25. Due to Chabot's campus construction, the event was held on the grounds of Claremont Middle School for the second year in a row. The Carnival will return to Chabot's own campus next fall.

The Chabot Carnival is a major fundraiser for the school's PTA programs, and, together with the Raffle, raised over $20,000 in support of the many programs of the Chabot PTA, which include curriculum enrichment such as Art, Music, Spanish, Garden and the Library.



Approximately 800 Rockridge children and their family members attended the Carnival and enjoyed its many activities – from the traditional Football Toss, Haunted House and Cakewalk, to such lively new offerings as a petting zoo, face painting, and two costume contests, one for kids and one for their pets. The Carnival also offered flu shots as well as a Reuse/Recyle booth that offered choice slightly used furnishings and raised over $1,000 by itself.



While it's a fun time for visitors, the Chabot Carnival is, in fact, a complex, completely volunteer-driven endeavor. In addition to many dedicated people, it also took 20 class game booths; 48 bales of hay; 65 pumpkins; 75 corn stalks; 200 balloons; 500 hot dogs; and countless bottles of water on that hot afternoon.

The Chabot Carnival would not have been possible without support from the greater Rockridge community. Carnival chairs Hope Broderick and Suzanne Skipper extend special thanks to these local businesses sponsors: Red Hound, Garibaldi's/Marzano, Piedmont Dental, Grubb Company, and Lawton Associates; as well as food providers Restaurant Chu, Market Hall, and Safeway. And, of course, the event would not have been possible without the welcoming spirit and hands-on support of Principal Kenya Crockett and the entire Claremont Middle School community.



PHOTOS: ANNETTE FLOYSTRUP

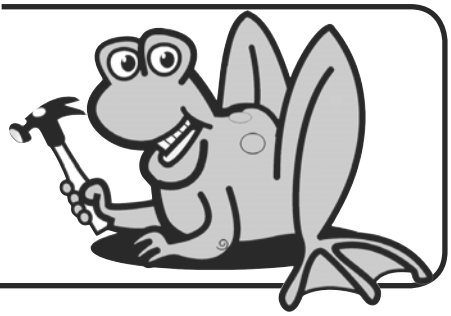

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FROG Park Corner

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



Public Art Installation Almost Complete

by the FROG Park Steering Committee

A huge thank-you to everyone who donated their time and worked hard to make the October FROG maintenance and planting day such a success. All day, volunteers from the community, the FROG steering committee, and College Preparatory School worked to help clean, weed, plant, remove graffiti, remove and replace the sandy fir bark, and renew the structure's wood.



The connection between the FROG parks and the students at College Prep dates back to the original build in 2001, when students dug postholes and did other heavy work. They have returned each fall maintenance day since then. Every class at College Prep has a community project, all of them directed by community services director Cynthia Geddes. This year's entire freshman class turned out for the Saturday workday. Thank you! The Park looks great.

Public Art Installation

The public art project in FROG Park is nearly complete, as promised in the September Rockridge News. Take a stroll through the greenbelt and try looking through the spotting scopes mounted in the concrete monuments located adjacent to the pathway. There are viewing ports for tall and small, focused on beautiful sculptures of animals and artifacts that have special relationships to the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt.

Last week, scores of happy kids were running along the pathway, thrilled to find the Cooper's hawk, a garter snake, and a butterfly (in the butterfly garden, of course). There is also a handicapped-accessible podium located by the Department of Motor Vehicles, providing all park visitors an opportunity to view and feel the sculptures. It has been several years in the making, and is intended as an interactive art project, so it is wonderful to see the project finally being enjoyed by the community.

Oakland artist Mark Brest van Kempen designed and installed the project, sponsored by the City of Oakland's Public Art Program with support from FROG. Funding was provided by Measure DD, the Oakland Trust for Clean Water and Safe Parks; the Oakland Public Art Program; the Oakland ADA Programs Division; and Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt (FROG).

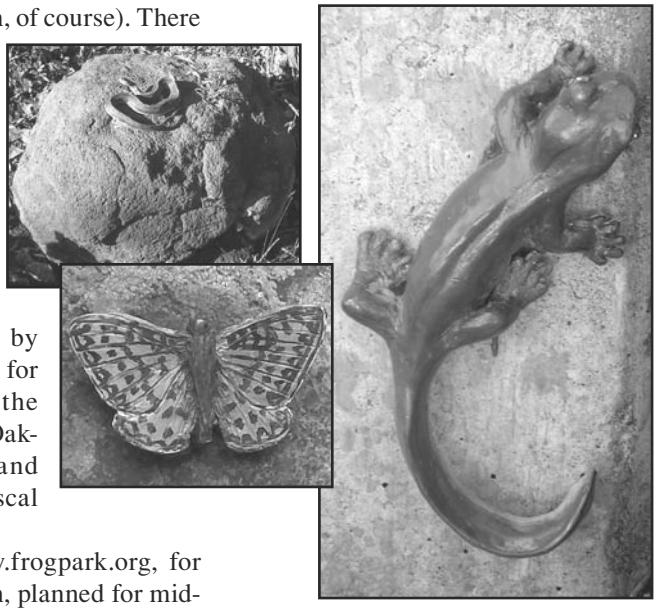


Visit FROG's Web site, www.frogpark.org, for news about an opening celebration, planned for mid-December.

Photos: FROG Park Steering Commitee



Beautification continues at FROG Park thanks to the efforts of volunteers who cleaned, weeded, planted and renewed the wood structures. Stroll along the greenbelt to view the wildlife sculptures now adorning the park, installed as part of the public art project.



CLAREMONT Is on a Roll – Check It Out!

Top five ways to explore Claremont

1. **Meet the new principal**, Kenya Crockett, at "Coffees with Kenya" the first Wednesday of every month from 8:00-9:00 a.m. at Claremont. Stop by for an invaluable opportunity to meet the principal and find out more about how she's running Claremont, while also getting a peek at the school itself. The next opportunity is November 4.

2. **Tour the school** with Assistant Principal Kevin Taylor and Claremont PTA VP Mike Napolitano every Friday from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Visitors will view classroom instruction and facilities, learn about our music and digital media elective programs, and enjoy a general question-and-answer session. For more information, contact Mike at MNapolitano@waterboards.ca.gov or (w) 510/622-2397 or (h) 510/655-4725.

3. **Check out the big jump in API scores** since last year (**90 points!**), the incredible, award-winning band, the media lab, and the opportunities for academic enrichment. Learn about what the administration, staff, and students are already doing. Then think about how much great new energy you and your child could add to this small local school!

4. **Get involved:** Join the Chabot Middle School Committee; subscribe to Claremont Middle School Committee e-mail list; subscribe to the Claremont "Knightline;" attend a Claremont PTA meeting.

   Contact Lexi Rhorer at lexir@pacbell.net or 510/655-6957 or Kenton Lee at kentonlee@hotmail.com or 510/654-2556 for more information. The Knightline is Claremont's weekly e-mail broadcast. PTA meetings are the last Monday of every month; non-Claremont parents are welcome.

5. **Talk with students, parents and neighbors** about the positive changes afoot there. Here's what some of them have to say:

   I am proud to say that I am a CMS parent and encourage all to take the time and come down to CMS. Things have changed and they're changing every day for the best. I believe we are on our way to being a school of choice.

   ...

   My experience has been mostly good and this year there seems to be even more progress happening in many areas.

   ...

   Ms. Crockett, the new principal, has been able to make big improvements in the climate in a very short time.

   ...

   The difference this year just in terms of student activity is spectacular!

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Rockridge Sales Remain Steady in October

Closing Date	Bd/Ba	Address	Sale Price	DOM	List Price	Original Price
10/1/2009	2/ 1	5454 Boyd Avenue	$817,000	10	$769,000	$769,000
10/6/2009	3/1	6000 Monroe Avenue	$655,000	100	$699,000	$759,000
10/8/2009	3/1	5314 James Avenue	$713,000	19	$718,000	$718,000
10/9/2009	3/3	5336 Shafter Avenue	$1,110,000	9	$995,000	$995,000
10/17/2009	3/2	381 61st Street	$815,000	0	$815,000	$815,000
10/23/2009	2/1	391 60th Street	$585,000	16	$500,000	$500,000
10/23/2009	4/4	350 Forest Street	$996,000	15	$989,000	$989,000

• Virtually the same market time in Rockridge now as in 2008.
• There is currently a 1.8 month supply of inventory in Rockridge.

Visit my website at www.eastbayhouse.com!
If you're thinking of buying or selling, give me a call for a free consultation.



Photo: Don Kinkead

The Neighborhood Merchant

by Theresa Nelson

Neighborhood History: Which Establishment on College Avenue is the Oldest?

This series of articles started with the late 20th century expansion of business in the Rockridge neighborhood. In the 1970s, Rockridge rebounded from the many homes and other buildings demolished to build Highway 24 and BART in the 1960s, when residents left for the suburbs and local business declined. We continued with a review of the many stores and businesses opening since 2000. In this final article in the series, we take a look backwards to the earliest days of the Rockridge business district.

When this neighborhood began developing in earnest in the first decade of the 20th century, the farms, canneries and dairies of earlier decades were mostly gone, replaced by bungalows, duplexes and small apartment buildings in the new Arts & Crafts style. Many people who left San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake stayed in Oakland, which doubled in population in 10 years, creating a demand for housing and local businesses to serve growing needs. Real estate developments were annexed to the growing city of Oakland, and streets were paved. New businesses were established along College Avenue, which boasted an electric streetcar linking to the Key System and trans-Bay ferries. The nearby Sacramento-Northern Railway line had its Rockridge stop at what is now the corner of Shafter and College Avenues. The Vernon-Rockridge Improvement Club was founded – in many ways the forerunner of the Rockridge Community Planning Council – and it campaigned for and raised money for a new library, two schools, street cleaning, and a firehouse. Some things never change … RCPC has worked on similar issues during its 25- year history.

One of the stores from that very first decade of the neighborhood is still in business … its name will be revealed later in this article. To set the stage, take a look at some interesting maps from Oakland's history, online at: www.teczno.com/old-oakland. The map from 1912 is a nice marker to begin the story: what is now known as the Rockridge neighborhood was then a cluster of tiny subdivisions, some only a few blocks in size, with interesting names: Vernon Park, Fairview Park, Brookside, Woodlawn Park, Rose Lawn Park, Roberts and Wolfskil Tract, Colby Tract, Woolsey Tract, Oak Ridge, Rock Ridge, White Tract, Country Club Terrace, and Claremont. The excellent book, *Rockridge,* from Arcadia Publishing, chronicles the neighborhood's development and has a wealth of wonderful old photos of Rockridge. It's available at Diesel Books and Pendragon Books on College Avenue.

A few establishments have recently provided anniversary dates from **1984 to the present**, and these include:

Cotton Basics, 1985
Kate Levinson, Ph.D., MFT, 1986
Elegant Nail Salon, 1992
Bambino Thrift Shop, 1994
Next Eyewear, 1998

And now for more history, going back through the decades:

Since 1980–1983:

Zachary's Pizza, 1983
Fenton McLaren, 1982
TranSports, 1982
Green Graphics, 1981
Pasta Shop, 1981
Claremont Rug Company, 1980
Duck Soup Family Playschool, 1980
Rockridge Rags, 1980
Yasai Market, 1980

Since 1979, Celebrating 30 Years:

Alexander Pope Skincare and Hair Studio
Brass & Glass
Ver Brugge Meats & Seafood

Since 1975–1978:

Hudson Bay Caffe (formerly, The Dancing Goat), 1978
TenTe's Hair 'n' All, 1978
The Burrito Shop, 1978
San Francisco Dancewear, 1975

Since 1974, Celebrating 35 years:

Eddie's Liquors
Law offices of Kletz & Moll

Neighborhood Merchant, page 11

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Neighborhood Merchant

from page 10

Since 1970-1973:
BART Rockridge station, 1973
Rockridge Café, 1973
First Federal Savings & Loan, 1972
Rockridge Antiques (now Rockridge Furniture & Design), 1972
Bodytime, 1971
Pendragon Books, 1971
La Farine Bakery, 1970
Jarvis Architects, 1970

Since 1969, Celebrating 40 years:
Rightway Shoe Repair

Since 1960–1968
The Graduate, 1968
Safeway, 1964
Bank of America, 1960

Since 1959 Celebrating 50 years:
Shawl-Anderson Modern Dance Center

Since 1953:
Stauder Automotive

Since 1949, Celebrating 60 years:
Shields, Harper & Co.

Since 1940–1947
Bosko's Framing Gallery, 1945
Rockridge Optometry, 1946

Since 1930–1939
George & Walt's Bar, 1939
Rockridge Barber, 1936
Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream, 1935
Bill McNally's Irish Bar, 1933

Since 1920–1929
The Levant Oriental Rugs, 1927
The Rockridge Masonic Hall, 1925
The School of the California Guild of Arts and Crafts (now the California College of the Arts), 1922
76 Service Station, 1920; stop in to see some wonderful historical photos

Since 1919

This year is the 90th anniversary of our own Rockridge Library. It was opened in 1919 in a now long-gone building on Shafter Avenue and then moved to a storefront on the corner of College and Miles Avenue where it stood until it was closed in 1986. It functioned in a trailer on the grounds of Claremont Middle School from 1987-1996, while a group of neighborhood volunteers raised funds and helped pass a parcel tax to build a new library. The new Rockridge Branch Library opened in 1996 at the corner of College and Manila Avenues.

Since 1913

Recently celebrating its 95th anniversary, is Claremont Middle School at the corner of College and Miles Avenue.

Since 1909

And celebrating 100 years – yes, 100 years – in Rockridge is **Chimes Pharmacy** at 3210 College Avenue near Alcatraz, phone 510/652-1990. Though their history is long and proud, they're up-to-date, online (www.chimespharmacy.com) and are reviewed on yelp (www.yelp.com/biz/chimes-pharmacy-berkeley). Current proprietor, John Gelinas, is only the third owner in the store's history. (See more about John and Chimes below.)



John Gelinas, Pharm. D., grew up in Rockridge in the 50s and 60s. He noted some ways the neighborhood has changed: in the 60s there were relatively few children compared with today. He explained that years ago, no matter its size, most families had only one car. Back then people could park all day on the street (there were no meters). He also noted that lots more people are out walking these days, where many of the stores provide for basic daily needs.

John showed me a tattered and yellowed prescription book from 1909. Back then pharmacies filled prescriptions by compounding, that is, creating customized mixtures from a doctor's notes. Except for the dubious "patent medicines," there were no brand-name drugs like penicillin or Prilosec to simply take from a bottle. Handwritten prescriptions were pasted into the book by date, with the very first one dated 5th of September 1909, by Dr. Albert Gilliham, M.D., in Berkeley. Looking through the old prescriptions, we saw all kinds of compounds and elixirs created, with ingredients like syrup of aspirin, ipecac, bismuth, caffeine, and even cocaine, which was legal at the time.

When you visit these long-time establishments, let the owners know how much they and their commitment to Rockridge are appreciated. And please stop by Chimes Pharmacy and say hello to John Gelinas and his staff, and wish them a happy 100th birthday!


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Ask a Cop

by PSO Officer Chew and PSO Officer Gerrans

The "Ask a Cop" column provides a question-and-answer format for Rockridge Problem Solving Officers (PSO) to answer residents' law enforcement and crime-related questions. PSOs Chew and Gerrans hope the column will improve communications and involve residents in the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) activities. Send your questions to editor@rockridge.org. Please include your name and address. Only your name will be printed.

Is it legal for kids and adults to ride their bikes on the sidewalk?

– L. Duque

While many parents may feel it is a safer place for children to ride their bicycles to avoid vehicle traffic, it is illegal regardless of age. The sidewalk is intended for pedestrians.

– PSO Officer Chew

Reminder to Our Readers:
In light of several recent inquiries we have received that are outside the purview of the Ask a Cop column, we would like to clarify that only questions that seek clarity with respect to criminal laws, local regulatory ordinances, or police procedures can be answered here. The column does not address issues related to the need for direct police services.

NCPC Minutes Available

The minutes of last week's Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council meetings are now available on the Rockridge NCPC Web site:

http://snurl.com/st05z

The November NCPC meeting will be on Tuesday, November 17, at The College Preparatory School, 6100 Broadway, 7 - 9 p.m.

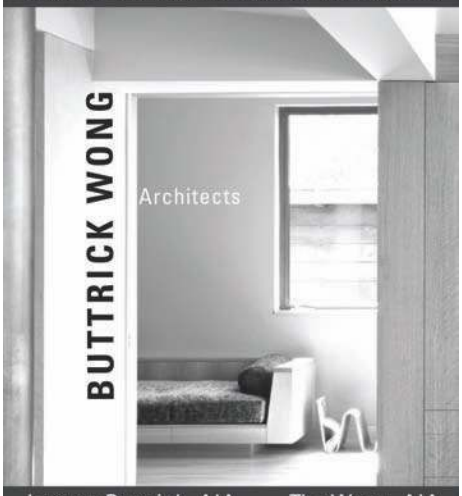
No December meeting.

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BART Retrofit

from page 1

Gardens, Frog Park, and then along the columns continuing west. Schedules are being finalized now.

There are several ways to find out about the latest activity. On BART's Web site at www.BART.gov, visit the section ABOUT BART and then PROJECTS. Under earthquake safety is a description of all projects, impacts, schedules, detours, notifications and other communications. You may also sign up for email alerts. Doorhangers are placed at residences that are within 1,000 feet of an anticipated activity. Extra precautions are taken with areas that may need more attention (such as the schools in the area).

For urgent matters, call 510/874-7425.



Photo: Don Kinkead

The seismic upgrade at the Rockridge BART station is scheduled for completion in January 2010.

Parking Meter Times Rolled Back



According to the office of the City Administrator, the City of Oakland will stop parking meter enforcement after 6 p.m., eliminating the two-hour extension to 8 p.m. enacted by the City Council in July. The extra two hours were rescinded by a decision of the council in October.

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Me. I've been an Allstate Agent for 10 years. And riding bikes for 17. That means I can talk all day about insurance features and discounted rates, but I'd just as soon talk about a new route you've found. Let's talk today.

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RN classifieds

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Rockridge Artist Holiday Open Studio

Artist Liz Maxwell will host open studio at 5808 Chabot Road, December 12-13, 11 am to 5 pm.. As at her last open studio, free art can be won by doing a puzzle.

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Compiled by Jo Ellis

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

Residents and business members can voice their concerns about crime and public safety. **Note new time and place for Nov. mtg:** Tues., Nov. 17, College Prep. School, 6100 Broadway, Room P1, 7pm. **No Dec. mtg.** Info@rockridgencpc.com or infofordenise@yahoo.com.

Director Jody London, District 1 Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)

Jody London will discuss the Academic and Fiscal Solvency of the OUSD. 11/11, 7:45 -9pm at the Piedmont Ave. Neighborhood Improvement League meeting, Piedmont Gardens, 110 41st St., 11th floor Sky Rm. Info: 459-0667 or Jody.London@ousd.k12.ca.us.

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:

- **Baking:** Tuesday, 11/10, 7pm.
- **Trains:** Make a collage train to take home. Tues., 11/24, 7pm.
- **Winter Lights:** Stories and crafts. Tues., 12/8, 7pm.

FOR TEENS:

- **Rockridge Ninjas (Anime Club):** Teens watch and talk about anime. Second Tues. each month (11/10), 5 to 6:30pm, upstairs meeting room.
- **Soap Making:** Make a gift for the holidays or for yourself. 12/10, 4 to 5:30pm. **Space limited: sign up in advance.** 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.
- **Cognitive Fitness: Teri Barr** from OUSD Older Adult program will discuss what science is telling us about staying sharp. Tues., 12/8, 2-4pm.
- **Lawyers in the Library: Free** legal advice. First Tuesday each month from 6 to 8pm (call to confirm). Advance sign-up starts 5pm. More info: 597-5017.

ART EXHIBITS: (Call to confirm dates)

Gallery:

- Nov.: **Oak. Public Library Staff:** group art exhibit.
- Dec.: **Joanne Hashitani:** recent works

Lobby Display Case:

- Nov.: **Oak. Public Library Staff:** group art exhibit.
- Dec.: TBA (Call for info).

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.**
Also closed 11/11, 11/26-28.

Diesel Book Readings and Events

All events are FREE and open to the public.

- Sun., 11/8, 3pm. **Poetry Flash** with **Marilyn Kallet** and **Susan Cohen**.
- Mon., 11/9, 7pm. **Amnesty International Meeting:** All invited to exchange ideas on action.
- Wed., 11/11, 7pm. Book Launch Party for local author **Anne I. Barrows:** *Our Charlotte* (poems).
- Sun., 11/15, 3pm. Publication party for local, award-winning author **Katherine Sturtevant:** *The Brothers Story*.
- Sun., 11/22, 3pm. **David Swanson:** *Daybreak: Undoing the Imperial Presidency and Forming a More Perfect Union*.
- Tues., 12/1, 6:30pm. **Claudia Pruett** and **Rima Barkett:** *Cooking Dinner: Simple Italian Family Recipes Everyone Can Make*. Food tasting from the book's recipes.

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

Wisteria Ways Concert Series

The Real Vocal String Quartet: Synthesis of world music with jazz, classical and pop sensibilities.
$15-20 suggested donation for musicians (cash only at the door). 383 61st Street. Inside venue (not wheelchair accessible). For reservations (strongly recommended), RSVP to info@WisteriaWays.org or 655-2771. See upcoming events at www.WisteriaWays.org.

Community Women's Orchestra Play-Along

All women in the community invited to dust off your instruments and join us for a Play-Along open rehearsal of Symphony No. 9 "From the New World" by Dvorak. If you don't play an instrument, come and listen. Thurs., 11/12, 7:30pm. Lake Merritt United Methodist Church, 1330 Lakeshore Ave. Free parking. Info: Linda: itune88@comcast.net or www.communitywomensorchestra.org.

Acoustic Open Mic at the Long Haul

Local Rockridge guitarist and songwriter **Jesse Strickman** and his band, **Dear Indugu**, will be the featured act on Sunday, 12/6, from 7 to 11pm. (Musicians may sign up for Open Mic first Sunday each month.) **Free food and admission.** The Long Haul, 3124 Shattuck Ave. More info at www.myspace.com/DearIndugu.

Annual Thanksgiving Day Community Meal

All welcome on Thurs., 11/26, 11am to 1pm. Free event but donations gratefully accepted. **Volunteers of all ages needed** for set-up, serving and clean-up. Hosted by the College Ave. Presb. Church, 5951 College Ave. To volunteer, donate or for more info, call Mike: 658-3487.

California College of the Arts (CCA) Holiday Fair

Shop for one-of-a-kind, affordable gifts made by students, alumni and staff: ceramics, blown glass, jewelry, clothing, photos, textiles, paintings and more. **Live jazz music.** Saturday, 12/5, 11am to 3pm. CCA campus, 5212 Broadway, main walkway. Info 594-3678 or www.cca.edu/.

North Oakland Senior Center

Program Highlights: Computer classes; health Insurance counseling and advocacy program; exercise; trips, tours and theater outings; Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Groups.
Hrs: Mon. – Fri., 8:45am to 4:45pm. 5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Closed: 11/11, 11/26-27, and 11/30 (mandatory shutdown).
Subscribe to "The North Oakland Senior Times," for a full schedule of classes/events and monthly lunch menu ($2.25 to $4.00). Info about events, membership, and opportunities to become a volunteer: 597- 5085.

American Red Cross

- **Mobile Blood Drives: In Nov., donors will be entered in a drawing for a $100 gift card for Macy's; in December, donors can enter a drawing for a Winter Getaway** (not available at high school or college blood drives). Call 800-GIVE-LIFE (800-448-3543) or visit HelpSaveALife.org/NC to find a location near you.
- **Volunteer Orientations:** Tour the Oakland Blood Center. Learn to assist blood donors, deliver blood, help with special projects. 11/10, 11/18 and 12/8 from 6 – 8pm and 12/2 from 10am-noon. 6230 Claremont Avenue (across from College Ave. Safeway). Learn more or sign up: Anne at 594-5165 or BlackstoneA@usa.redcross.org.

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