THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

VOL. 26 ■ NO. 1 ■ ISSUE NO. 274 ■ January 8, 2011 ■ CIRCULATION: 5,100 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

Sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council • 4123 Broadway, PMB 311 • Oakland, CA 94611 • 869-4200

Rockridge News to Notch 25th Anniversary in March


The Rockridge News

March 13, 1986 Vol. 1 No. 1

WHEN IS THE NEXT MEETING?

Shafter Avenue Housing Proposed by Wilson Bros.

Dreyer's Plans Final!

Ready for City Submission

Presentation to Neighborhood Scheduled

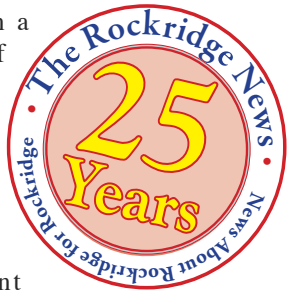
Taft Street Neighbors Oppose Conversion

Dreyer's Development Pressure

Vol. 1, No. 1; March 13, 1986

Spawned from the union of an early Macintosh computer and PageMaker software, Vol. 1, No. 1 of The Rockridge News hit the streets March 13, 1986, amidst a surge of growth and change proposed for Rockridge.

Published under sponsorship of the Rockridge Community Planning Council, the newsletter's purpose, as stated in the issue, was to "...update residents on development and planning activities that affect our neighborhood," as well as "present information on community events and issues affecting residents and merchants alike." The newsletter thus took on a mission of information begun by anxious, concerned neighbors posting development plans and meeting notices on neighborhood telephone poles.



Suddenly, it is 25 years later. The newsletter has published an unbroken line of issues which have continued and enlarged upon the original vision.

What has not changed across the decades is the spectre of inappropriate developoment projects that seek to capitalize on the attractions of Rockridge as a place to live or to visit. The newsletter will continue to call for process, procedure and coherent design in planning decisions.

20 AGENDA: RCPC Town Hall Meeting

1. Community-proposed alternatives for the Rockridge/Safeway Shopping Center

2. RCPC Committees Annual Community Report

1. Safeway Shopping Center (Broadway & Pleasant Valley)

Presentation and discussion of four community-proposed alternatives to Safeway's proposal to rebuild and expand (by over 100,000 sq.ft) the Rockridge Shopping Center. Two come from Urbanists for a Livable Temescal Rockridge Area (ULTRA): one primarily residential; the other mixed residential and commercial. Two were developed by RCPC members: One that repositions Safeway's proposed development in a more integrated way; another that intensifies Safeway's proposal. Come hear and respond to these suggestions.

2. RCPC's "Reports from the Committees"

RCPC's traditional annual "reports from the committees" and community feedback. Check out what RCPC has been up to in 2010, and let us know what you think we should (or shouldn't) be doing in 2011:

- Land Use
- Communications
- Transportation
- Parks and Open Space
- Schools
- The Rockridge News
- Fundraising
- Public Safety

Thursday, January 20 | 7:30-9 p.m.

Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College Avenue at Manila, Community Room (Upstairs)



In the January 2009 Rockridge News, District 3 BART board member Bob Franklin wrote of the early stages of the transit agency's system-wide seismic retrofit. In this issue, two years later, Franklin, now board president, reports on the progress of the construction in Rockridge, and discusses other BART projects in the neighborhood. See page 4.

IN APRIL: RCPC BOARD ELECTIONS; SIX SEATS. SERVE ROCKRIDGE – PAGE 12

During its enduring publication life, The Rockridge News has been guided by different editors. Beginning with this issue and over the coming months of the newsletter's anniversary year, we will present statements from these editors reflecting upon their service and experiences as they shepherded the newsletter from issue to issue.

We begin the series with Immediate Past Editor Cyril Gulassa. **— *Editor***

Cyril Gulassa: 1997 to January, 2008

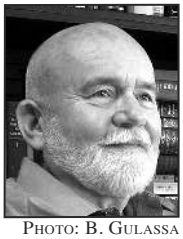


PHOTO: B. GULASSA

For nearly a quarter century, The Rockridge News has helped preserve and enhance the quality of life in Rockrdge. From opposing high-rise towers along BART to building the Rockridge library, from opposing factories on College Avenue to building two fine parks, and biennially showing off Rockridge's splendid kitchens. The Rockridge News has been a dependable, celebratory and persuasive voice. When Kathy Walsh announced in 1997 that she was stepping down as editor, I volunteered.

Reading The Rockridge News is a great way to keep up with events, but if you really want to get a 3-D take on Rockridge, there is no better way than to serve as editor/writer of the Rockridge News. You get to sit in on meetings of RCPC, master the pros and cons of zoning, attend architectural briefings, interview City Council and school board dignitaries, cruise the streets for stories and hang out with homegrown movers and shakers who care deeply about Rockridge and its quality of life. Best of all, you get to write about fascinating locals, like the woman who refurbished an entire house by herself; a student who canoed down 30-foot waterfalls; a troop of middle-agers who met every Sunday for three vigorous hours of ultimate Frisbee; having a glass of Guinness at McNalley's with a husband and wife recovering from a near-fatal accident while crossing Claremont Avenue. And, if you see 15 police motorcycles parked outside the Claremont Diner, your press status qualifies you to barge in and ask what's going on.

When the issues heat up, like the 2007 conflict over land use that resulted in a sweeping change in RCPC leadership, as editor you preside over the debate and assure a fair hearing for all sides, including your own.

However, a word of warning: Editing The Rockridge News seeps into your bones. Last week I had to resist the urge to pull over and snap a photo of that big machine gnawing on the 4th Bore, or interview that gentleman in the Santa hat tinkling the Salvation Army bell at Safeway. **— *Cy Gulassa***

Rockridge DVD Project Seeks Volunteers



by Jon Gabel, project co-chair

The Rockridge DVD Project continues to receive donations which, as of this writing, total over $6,000 - thank you all! The running total of the donations and donors' names can be found at www.RockridgeDvdProject.org (click on 'Donors' for the list of names).

To date, most donations have been from individuals. With a good beginning from the Oakland community, we are in a strong position to solicit corporate contributions, and we invite additional volunteer help to do this. If you are interested in joining the Rockridge DVD Project to work on corporate fundraising, we want to talk to you! This is an opportunity to participate in making a significant contribution to the Rockridge Branch Library by adding more than 2,800 DVD titles to its collection. Fundraising experience is not necessary; but you will need to write grant applications and communicate with potential donors. We will be contacting members of the film industry in the Bay Area and beyond, as well as locally represented corporations.

If this sounds interesting to you, e-mail Jon Gabel at JGabel@RockridgeDvdProject.org (*no hyphen in link address*).

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5366 College Avenue
597-5017
HOURS:
Tues: 12:30 – 8 p.m.
Weds, Thurs, Sat: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Friday: 12 – 5:30 p.m.
***CLOSED**: Sunday and Monday; also Tues, Jan. 18*
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.

***Rockridge News* Production**
Don Kinkead.....Editor
Ortrun Niesar.....The Muse
Barry Kaufman.....Food
Jo Ellis.....Advertising & Community Calendar
Theresa Nelson.....Neighborhood Merchant
Susan Montauk.....Business Manager
Don Kinkead.....Graphics & Layout

RCPC Board of Directors, 2010-2011
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For information: info@rockridge.org

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

To subscribe to ***The Rockridge News***, send your check for $20, payable to *Rockridge News* Subscriptions, to: *Rockridge News* Subscriptions at the address below.

CONTACTING *THE ROCKRIDGE NEWS*

- 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:
Editor: editor@rockridge.org
www.rockridge.org
The Rockridge News, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611
RCPC Voice-mail: 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
☛ **February 5, 2011**
☛ **February deadline is January 20, 2011.**
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.)*

Apologies to Cool Hand Luke, but what we don't want here is a "failure to communicate." Neither do we want one-sided communication. When March rolls around, The Rockridge News will have published an issue every month, except August, of each year since 1986, a total of 276 issues. Throughout, newsletter editors and writers have sought to provide information to the Rockridge community about local events and concerns in an even-handed, honest and straightforward manner.

We would like now to hear from you, reader, your thoughts about the newsletter's topical content, its features, and your receipt of finished copies. Please take a moment to complete the survey below, adding comments as you like. Survey may also be completed online at http://www.rockridge.org or via http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/92NP3T8. Questions or comments? E-mail editor@rockridge.org. Thank you.

Reader Survey: The Rockridge News

Are you a Rockridge resident?
❑ Yes ❑ No
Yes? Your street/block? (*Ex:* 56xx Taft)
_____

Begin survey. Multiple answers are acceptable. (Should take about 90 seconds.)

1. Are you a regular reader of The Rockridge News?
❑ Yes
❑ No. How frequently?_____

2. How do you get the newsletter?
❑ Delivered to my home
❑ College Avenue merchant
❑ College Avenue coffee shop
❑ Read it online at www.rockridge.org
❑ Subscription delivered by mail
❑ Read it at the Rockridge library
❑ Other _____

3. Which features do you read most often?
❑ Land Use Committee report
❑ Letters to the editor
❑ Rockridge Cornucopia
❑ FROG Park reports
❑ The Rockridge Muse
❑ Classified ads
❑ Community Calendar
❑ The Neighborhood Merchant

4. What local news topics do you look for in each issue?
❑ Planning and Zoning
❑ Local building projects
❑ City Council decisions
❑ City budget
❑ Local schools
❑ Education issues
❑ Parks
❑ Transportation
❑ Traffic issues
❑ Pedestrian safety
❑ Mixture of local businesses
❑ Merchant/Business affairs
❑ Rockridge Branch library
❑ Food
❑ Local restaurants
❑ Local arts, entertainment, activities
❑ Other _____
❑ Other _____

5. What do you think of the proportion of display advertising to print content?
❑ Too many ads
❑ Not enough ads
❑ About right
❑ Other _____

6. What would you like to see MORE of in the newsletter?
❑ _____
❑ _____
❑ _____

7. What would you like to see LESS of?
❑ _____
❑ _____
❑ _____

Comments: _____
_____
Attach any additional comments.

Thank you for participating in The Rockridge News Reader survey. Your answers will help assure the newsletter is providing readers with meaningful news and information. Please copy or clip and mail your survey answers to: RN Reader Survey, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. Add additional comments on a separate sheet. The survey may also be completed online at http://www.rockridge.org or via http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/92NP3T8.

The Rockridge News is sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council to help keep residents up to date on issues affecting Rockridge. RCPC has begun publishing an E-News bulletin to better inform residents about fast-moving events when the newsletter is between publication dates. RCPC wants to reach the most community members possible with this bulletin. Please take a moment to sign up for your copy. All personal information is kept confidential.

RCPC E-News Enrollment Request

Yes! I want to receive e-mailed updates about Rockridge events and issues. Add me to the RCPC E-News mail list.

E-Mail Address: _____
Legibility Counts: Please Print

Please provide the following for E-News records, and select your interests at right to help guide future topic choices. All personal information is kept confidential and will not be released, circulated or sold.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Home Address:_____ (Apt. _____) City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (Cell ❑ or Landline ❑) (_____) _____

Copy or cut out your completed enrollment request and return by mail to: RCPC E-News Enrollment, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. Or, e-mail your information to: info@rockridge.org. Thank you for joining the E-News mailing list. E-mail additional comments to: editor@rockridge.org.

I am interested in:
❑ Planning and Zoning
❑ Local building projects
❑ City Council decisions
❑ City budget
❑ Local schools
❑ Education issues
❑ Parks
❑ Transportation/traffic
❑ Pedestrian safety
❑ Mixture of local businesses
❑ Merchant/Business affairs
❑ Rockridge Branch Library
❑ Food
❑ Local restaurants
❑ Local arts and activities
❑ Other _____

BART and Rockridge in 2011

BART Board President Bob Franklin Reports on Current Projects

This Year at BART

The coming year will bring new things for BART:

■ **The first infill station** is scheduled to open between the Castro Valley and the Dublin/Pleasanton BART stations near the Stoneridge Mall on February 19.

■ **BART is accepting applications** at BART.gov for the first citizen review board of its Police Department. Also this year, all BART police officers will receive training in community policing and problem solving.

■ **The Clipper card** (the smart card that is used to pay fares on eventually all Bay Area transit operators) now can be used to conveniently pay BART fares and to pay for parking at BART lots.

■ **The Ed Roberts Campus** will open up this spring at the Ashby Station. It will be a fully accessible office building, focused on creating independent lifestyles for persons with disabilities.

■ **BART will award its largest contract ever** for the $3.4 billion new car procurement, to replace BART's 669 cars, most of which have been in service since BART opened in 1972.

BART and Rockridge

■ **BART Plaza**: BART will soon be releasing the bid documents for the redesign of the plaza at the base of the escalator leading to the Rockridge station platform. BART is working in cooperation with the Rockridge District Association (RDA), the RCPC, and the city of Oakland to make this space a much more welcoming gathering area for the community.

■ **Seismic Safety Construction:** BART's Earthquake Safety Program continues to spread throughout the District in order to ensure safety and to return BART to service as quickly as possible following a major earthquake. Work to strengthen the Rockridge Station was completed in late 2009.

Construction on the last two remaining columns in the west Rockridge parking lot was scheduled to wrap up during the last week of December 2010, with site restoration to follow.

■ **Patton Street/Chabot School:** East of the Rockridge Station, major construction continues on and around Patton Street. BART coordinates ongoing street and sidewalk closures and detours with the city. BART also continues to work with Chabot Elementary School to provide information about construction in the area for students and parents. Work in this area will continue through spring 2011.

■ **Hardy Park:** Work at the Hardy Park basketball court and dog park concluded in late fall 2010, with completion of final paving, fence installation and restoration of landscaping. BART worked with the city to restore the recreational sites to the city's specifications.

■ **Mural Repair/Hudson Street:** Restoration to the mural located on Claremont Avenue is being negotiated. Oakland is identifying a conservator that will work with BART to repair the damages unfortunately caused by retrofit work. Construction on a remaining column situated near the intersection of Claremont Avenue and Hudson Street was scheduled to be completed in late December, with site restoration of the area to follow.



Work in progress. Excavating and reconfiguring the bases of BART's overhead track supports for improved seismic safety involved several pillars at a time as the project moved through the Rockridge BART parking lots.

Photo courtesy of Bob Franklin

Please feel free to contact me with any BART concerns or questions that you may have. E-mail: BobFranklinBART@aol.com Cell: 510/684-0026.

Bob Franklin is a resident of Rockridge and member of the BART board of directors. In December, the board unanimously elected Franklin as its new president. He is the first former BART employee to serve as board president.

Franklin said that BART has many exciting initiatives that will be launched or continue in 2011. His top three include raising awareness about the need to replace and expand the fleet of 669 train cars. (Visit www.bart.gov/cars for more information.) Second, he wants to improve community relations with the public and passengers.

Lastly, Franklin wants to create a more positive relationship with BART employees.

(Adapted from BART's website at http://www.bart.gov/news/articles/2010/news20101217.aspx)

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Weekend Brunch in Elmwood



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RCPC Land Use Committee

The RCPC Land Use Committee meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Rockridge Branch Library, Upstairs Meeting Room, 7:30 p.m. Next meeting: January 26.
Subject to change. Check Rockridge.org for meeting updates

■ **Rockridge Shopping Center Reconstruction Project —** Corner of Broadway/Pleasant Valley

This project proposes to reconstruct and expand North Oakland's most important shopping center. The Planning Commission design review committee hearing on the project scheduled for December 8 was cancelled by Safeway at the last minute. It will likely be rescheduled to the committee's January 26 meeting, probably 5 p.m. in City Hall hearing room #1. Watch the e-newsletter or check RCPC's website at http://www.rockridge.org for further details.

Four community alternatives to Safeway's proposal have been sketched out and posted on RCPC's website. As noted on the front page, the January RCPC Town Hall Meeting will include a presentation of the community design alternatives. Community support at the design review committee public hearing will be important in getting the Planning Commission to take the community alternative plans seriously.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) now in preparation may be released this spring. The planner assigned to the project is Darin Ranelletti, 238-3663, DRanelletti@oaklandnet.com.

■ **College Avenue Safeway Shopping Center —** Corner of College and Claremont Avenues

This project, planned to replace the existing Safeway store with a store more than double its size, plus an extra 12,000 sq. ft. of "small shops" along College Avenue and on a short pedestrian mall, is under planning department review. The draft EIR could be released in late February, with a design review hearing shortly thereafter.

■ **Land Use Meeting Agendas**

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

Using a combination of a grant from the Rose Foundation and matching community donations, RCPC has retained consultants to review the adequacy of the EIR's analysis of air and water quality, traffic, and toxic materials impacts. RCPC is also concerned about the potential economic impact of the project on College Avenue's currently highly successful retail district. Donations for the matching grant are still being accepted.

The planner assigned to the project is Peterson Vollman, pvollman@oaklandnet.com, 238-6167.

■ **Citywide Zoning Update**

The Planning Commission approved citywide revisions to Oakland's zoning at its December 15 meeting and sent them forward for City Council consideration and approval. For the most part, Rockridge's zoning has been left unchanged. However, Telegraph Avenue through Temescal and north to the Berkeley border is proposed for heights of up to 60 feet, which would tower over the adjoining historic and small-scale residential areas. RCPC hopes to convince the City Council, and specifically District One Councilmember and Council President Jane Brunner, to modify these height limits to protect Rockridge residents. Watch for notices of the City Council meetings when this important change will be considered.

YES! **I want to help RCPC protect Rockridge by making sure the EIR for the College Avenue Safeway Project is complete and accurate. Here is my contribution of $ _____. *Contributions may also be made at* www.rockridge.org**

Name _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **ZIP** _____

Phone # _____ **e-mail** _____

Mail to: RCPC, 4123 Broadway PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611.
Checks should be made payable to: RCPC/Safeway EIR Fund.

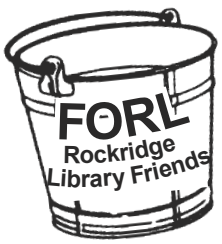
Thank you!

Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Federal tax ID no.: 94-3011284

Support Library Friends: Donations Invited; Board Opening

by Kathy O'Neal, FORL co-chair

FORL Fund Drive Continues



The Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL) annual appeal for continuing and new donors is well underway.

FORL funds a variety of children's and teens programs and books and periodicals as part of Rockridge's tradition of supporting our library community. Your support is especially important during the challenging budget constraints of the Oakland Public Library.

If you missed the notice in last month's Rockridge News, please go to our Friends of the Rockridge Library website at www.friendsoftherockridgelibrary.org where you can learn about FORL as well as donate online. News about our Rockridge branch, library volunteer opportunities and a calendar of events will be rolled out on our website in 2011.

In November, FORL completed the planting of donated "fortnight lilies" along the entire east side of the library parking lot, thanks to Luciano Cortes of Oakland Public Works and his crew, and District 1 public works Supervisor Herman Miller. The lilies will bloom in the spring and make our library grounds that much more beautiful.

Opening on FORL Board

The Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL), a subsidiary of RCPC, has an opening on its board. The term is for 15 months, beginning January 2011. We are looking for someone who loves the library and has some website design experience. The 11-person board meets four times a year on Tuesday evenings and other times during the calendar year as needed. If you are interested in being an active participant on this nonprofit board, please e-mail either of the board's co-chairs: Kathy O'Neal, onealkathryn@gmail.com or Carol Bieri, cbieri@pacbell.net.

For more information about FORL, please visit friendsoftherockridgelibrary.org.

Claremont School: Fundraising Rides and Student Supports

Ride for a Reason 2011: Signup Starts Jan 24 for May Ride

by Mike Napolitano and Mike Mages, Claremont Middle School parents

Ride for a Reason is a group bicycle ride to the state Capitol to draw attention to the funding crisis in California's public schools and to raise funds for class enrichment programs in Oakland.

Last year, 40 riders – parents and friends of parents – participated in the ride and raised $8,500 for Claremont Middle School and the same for Oakland Tech. This year, our goals are to have 100 riders and to raise $15,000 for each school.

The ride is on Saturday, May 7; we are now recruiting riders who may choose their ride from 10-mile, 60-mile, and 100-mile options. The event is fully supported, including "sag wagons," rest stops and water along the route and a lunch stop; arrangements for transportation home from Sacramento; group leaders to guide and assist all riders (riders are grouped by ability level); two planned practice rides to help participants get ready; and a t-shirt and water bottle for all participants.



Participants in the 2010 cycle ride to Sacramento are greeted in front of the Capitol by Assemblyman Andre Swanson, a strong supporter of schools and education.

PHOTO: SARAH MAGES

Riders are encouraged to raise $300 or more in pledges to help achieve our fundraising goal. Registration and launching of the website for the event are scheduled to start January 24.

Go to the Claremont Middle School website, http://www.claremontms.org, and follow the registration and donation page link.

For more information, contact Mike Napolitano at 655-4725, or by e-Wmail at mikenapolitano5@gmail.com.

Thanks for your consideration and support. Together we will make a difference.

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Oakland Tech: Drama, Music and Dance Stage Comeback

Fund Drive Underway to Restore Classic Steinway Piano for Performing Arts Program

Piano Restoration Fund Contribution Form

Yes! I would like to make a tax deductible contribution towards the restoration of the 1917 Steinway Model B piano at Oakland Technical High School sponsored by the Class of 1961.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

Levels of Giving

Enclosed is my check in the amount of:

- ☐ $1000 Angel
- ☐ $500 The Virtuoso Society
- ☐ $250 The Concerto Club
- ☐ $100 The Sonata Society
- ☐ $50 The Full Score Club
- ☐ Other _____

Matching Funds

☐ Yes, I am (or my spouse is) part of a matching gift program. I have enclosed or will mail separately the signed form from _____ Company to match my gift.

Please make check payable to: Oakland Tech HS PTSA

Please send your check to: Piano Restoration Fund, c/o Camille Chupp Reed
6243 Rockwell Street, Oakland, CA 94618

Oakland Technical High School Class of 1961 Spearheads Steinway Piano Restoration

by Camille Reed, Class of '61, and Pat Williams, auditorium committee chair

In 1917, Oakland Technical High School ordered a Steinway Model B Piano from Steinway & Sons in New York City. The school had opened in 1912, and needed the instrument for the many student performances at the high school. They had an orchestra, band, chorus, glee club, staged musicals and a variety of other events that enriched the students, and made good use of this wonderful instrument.

The piano, seven feet long and described as a "presentation piano," continued to be a centerpiece of the performing arts department, but fell into disuse, most dramatically in 1989 when the music program was eliminated by the district. However, the Steinway quietly and thankfully remained in its place at stage left. There it sits protected in a crate recently built by involved parents, but in need of significant restoration to return it to its former glory.

We believe that the time for restoration of this marvelous instrument has come: Things are changing at Oakland Technical High School. Six years ago, parents, teachers and administrators came together to revive the performing arts department. Today, there is a cadre of dedicated full-time teachers doing amazing work in the drama, music and dance departments.

There are more

Tech Piano 11

More News About Oakland Technical High

Oakland Tech's Paideia program featured in Oakland Tribune

Katy Murphy's December 8 article in the Tribune titled "Oakland's new 'it' high school bucks declining enrollment trend" highlights Tech's successful programs and increasing enrollment. The Paideia program, a popular humanities program based on the Socratic method, is featured throughout the article. Almost one-third of Tech's 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students participate in the rigorous program, many recommended by their 9th grade teachers. To read the full article, including interviews and comments from multiple Oakland Tech teachers and students, visit http://www.insidebayarea.com/top-stories/ci_16800211

Enrollment information 2011

The Oakland Unified School District's (OUSD) options window for incoming students closes January 14 at 3 p.m. Applications submitted after this time are considered late, and will not participate in the first round of lottery placements. For help filling out the forms and completing the process, read "The Guide to Enrolling at Oakland Tech" at http://oaklandtech.com/staff/admissions/enrollment/enrolling-at-tech-faq

Auditorium Project Gathers Supporters

Phase Two of the Tech Auditorium Project, now underway, addresses outdated and flawed acoustics, lighting, and sound in the auditorium. These big-ticket items are necessary for the auditorium to serve the students' and community's needs. In the last quarter of 2010, the Auditorium Committee raised over $30,000, which will fund a large portion of the sorely needed acoustic work.

Another exciting development is the recent decision by the Tech class of '61 to take on the restoration of Tech's 1917 Steinway grand piano, as discussed above. The auditorium upgrades will support Tech's revitalized performing arts program, as well as serve the other schools and community groups that perform, meet and host events in the auditorium. To make a tax-deductible donation or to find out more about the Tech Auditorium Project, contact Pat Williams at 510/444-1640 or prwillia@pacbell.net.

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.

"Plant Blight" Update: Mediation Model Can Help Resolve Enforcement Approach

Editor:

The December, 2010 issue of The Rockridge News included my op-ed piece about how the verdant garden Alfred Crofts and I have tended for a decade at a nearby rental property aroused the ire of a neighbor who reported us for "blight," resulting in steep fines. We have continued our research, talking to other victims of the blight ordinance and pursuing an as-yet incomplete Public Records Act search of our Community and Economic Development Agency (CEDA) file.

We believe the blight ordinance, enacted to rid the city of seemingly intractable and serious blight, has morphed into a funding mechanism for city coffers, aiding and abetting neighbors' feuds. Do the math: 40 inspectors, 22,000 blight complaints per year, $1,239 for a second strike – quite a revenue stream.

From some City Hall staffers with access to raw data from blight complaint files we have learned that more than half of the complaints allege untidiness and housekeeping issues, like trash. A small percentage involve unregistered secondary units or unpermitted building. (This lack of emphasis on structures may explain the continuing existence, even in upscale environs, of high-profile, truly blighted commercial and residential properties.) There is no threshold for separating trivial or spiteful complaints from serious ones, nor any matching of ZIP codes to complaints that might reveal where the City's resources are spent fighting "blight."

It doesn't have to be this way. The outrageous fines, fees, and the property liens that result if fines and fees go unpaid, shouldn't be used to generate funds the way street sweeping violations are. According to AuditOaklandCEDA.com, a site created by another blight program victim, cities like Baltimore and Detroit have transparent appeal processes and work with citizens to fix blight, with the goal of keeping them in their houses, not pursuing stringent policies that could lead to financial hardship.

Mayor Quan's slogan is "changing Oakland block by block." To correct the blight ordinance, she need look no further than to Richard Cowan, her chief of staff. For years, Cowan headed Conciliation Forums of Oakland, a group composed mostly of volunteers who mediated disputes between neighbors and groups. The idea was to bring about peaceful resolutions and compromises, not to exploit vendettas for city budgets. We need to get back to that model. Maybe Cowan, in the new administration, can wear another hat and craft a less punitive solution to "blight" complaints.

— Robert Brokl

Blight Abatement Notice Sent to Deceased Parents

Editor:

Thank you for the article in the December issue about the bizarre Oakland city laws about plants growing in our yards.

Back in 2006, my Rockridge property was subjected to an unannounced three-day raid by a contractor and his garden butchers. My bartlett pear tree was reduced to a stump (years later it regrew as a quince tree, evidently from the pear's rootstock). Other fruit trees in the backyard were also severely pruned. Several blue gum eucalyptus trees in my backyard were killed. The front yard was also butchered and pruned without mercy.

It seems that the city sent a letter of notice of problems to my deceased parents, who had lived out of town, but did not bother to notify me, the resident.

When you enter Oakland, you surrender many of your Constitutional rights, guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. The 4th Amendment, which guarantees due process, has been obliterated by the Oakland system of neighbors ratting out neighbors anonymously to the Blight Police and the Parking Police. This is quite similar to the system used in the Communist East German tyranny for many years. It enables bigotry, bullying and neighborhood busybodying.

Selectively enforced laws always lead to trouble and

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Letters, from page 8

discrimination. If the city government wants front yard shrubs limited to a 15 foot height, they should start with fancy houses at the top of Montclair and see how far they get...

The City Council should scale back its high-handed blight laws and bring them in line with our Constitutional protections of rights.

— James K. Sayre

Problematic Bar Now Wants Pool Hall Permit; Neighbors Challenge

Editor:

In the June 2010, Rockridge News there was an article on the city's nuisance abatement program. The residents of Kales Avenue closest to College Avenue were relieved to see that there is a city employee (Arturo Sanchez) responsible for helping citizens with nuisance abatement. We contacted Mr. Sanchez about two bars that were very noisy late at night: the Conga Lounge and George & Walt's. Mr. Sanchez subsequently sent letters to both bars.

The Conga Lounge was very cooperative, promising to make the level of the music such that it could not be heard on the sidewalk outside the bar; to ask patrons not to linger outside the door after leaving the bar; and generally to respect the fact that the Conga Lounge is a bar within a neighborhood of residences, and to respect that neighborhood. The Conga Lounge has kept those promises.

The story with George & Walt's has been altogether different.

At 1 a.m. on many nights, their loud music blares through the open bar door, and their patrons hanging out in front of the bar, loudly arguing, keep us all awake. (Ear plugs are not a solution for those of us with young children.) The situation with George & Walt's did not change after Mr. Sanchez's letter any more than it has changed after our repeated requests to close their door, turn down their music and discourage their patrons from creating loud disturbances outside the bar.

On December 9, we received a letter from the city that George & Walt's is applying for a pool hall permit. This permit is to be retroactive to take care of the fact that they do not have a permit for their three existing pool tables.

We asked that this permit be granted with the condition that they reduce the noise level to that specified in the city code, and that respects the neighborhood.

We met with the Land Use Committee of the RCPC to see if they can help us in this. Boardmember Ronnie Spitzer was appointed to determine the facts in the situation.

We urge any Rockridge residents affected by the noise of George & Walt's to let Mr. Sanchez know, in writing (asanchez@oaklandnet.com). If you receive this newsletter before the January 6 hearing, please also let Nancy Marcus know (nmarcus@oaklandnet.com).

Thank you,

— Paula Hawthorn, Armen Sedrakian, Ruth Alahydoian, Ellen Gobler

Ed. Note: *Ms. Nancy Marcus handles Special Activity Permits for the city administrator's office. Such permits relate to "Activities [that] include carnivals, bingo games, bingo hall, alley, ... pool room, secondhand/pawn shop, ..." according to the city's website.*
A fuller version of the following letter was recently sent to Ms. Marcus by a neighbor of George & Walt's establishment.

Office of Special Permits
City of Oakland

Dear Ms. Marcus:

I request that the Pool Hall permit be issued only if conditions are met to minimize the public nuisance and excessive noise caused by George & Walt's patrons after 11 p.m. most nights. Those of us who reside on the College Avenue end of Kales Avenue routinely suffer sleepless nights and littered lawns as a result of the lack of respect displayed by G&W's patrons on any given night of the week.

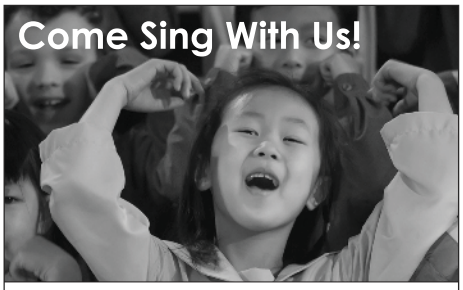
While I don't generally mind being awakened by rowdy partiers on weekends, and accept this is the price one must pay by living within shouting distance of a "beloved" local bar, I do mind, and increasingly resent, the fact that George & Walt's management deny any responsibility for their patrons who are permitted to drink, smoke and carry on loudly on the wide public sidewalk outside the bar. And to add insult to injury: the staff are generally rude whenever I have called to report loud or unruly patrons.

In 2006 we neighbors convened a meeting with the owners of George & Walt's to share our concerns about the noise and litter, and were given assurances that things would change, but if anything during this past year the noise has gotten worse, and G&W's has thus far only thumbed their noses at their neighbors' myriad requests for after-hours relief.

Thank you for considering this matter.

— L. Augusta

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Rockridge Real Estate 2010 Review

by Ortrun Niesar, Rockridge News contributor

Rockridge real estate sales in 2010 were essentially a repeat of 2009. Inventory was low, all good homes sold within a reasonable period of time and prices largely held their own, the variance being hardly more than 5 percent in either direction. Patience, thorough preparation for the market and a generally conservative approach to buying or selling seem to have been the key indicators for success in a difficult year. These same attributes will certainly apply in 2011 as well.

The Good News

The statistics we have been keeping for you since 2002 show that the Rockridge micro-market continues to defy regional market statistics for Alameda County. We continue to do better than most areas, holding our own with other top residential neighborhoods, such as North Berkeley and the Elmwood. Rockridge has the unique advantage of offering an excellent commute to San Francisco, good climate, great walk scores*, lovely craftsman homes, level streets, availability of necessary services, good public and private schools and last, but not least, engaged neighbors and an active and effective neighborhood organization in RCPC. All of these factors contribute greatly to the stability of home prices here.

What Your Home Is Worth

Given the limited inventory and slow sales of 2010, the recorded statistics tell only part of the story. The average sold price of $680,617 for a 2-bedroom home, for example, would indicate a drop in value of about 5 percent from 2009. Should that worry you? Not really. In truth, the highest sale price recorded for a Rockridge 2-bedroom home in 2010 was $870,000, with most of the other well-prepared homes falling between $700,000 and $775,000. These prices are similar to those during the past four years, indicating continued strong buyer demand and a stable market for your bungalow.

The scenario holds true for homes of three or more bedrooms. A good 3-bedroom home will sell from $875,000 to $1,050,000, or more. Homes of four bedrooms or more tend to be newer homes or historic homes that fetch prices well above the $1,000,000 mark.

For more information on what you might expect if you plan to buy or sell this year, talk with the soldiers on the ground: your local realtors, appraisers and mortgage brokers. The key word here is "local." A group of local professionals working together with you will surely give you the best results in this market.

Outlook for 2011

My advice for 2010 holds for 2011. Buying, selling or refinancing your Rockridge home may be done with confidence and caution. Mortgage rates are still hovering around 5 percent. If you plan to sell, prepare your home properly for sale. Don't skimp here. If you are looking to buy, be aware that banks continue to move cautiously. Lenders have taken to double checking your credit card balance just before funding. For best results, consider offering a large down payment, low debt/income ratio and solid employment documentation. Before putting your house on the market, check with the city building department to make sure you are compliant with the latest local regulations. Keep an eye out for the new sewer lateral inspection and repair requirements which are expected to go into effect shortly in Oakland, Emeryville and Piedmont. Repairs of sewer laterals normally are a cost to the seller of about $4,000 to $7,000.

This analysis covers Rockridge homes sales from the Berkeley border in the north, south to Broadway Terrace and 51 Street, west to Telegraph Avenue and east to Hwy 13. Information supplied by EBRD 2010 is deemed to be reliable but not guaranteed. Ortrun Niesar is a Realtor with East Bay Sotheby's International Realty. ortrun.niesar@sothebysrealty.com.

Average Sale Prices by No. of Bedrooms

Year	2BR	3BR	4+BR	No. of Homes Sold
2005	$ 802,513	$ 956,722	$ 1,466,920	124
2006	760,782	962,488	1,498,687	112
2007	780,268	986,895	1,330,031	127
2008	757,011	921,476	1,329,080	98
2009	711,967	840,074	1,388,314	79
2010	$ 680, 617	$ 876,609	$ 1,330,676	90

Rockridge Home Sale Prices 2002-2010

Year	Avg. Price	% Chge	Median Price	% Chge
2002	$ 770,604		$ 691,500	
2003	847,637	9.9	750,000	8.5
2004	902,000	6.4	805,000	7.3
2005	1,032,139	14.4	930,500	15.6
2006	1,111,317	7.6	903,500	3.0
2007	1,106,186	-1.0	1,000,000	10.3
2008	1,029,153	-7.0	905,000	-9.5
2009	904,954	-12.0	850,000	-6.0
2010	$ 962,757	6.4	$ 838,000	-.02

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* Walk scores are a measure of the presence and quality of sidewalks, pedestrian access, traffic and road conditions; overall, the general accessibility and safety of a neighborhood. See http://www.walkscore.com/how-it-works.shtml. — Ed.

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Parents: NOTE Oakland Unified School District's Options Enrollment Window for the 2011-12 School Year runs from Dec 6, 2010 to Jan 14, 2011. http://publicportal.ousd.k12.ca.us/ousd/site/default.asp

Tech Piano

from page 7

than 450 students participating in the performing arts courses offered as part of their high school education – and that number is growing every year. There are ambitious plans for a Performing Arts Academy at the school. Parents, teachers and administrators have formed an active Auditorium Committee, working on the full restoration of the auditorium, including improving the acoustics, lighting and sound systems in the theater.

The Steinway, sitting at that school for 93 years, is part of the auditorium restoration project. Piano experts deem it worthy of restoration, a restoration that will cost close to $40,000. The piano would serve as an anchor piece for the auditorium itself and the performing arts programming. It would be used by all the performing arts for their performances and by the advanced piano students for their practice and their recitals.

The Oakland Tech Class of 1961 has joined forces with the auditorium committee and is spearheading the restoration of the Steinway. We are asking that members of our community help us in the restoration of this instrument. Gifts will be tax-deductible as permitted by law and will serve as a strong message of our commitment to our public high school and encouragement for the community to help with the other elements of the auditorium restoration project.

To make a contribution to the Steinway restoration, send a check payable to Oakland Technical HS PTSA (Parent Teacher Student Association), c/o Camille Reed, 6243 Rockwell Street, Oakland, CA 94618. For additional information, please e-mail Camille at Camille888@sbcglobal.net.

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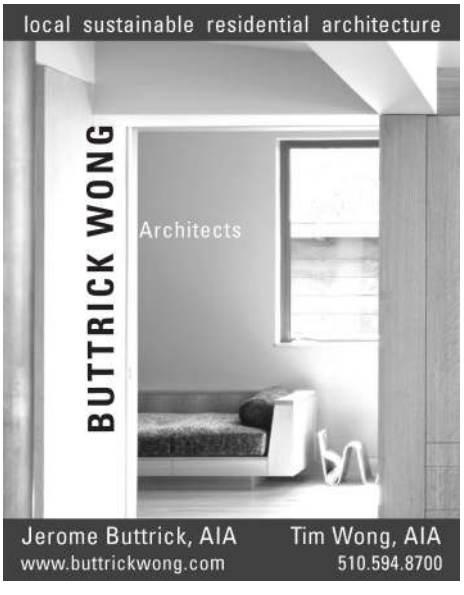
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Closing Date	BR	BATH	Address	Original Price	List Price	DOM	Selling Price
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12/3/10	4	3	5848 Oceanview Drive	$949,000	$949,000	42	$920,580
12/3/10	4	2	524 Forest Street	$739,000	$699,000	44	$685,000
12/9/10	3	1	6225 Auburn Avenue	$695,000	$695,000	14	$739,000

• Rockridge currently has about a 2.5 month supply of inventory.
• Average market time is currently 29 days in Rockridge – a decrease from 43 days at this time last year.
• Median sales price has increased from $745,000 at this time in 2009 to $747,000 presently.

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RDA Celebrates 2010 Achievements; Looks Forward to 2011 Successes

The Rockridge District Association's (RDA) annual member appreciation breakfast was held December 9 at Somerset Restaurant on College Avenue. This was a time for our members to meet, share information and get to know one another.

Guest speaker City Council President Jane Brunner gave an update on the state of the city. Susan Bernosky, RDA president, welcomed new members, including Monte McClain, new pastor of the College Avenue Presbyterian Church. We spoke on the RDA's accomplishments for 2010. We acknowledged our successful partnerships with Bob Franklin of BART and with the RCPC.

We were pleased to report that the RDA has facilitated the trimming and maintenance of our 140 or so trees on College Avenue, a responsibility we took on due to the city's budgetary constraints. This project is funded with our member assessments and promotes the health, safety and beauty of our neighborhood.

On a final note, the RDA website at www.rockridgedistrict.com has two new features: business specials and upcoming events.

We look forward to continued successes in 2011.

— Reported by Susan Bernosky



RDA celebrates the holidays. Front, from left: Louise Rothman-Riemer, Secretary RDA – *DHR Investments*; Jane Brunner; Joyce Gardner, board member – *FIT*; Thelma Harris, board member – *Thelma Harris Art Gallery*. Middle: Sara Wilson, Immediate Past President, RDA – *Market Hall*; Susan Bernosky, President, RDA – *Strahan Ins Svcs Inc*; Veronica Bhonsle, board member – *VERO*; Liz Taylor, board member – *Tootsies Rockridge*. Back: Chris Jackson, Operations Manager, RDA; Henry Levy, Treasurer, RDA – *Henry C. Levy & Company.* PHOTO: DON KINKEAD

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Opportunity: RCPC Board Applicants

The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) holds its annual election for seats on the board of directors in April. Six board seats (out of a total of 13) will be up for election. One of them could be yours.

What do RCPC boardmembers do? Among current projects facing Rockridge are: two major Safeway building proposals; stimulating College Avenue retail; supporting Rockridge public schools; and confronting Rockridge's continuing problems with traffic and crime. RCPC is involved in all these issues and more.

Watch for further announcements in The Rockridge News. For more information or to tell of your interest in the meantime, e-mail chair@rockridge.org.

START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT:

Join the Rockridge News Team

Do you like to walk? Do you like to meet your neighbors? Then we have the perfect volunteer job for you and it only requires about 20 minutes of your time each month: The Rockridge News need a block captain for the following route. If you live close by and would like to volunteer, drop us an e-mail or give us a call and we'll set you up.

Route	Description
12C	From Ada down Broadway, odd numbers to the real estate office on Broadway at the Broadway/College intersection.



Call The Rockridge News business manager at 510/547-3855 or e-mail smontauk@gmail.com to volunteer.

Emerson Elem. School Fund Brings Art Program to Classrooms

by Bruce Williams, Emerson School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

A fundraising blitz on behalf of the Emerson Enrichment Fund has led to a partnership with Studio One Arts Center to bring art instruction to each Emerson classroom beginning in mid-January.

Studio One staff will visit each classroom once a week, bringing a high level of instruction to the children. School board member Jody London referred to the arrangement as an ideal match, since Studio One is located just a block from Emerson Elementary.

The Emerson Enrichment Fund had raised slightly more than $10,000 as of mid-December. With pledges for additional contributions on the books, the way was cleared to bring in the Studio One program. With additional funds, the plan is to continue the program through the end of the school year.

The Emerson Enrichment Fund strives to establish permanent weekly art and music instruction in each classroom. The fund and the school PTO accounts are handled through Faith Network non-profit accounting service; contributions to the fund and to the PTO are tax-deductible. Checks payable to Faith Network for Emerson PTO may be sent to: Emerson Elementary School attn: PTO/Enrichment Fund, 4803 Lawton Avenue, Oakland 94609. Cash contributions are accepted at the school office. The tax ID# is 94-3403801

Contributions to the fund may also be made through Barefoot Books, online publishers of children's books, with many titles not available in large bookstores. If you are looking for books for your kids, consider purchasing them through Barefoot Books. Community member Dana Hull, a Barefoot Books representative, has directed all commissions on her sales to the fund. For more information on purchasing books through Barefoot Books, contact Dana Hull at danahull@gmail.com or go to www.danahull.barefootbooks.com

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E-mail *Rockridge News* Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), or mail to: *Rockridge News* Community Calendar, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month.

Compiled by Jo Ellis

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

Residents and business members of NCPC's 12Y and 13X areas can voice their concerns about crime and public safety. **Note: this month only, meeting on Saturday, 1/22, 3:00 PM.** Rockridge Library, upstairs meeting room, 5366 College Ave. (at Manila). Info: chair@rockridgencpc.com.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

FOR CHILDREN

- **Toddler Story Time:** Every Saturday, 10:30am.
- **Pre-School Story Time:** 1st and 3rd Wed., 10:30am.
- **Baby and Toddler Story Time:** 1st and 3rd Wed., 10:30am, **upstairs**.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- **Season of Non-Violence Friendship Bracelets:** Learn to make friendship bracelet (or practice new designs). Materials provided. Thurs, 1/20 and Sat, 1/22, 3:30 to 5pm. All ages welcome; best for kids 8 and up.

FOR TEENS

- **Rockridge Ninjas Anime Club: Ages 13 and up**, watch and talk about anime (Japanese animation). Second Tues. each month, 5 to 6:30pm, upstairs meeting rm.
- **Teen Advisory Board** (ages 14-18): Help advise the library how to better serve teens. Get community service credit for school. **Snacks provided.** 1st Saturday each month, 4 to 5pm. **NOTE: Jan. meeting re-scheduled to 1/8 because of New Year's Day.**
- **Video Gaming Tournaments: Naruto III and Super Smash Bros. on the Wii.** Sign-ups begin at 3:45 on 1/25. **Great prizes.** Hosted by the Teen Advisory Board.

For questions: Susy, 597-5017.

FOR ADULTS

- **Writers Support/Critique Group**: All writers welcome. Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. (double-spaced, MS margins) of any prose for on-site reading/discussion (you're also welcome to come empty-handed). Third 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 and referrals**. First Tues. each month. **New times: 5 to 7pm (advance sign-up starts 4:45pm)**. Note: Volunteer lawyer leaves before 7pm if no more people are present.

ART EXHIBITS (CALL TO CONFIRM)

Gallery:

- Jan: **Nancy Duscenteau:** color prints from her photo-essays.
- Feb: **Oakland Art Assn. Rick Nelson**: small paintings.

LOBBY DISPLAY CASE:

- Jan: **Non-Violence Movement:** Commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi.
- Feb: **Re-Create: Art by Kids**; sponsored by MoCha and the Rockridge Library.

LIBRARY HOURS

Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed., Thurs. and Sat. 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri., 12 to 5:30pm.
Closed: Sundays and Mondays; also **all Oakland Public Libraries closed Tues, 1/18**.

Diesel Book/Poetry Readings/Events

All events are FREE and open to the public.

- Mon., 1/10, 7pm. **Amnesty International Meeting** (2nd Monday each month): All invited to exchange ideas on action.
- Sun., 1/16, 3pm. **M.L. Liebler**, joined by **Diane di Prima, Geri Digornio, Sue Doro, Maria Mazziotti Gillan, Michael McClure**, and **Al Young**: new anthology, *Working Words: Punching the Clock and Kicking Out the Jams*.
- Wed., 1/19, 7pm. **Bryan Charles**: new memoir, *There's a Road to Everywhere Except Where You Came From*.
- Thurs., 1/27, 7pm. **Release Party for Issue 2** of *California Northern Magazine*.
- Sun., 1/30, 3pm. Poetry Flash: Risa Kaparo will read and perform from her poetry and music CD, *Awaken.*

DIESEL, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave. More info about these authors/ books (and other events and discussion groups): 653-9965 or events@dieselbookstore.com.

Rockridge Rock Band: Dear Indugu

The band members, who grew up in Rockridge, play music that is "raw and lyrically driven". Intimate acoustic performance on Sunday, 1/23, 5pm. **Free for all ages**. Nomad Cafe, 6500 Shattuck Ave. More info: Facebook.com/DearIndugu.

Wisteria Ways House Concert Series

Canconier: Diverse collection of voices and instruments features a mix of 15th century music from the time of Vlad Dracula. Sound clips at www.canconier.com/. Saturday, 1/22, 8pm (door opens 7:30pm). $15-20 donation for musicians (cash only at the door). 383 61st Street (inside venue, not wheelchair accessible). For reservations (highly recommended), RSVP to info@WisteriaWays.org or 655-2771.

Women Singers Wanted

The Distaff Singers, the Bay Area's longest-running women's choral group, is seeking new members. No auditions necessary, just ability to match pitch. Practice Tuesdays, 7:15 to 9pm at Bishop O'Dowd HS, 9500 Stearns Ave. A benefit concert in the fall supports local K-12 music programs. Info: Carola Ingram, 547-1191 or carolaingram@mac.com.

North Oakland Senior Center

Programs include: Arts/crafts; health Insurance counseling; dancing and exercise; trips, tours and theater outings; Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Groups and more.

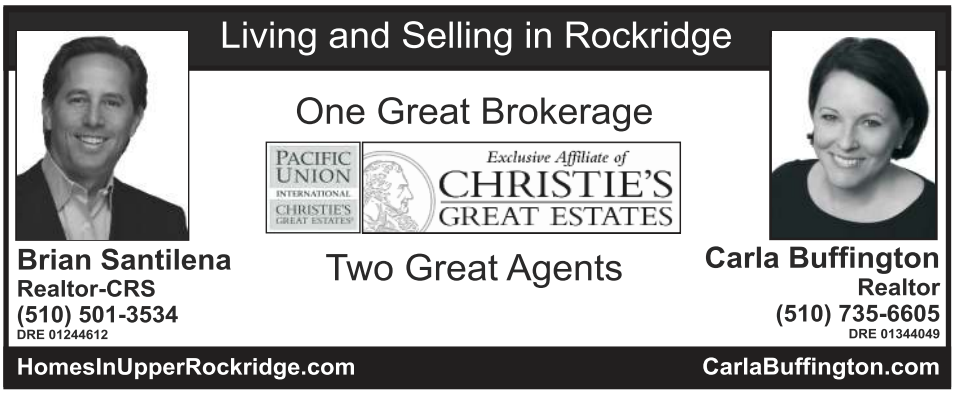
- **Sign-up now for 3 day/2 night trip to Yosemite** (May 3-5). More info: 597-5085.
- **Free AARP Tax Help** begins Wed., 2/2.

Mon. – Fri., 8:30am to 4pm. 5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Subscribe to "The North Oakland Senior Times" for full schedule of classes/events, lunch menus, membership, and volunteer opportunities. Info: 597- 5085.

Volunteers Wanted

- **Chabot Space and Science Center**. Assist visitors and share the wonder of the Universe with others. **No science or astronomy background needed; extensive training opportunities offered**. Next Volunteer Orientation: Saturday, 1/29 from 10:00am to 2:00pm, Chabot Space and Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd. Info and sign up for orientation: http://www.chabotspace.org/adult-volunteers.htm or e-mail volunteers@chabotspace.org.
- **Pro Arts:** provides critical access to contemporary art in Oakland and the East Bay. Volunteers needed as Curatorial interns, Publicity interns, Publicity/Communications Manager, East Bay Open Studios Committee Members, and Strategic Planning Partners. Artists interested in fee waivers based on volunteer hours for East Bay Open Studios must sign up before February 2. Details: info@proartsgallery.org or www.proartsgallery.org/proarts/intern.php
- **American Red Cross:**
  - **Mobile Blood Drives:** In Jan., **all presenting donors can enter a drawing for a 50" Samsung 3D Plasma HDTV** (not available at high school or college blood drives). Call 1-800-Red Cross (1-800-733-2767) or visit www.redcrossblood.org to find a location near you.
  - **Volunteer Orientations:** Tour the Oakland Blood Center. Learn to assist blood donors, deliver blood, help with special projects. Tuesdays, 1/11 and 1/18 from 6pm – 8pm. 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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