THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

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RCPC Board of Directors Election Rescheduled to May

Lack of a quorum scuttles April board vote. Attend May 19 to hear the latest on Safeway and to vote for RCPC board member candidates.

by Stuart Flashman, chair, RCPC

What would happen if they held an election and nobody came? It's an old joke, but nobody laughed when it was discovered that for the first time in RCPC's 25-year history, there was not the necessary quorum — at least 25 members — to make the vote for board of directors valid. Consequently, the election has been rescheduled for the RCPC Town Hall meeting May 19, 7 p.m., at the Rockridge Branch Library.

If a quorum is present, there will also be balloting the following Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the library.

RCPC is offering two added incentives to attend the meeting: First, there will be an update on the two Rockridge Safeway projects (College Avenue and the Rockridge Shopping Center), including an update on what's happening with the CVS store. Second, refreshments will be served. Please come and participate, and be sure to bring a picture ID and/or utility bill as proof of your Rockridge address.

Also, we offer our sincere apologies to all those RCPC members who did show up to vote and participate at the April meeting. Please come back for the May meeting and cast your vote again.

RCPC Board of Directors Seeks "New Blood"

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC chair

No, we're not vampires, but RCPC is looking for two new members for its board of directors. While six current board members are up for re-election this month, there are also two vacancies in seats not up for election. Service on the

Board: New Blood, page 6

REFRESHMENTS!

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AGENDA: May RCPC Town Hall Meeting

■ **Board Elections: RCPC holds election for board candidates. Show your support for your neighborhood organization.**

■ **Safeway Update: Updates on the Rockridge Shopping Center and College Avenue Safeway Projects.** Details below.

■ **Voting for RCPC** board members has been reset for this May Town Hall. Rockridge residents may vote at this meeting or on Saturday, May 21, at the Rockridge Branch library between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., but a quorum of at least 25 residents must vote or sign in at the Town Hall. Residents will need to verify their address. ***See story above.***

■ **Oakland Planner Darin Ranelletti** (invited) explains how Oakland will process Safeway's Rockridge Shopping Center redevelopment proposal. Help shape RCPC's response. Also: • College Avenue Safeway; • CVS store closure.

Thursday, May 19 | 7-9 p.m. Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College Avenue at Manila

Note start time

Coming: Rockridge Plaza



Makeover for BART Area at Keith and College

Designer Greer Alley, left, Market Hall owner Sara Wilson, RCPC boardmember Ann Winterman, and BART board President Bob Franklin present the BART Plaza proposal at the April RCPC Town Hall. **Story on page 10.**



- Andrea and Tiffany near Redondo Park
- Cub Scout Pack 274, Greg Feist, leader: Oscar; Evan; Lucas; Alexsandro (r).
- Bill and Claudette Accacian, grandchildren Logan and Spencer
- More pictures, page 13

Earth Day and Family Fest Perk up Frog Park for Spring

by Theresa Nelson, FROG chair

A beautiful, sunny Earth Day saw a record turnout at Frog Park for a morning cleanup and a fun Frog Family Fest in the afternoon. More than 100 volunteers — adults and children — joined in to clean the park, play structures, the creek, and pathway and planted areas. When children see adults volunteering for an Earth Day cleanup, they see adults as role models making the effort to steward the Earth and community resources. A huge amount of work was accomplished, thanks to Rockridge and Temescal neighbors and friends. For more

Earth Day at FROG Park, page 12

Oakland in Budget Solution Quandary, Mayor Tells North Oakland Meeting

by Chuck Afflerbach, Rockridge resident

Mayor Jean Quan came to North Oakland for her first town hall meeting, and her message could not have been clearer: there's a new mayor in town and things are going to be different.

"We're trying to reorganize government to make it closer to the community, to make it more transparent, and to get you involved," Quan told 300 Oakland residents at the North Oakland Senior Center Saturday morning, April 2. True to her word, she put the audience to work helping to solve the problems facing the city.

But first came the introductions. Joining the mayor at the meeting were District 1 City Councilmember Jane Brunner, School Board Vice President Jodi London, Police Chief Anthony Batts, and a dozen more department heads and managers from City Hall.

After a pep talk on why Oaklanders love their city, the Mayor got to the root of all problems: money, or the lack of it. "This is clearly a budget situation that is the worst Jane and I have faced," Quan said. "We've been cutting and cutting and there's not much left to cut."

Councilmember Brunner echoed her concern, emphasizing that the general fund for the coming year will be $90 million less than the past four years. "We have done a lot of one-time fixes. We are not going to be able to do one-time fixes anymore."

Quan briefly outlined her budget plan with the warning that "we're going to be asking everyone to sacrifice." Voters will again be asked to pass a new parcel tax, after rejecting one last November. City employees will see more salary cuts and more layoffs. The mayor's hope is that the city will weather the recession and be poised to bounce back. "We're big enough to do great and interesting things but small enough to talk to each other," she said.

Then that talking to each other began. Residents were asked to join one of eight different "breakout" groups to discuss issues including public safety, jobs, traffic, schools, and the Caldecott Tunnel's fourth bore. After a half-hour discussion, each group presented its ideas to the town hall meeting. These proposals were collected by the mayor's staff for future consideration.

The District 1 meeting was the third of seven town hall meetings scheduled across Oakland this spring. Mayor Quan has pledged to hold a town hall meeting in each district each year.

Word is out that Oakland has a new mayor and she's not hard to find.

The meeting can be viewed in five parts on the Mayor's YouTube channel at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfeBeBAWLFc, the first video in the series. The video series apparently omits the mayor's Q&A with audience members and her closing comments. In her wrap-up, she made four points:

- City workers will face furloughs, pension cuts, and increased health care costs.
- City programs will be cut and the community will get less in services.
- City government will have to be restructured and some departments eliminated.
- Because voters rejected a previously proposed $360 parcel tax, Oakland residents can expect a new parcel tax proposal in the $80 range.



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Library program details: See Calendar, page 15.

The Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded in 1986 by Don Kinkead, is published monthly in Oakland and is sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), a nonprofit public benefit organization founded to: preserve and enhance the unique character of the Rockridge neighborhood; promote the health, safety and quality of life of its residents; furnish a forum for community involvement, and provide leadership and representation of neighborhood interests.

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- Do you have questions about newsletter distribution?
- Want to volunteer to be a ***Rockridge News*** block captain?
- Would you like to write a letter to the Editor?

Contact us at one of the following:
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The Rockridge News, 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.

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RCPC Land Use Committee

The RCPC Land Use Committee meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Rockridge Branch Library, Upstairs Meeting Room, 7:30 p.m. Next meeting: May 25. *Subject to change. Check www.rockridge.org for meeting updates.*

■ **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.

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee chair

- **Rockridge Shopping Center Reconstruction Project** (Corner of Broadway and Pleasant Valley)
- **College Avenue Safeway Shopping Center** (Corner of College and Claremont Avenues)

As reported in last month's Land Use Committee Update, the Draft Environmental Impacts Reports (DEIRs) for these two large and important projects have again been delayed.

Darin Ranelletti (238-3663, DRanelletti@oaklandnet.com), the planner assigned to the Rockridge Shopping Center project, now says that the DEIR for that project can be expected, perhaps, some time in June. Once released, there will be a 45-day public review and comment period, including a public hearing before the Planning Commission. That meeting will not, however, be when the Commission considers whether to approve the project. That won't happen until all of the comments on the DEIR have been responded to in writing and the Planning Commission has decided whether to certify the Final EIR as adequate. Bottom line: don't expect this project to come up for possible approval until some time in the fall. At that point, the Planning Commission may look a bit different. Doug Boxer and Vince Gibbs have left the commission, giving Mayor Quan two appointments to the commission. In the meantime, RCPC and other community groups will continue trying to convince Safeway that a better project would, in the long run, be in everyone's best interest.

On a related note, Safeway has extended the lease for the CVS store until December. The store had already begun closing down departments and emptying out shelving areas. Now, it appears they will restock the store, at least temporarily. Does this mean there's a possibility that Safeway has had a change of heart about kicking CVS out? Don't count on it. More likely, it just indicates they've realized they won't have a project approved any time soon, and don't want to leave the store sitting vacant. Still, one can hope. If you want to write to Safeway about this, the address is:

David Zylstra, Chief Operating Officer
Property Development Centers
5918 Stoneridge Mall Road
Pleasanton, CA 94588-3229

Concerning the College Avenue Safeway store project, it looks like Peterson Vollman, (pvollman@oaklandnet.com, 238-6167), the planner handling the project, hasn't met his goal of having the DEIR for that project released in April. As of press time, there's no word back from him about when to expect public release of the DEIR.

Both of these projects can be expected to have multiple impacts on Rockridge, ranging from traffic, to air and water quality, to overall quality of life. RCPC expects to be involved in commenting on both EIRs, and encourages Rockridge residents to participate in the public review process.

Look for future updates on both projects on the RCPC website, http://rockridge.org.

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 http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/CEDA/o/PlanningZoning/s/Application/index.htm.

5337 College Avenue

Proposal: Minor Conditional Use Permit to operate a Limited Service Restaurant and Cafe.
Applicant/ Scott Cameron
Phone Number: 925/260-4165
Planning Permits Required: Minor Conditional Use Permit to operate a Limited Service Restaurant and Cafe Activity in the C-31 Special Retail Commercial Zone
Case Planner: Mike Rivera at 510/238-6417 or mrivera@oaklandnet.com

6129 Hillegass Avenue

Proposal: Create a new driveway and parking space to serve an existing single-family dwelling which currently does not have on-site parking.
Applicant/ Emma and Andrew Armstrong
Phone Number: 415/810-7253
Owner: Emma and Andrew Armstrong
Planning Permits Required: Minor Variance for less than 10 feet of separation between the proposed driveway and an existing driveway located on a neighboring lot
Historic Status: Potential Designated Historic Property, Survey Rating Dc2+
Case Planner: Leigh McCullen at 510/238-4977 or lmccullen@oaklandnet.com

Rockridge resident and CVS shopper Joan C. is pleased to learn that the much-loved store will continue in business at the Safeway Shopping Center, at least through December, 2011, rather than closing soon. "This store is a real community resource," she said.



D. Kinkead

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Last Call for Kitchens for RCPC Tour!

by Natalie Mehta, RCPC Kitchen Tour

In preparation for this fall's Rockridge Kitchen Tour, set for October 2, the planning committee has been visiting many neighborhood kitchens and has been truly impressed by the creativity and craftsmanship of these Rockridge gems.

As we are in the final weeks of meeting with candidates before selections are made at the end of May, we are putting out the "last call" for candidates. If you, or someone you know, is putting the final touches on a kitchen remodel, or is already enjoying a completed renovation, please let us know.

Past tours have featured a variety of styles including bungalow, traditional, and contemporary. Submissions may be directed to Natalie Mehta at 415/279-5148, or Natalie.mehta@yahoo.com.

New: A Rockridge News Series

Sound Facts About Soundwalls

by Andrew Charman, chair, RCPC Transportation Committee

Engineering studies for possible soundwalls along parts of SR-24 in the Rockridge area have been included on the final list of the Caldecott Fourth Bore Settlement projects. [See article and list on page 5.] The subject of soundwalls in Rockridge has a long history, and has generated much discussion and many questions over the years. To determine whether these sound wall projects will continue to move forward, residents of affected parts of Rockridge will be polled for their opinions.

To help inform community discussion, the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) board is starting an outreach and educational initiative centered around a series of articles in The Rockridge News. The group will also organize community meetings for further discussion. RCPC seeks to provide a context for — and accurate information about — the characteristics, performance, and costs and benefits of soundwalls, before any residents are asked to make binding decisions about whether the walls should or should not be installed.

These articles will explore topics relevant to noise pollution and its mitigation including: tutorials on sound and hearing; noise and its measurement; socioeconomic, psychological, and physiological effects of noise; surface traffic and traffic noise; local, state, federal, and international guidelines for regulating noise; noise control, suppression, and mitigation; what soundwalls do and do not do, and how they do it; what soundwalls might look like, and what they might cost; a brief history of soundwall issues in Rockridge; and a description of the soundwall public process moving forward.



The serenity of the concrete forms supporting the freeway belies the often intrusive whines, hums and honks from the constant stream of traffic above. Oakland's Fourth Bore Settlement Agreement provides funding for studies to determine if and how soundwalls in particular locations in Rockridge will help to lessen the effects of traffic sounds. RCPC will present a series of articles to examine soundwalls and sound effects. *(See story, page 5, about the financial settlement.)*

The articles will be edited and abridged for publication in The Rockridge News in subsequent months. Fuller and somewhat more technical versions will be posted as fact sheets on the RCPC website for readers' further review.

We will try to address your concerns in this series. If you have any specific questions or comments about soundwalls or noise pollution, please contact the RCPC board via info@rockridge.org or The Rockridge News via editor@rockridge.org.

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Caldecott Settlement Project List Posted: Soundwall Studies, Intersections, Bicycle Facilities, More, Proposed for Funding

Submitted by Fourth Bore Coalition

The final list of projects to be funded through the city of Oakland's $8 million Settlement Agreement with Caltrans over the Caldecott Tunnel Fourth Bore EIR was released March 23. These projects are intended to ameliorate the impacts to the North Oakland Hills, Rockridge and Temescal districts of adding the fourth bore to the Caldecott Tunnel. According to the agreement, projects must "have as their primary purpose the improvement of pedestrian, bicycle, transit and local street improvements, noise barriers, including projects that support the use of transit (and the reduction of single-occupant motorized vehicles, such as transit signal coordination and amenities), to the greater community in the Highway 24 corridor between I-580 and the Caldecott Tunnel."

Public Input in Creating the List

The project list has been finalized through a series of three 3-hour-long walking tours of affected areas, considering over 250 public comments, and a public meeting held in November, 2010.

More details on the intent and conceptual design of these projects are available at http://dl.dropbox.com/u/16069359/Oakland-Caldecott/Caldecott%20project%20fact%20sheets_03-14-11.pdf. The project cost estimates include a budget for public involvement in project design decisions.

Next Steps

An agreement with the Alameda County Transportation Commission and Caltrans must be signed with the city regarding funding and the list of projects. While this process is underway, each project will be evaluated to determine if more design work is needed prior to further community meetings, or vice-versa. The city intends to begin by focusing on the first six projects on the list.

Once the design of those projects and pre-construction work is underway, the community will be asked to participate in the development of projects farther down the list. You will be directly notified of opportunities to participate in the design of these projects.

In addition, the Fourth Bore Coalition will continue to track this process at www.fourthbore.org, as will the RCPC at www.rockridge.org.

All material in this report, and additional information, is available at http://www.fourthbore.org/featured/oakland-settlement-final-project-list/

A Note About the Project List and Cut-Off Points

Pending further project design details, the list currently funds the projects numbered 1 through 21. That funding cut-off line could move up or down as more project details are developed.

— Stuart Flashman, RCPC chair

Project Number and Name	Est. Cost
1 Tunnel Road/SR 13/Hiller Drive Intersection Improvements	$950,000
2 Pedestrian Facilities on Caldecott Lane/Tunnel Road	$650,000
3 Bicycle Facilities on Caldecott Lane/Tunnel Road	$290,000
4 Caldecott Lane/Kay overcrossing Intersection Improvements	$400,000
5 Bike facilities on Broadway from Brookside Avenue to Kay OC	$410,000
6 Jogging/walking path on Broadway from Golden Gate to Lake Temescal	$275,000
7 Soundwall study: Eastbound between Vicente Way and Broadway	$554,000
8 Soundwall study: Westbound between Ross Street and Telegraph Avenue	$628,000
9 Broadway/Keith Intersection Improvements*	$840,000
10 College/Keith Intersection Improvements	$235,000
11 Bike Route Signage at Rockridge BART	$20,000
12 Broadway/Lawton Intersection Improvements*	$400,000
13 Broadway/Ocean View intersection improvements*	$400,000
14 Broadway/Brookside/SR 24 On-ramp Intersection Improvements	$295,000
15 Rockridge BART Bicycle Parking	$100,000
16 On-street Bicycle Parking in Commercial Areas	$30,000

Project Number and Name	Est. Cost
17 52nd/51st/SR 24 ramps/Shattuck Intersection Improvements	$635,000
18 Soundwall study: Westbound between Patton Street and Ross Street	$179,000
19 Alternatives' Analysis of Lake Temescal - Tunnel Rd Bike/ped connections	$200,000
20 College/Miles Intersection Improvements	$160,000
21 Claremont/Hudson/SR 24 On-ramp Intersection Improvements	$180,000
22 College/Manila intersection improvements	$200,000
23 Pedestrian Scale Lighting on Telegraph from 42nd Street to Berkeley border	$240,000
24 Soundwall study: Eastbound between 40th and 52nd Streets	$425,000
25 Soundwall study: Westbound bet. Telegraph Ave. and M.L.K. Jr Way	$306,000
26 Telegraph/56th/Eastbound SR 24 On-ramp Intersection Improvements	$230,000
27 Soundwall study: Eastbound between Broadway and Golden Gate Avenue	$312,000
28 College/Claremont Intersection Improvements	$225,000
29 Broadway/Manila Intersection Improvements	$257,000

Project Number and Name	Est. Cost
30 Telegraph/Aileen/SR 24 Off-ramp Intersection Improvements	$113,000
31 Soundwall study: Eastbound between 52nd Street and Claremont Avenue	$289,000
32 Soundwall study: Eastbound between Golden Gate Ave. and Lake Temescal	$536,000
33 Soundwall study: Westbound between M.L.K. Jr. Way on-ramp and 40th St	$304,000
34 Soundwall study: Westbound between Golden Gate Avenue and Patton St	$231,000
35 AC Transit Route 51 Service Improvement	$920,000
36 Telegraph/Claremont/52nd Intersection Improvements	$240,000
37 Bicycle and Pedestrian Park Rest Stop	$192,000

* Projects #9, 12 and 13 will be designed together.



Water Still Runs Deep

by Don Kinkead, editor

Not so long ago, before there was Rockridge, before there was Oakland, even before there was the East Bay, there was open land from the hills to the Bay. Covered with grasses and trees, the land was home to a network of creeks and streams draining rainwater runoff from the hills, nourishing plants, animals and the people that lived here then, as the water moved on to the Bay.

Time passed, cities grew and most creeks were buried deep underground in big culverts that could still drain the water to the Bay, but that could be covered over to make flat land for buildings. And it wasn't so long ago: The Oakland Library's history room has a photograph from the late 1800s showing a wooden bridge over a creek running through what is now the intersection of Telegraph Avenue and 52nd Street. (Some of the buildings in that photo still stand on Telegraph today.)

Nowadays, except for sections still open to the sky, creeks are largely out of sight, but there are efforts to keep them flowing in the collective memory. One such project was discovered in mid-April when bemused passersby noticed five irregularly shaped cast bronze disks depicting scenes of water plants and animals set in the sidewalk next to Oliveto Café, facing Shafter Avenue. The word "Temescal" was stamped in the concrete next to the disks.

According to information e-mailed to The Rockridge News by Kristin Hathaway, an Oakland watershed program specialist, this is a city public art project, funded by Measure DD Creek Restoration and Lake Merritt Water Quality funds.

"This project is located in five different watersheds throughout the City," she wrote, "one of which is the Temescal Creek Watershed. These markers in front of Oliveto are located over a former branch of Temescal Creek. Each of the sites is marked with the name of the watershed in which it is located to draw attention to the fact that these culverts/buried creeks are part of a larger watershed system."



Shielding her eyes from the afternoon sun, a pedestrian approaches the Temescal Watershed sidewalk art installation at Shafter and College avenues.

Kristin Zaremba, public art project manager for Oakland, e-mailed that the artworks were created by the artist team Wowhaus, Scott Constable and Ene Osteraas-Constable, after a city-wide community outreach for ideas and feedback "from a variety of residents before commencing their designs."

However, a Rockridge resident with experience in public projects, felt the reported outreach missed the Rockridge community. Zaremba wrote that the owners of Oliveto were contacted about the project; Market Hall owner Sara Wilson said she was not contacted for comment or review.

Visit oaklandcreeks.org for more information and links to creek and watershed sites..

Board: New Blood

from page 1

board is not very onerous, but does require attending one three-hour board meeting a month, plus attendance at monthly Town Hall meetings and service on at least one RCPC committee.

One of the vacant seats is the board's traditional "merchant" seat. That seat is the only voting seat not restricted to Rockridge residents. It is filled by board appointment, for up to a one-year term. The appointee is ordinarily an owner of a business or commercial property within Rockridge, with preference given to retail merchants along College Avenue.

The other open seat would also be a one-year appointment, but to a seat that will be up for election in 2012. It is open to any adult living within the RCPC boundaries. (See our website at http://rockridge.org for a map.)

If you'd like to help keep Rockridge alive and well, and have a chance to provide direction to RCPC's many programs and projects, please submit a letter of interest. Include your address and contact information and a short statement about your background and why you would like to be appointed to the board. Letters may be sent via e-mail to chair@rockridge.org or via regular mail to RCPC, PMB 311, 4123 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94611. The deadline for applications is May 31, 2011.

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FROG Restroom Construction Underway

by Theresa Nelson, FROG Chair

Work on the new Frog Park restroom is moving ahead, now that sunnier skies are here. "It is wonderful to finally see this project come to fruition," said FROG committee member Mike McDonald.

Before the 2001 Big Build at the park was even finished, people began talking about the need for a restroom. FROG committed to leave a Porta-Potty on-site as an interim solution, though no one realized it would be a 10-year interim solution.

After Phase Two of the park opened in 2006, Mike McDonald and Christie Beeman began to work on restroom options. As Mike noted, "A proper restroom for the park was simply necessary given the overwhelming popularity and use we were seeing at the park. On any given day, you would see moms and dads toting youngsters and knocking on neighbors' doors asking to use their restrooms, or little ones squatting behind trees."

Mike and Christie worked with Councilmember Jane Brunner to secure funding for a permanent restroom. Jennifer Cooper became involved, and continued to work to secure the location and general design on the project while Mike was living temporarily outside the neighborhood. Ronnie Spitzer also worked on the final restroom phases.

We appreciate the help of Councilmember Brunner's staff members Kate Whitlow, instrumental in getting funding, and Nila Kim for her major work getting CalTrans to approve the current location and working with other city staff, including Jim Ryugo of Public Works, on the project. Zac Wald, Brunner's chief of staff, played an important role keeping the project moving forward over the past five years.

The restroom is expected to open in early summer; more details will be published in the Rockridge News and on the Frog Park website, www.frogpark.org.

Our thanks to Mike McDonald, Jennifer Cooper, Ronnie Spitzer and Christie Beeman for their dedication and persistence in making the new restroom a reality.



Ronnie Spitzer, left, Mike McDonald and Theresa Nelson at the construction site of the new Frog Park restroom.



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Reader Survey Results: The Rockridge News

To mark the 25th year of its publication, The Rockridge News surveyed its readers to learn which subjects covered by the newsletter were most important to them. Forty-three responded to the online survey and eight mailed in survey forms clipped from the newsletter. Readers were also asked for their thoughts on topics that should either be included or be left out, and were invited to make general comments, as well.

Advertisements in the newsletter offer an important resource to readers seeking particular services provided close to home, and fund newsletter production costs. Readers were asked to give their opinions on the quantity of advertising in the newsletter. Most respondents felt the present amount to be sufficient.

The survey questions and results are below, with responses arranged in order of frequency. With 51 responses out of more than 5,000 expected readers, the results cannot be said with any certainty to reflect the wider readership. Perhaps the results do not even reflect your views about the newsletter. If you feel differently — or to add your view to those below— tell the editor. E-mail editor@rockridge.org or take the survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/92NP3T8. Thanks to all for participating. ***— Don Kinkead, editor***

1. Are you a regular reader of The Rockridge News?
   - **48** Yes
   - **2** No

2. How do you get the newsletter?
   - **46** Delivered to my home
   - **3** College Avenue merchant
   - **1** College Avenue coffee shop
   - **1** Read it online at rockridge.org
   - **1** Read it at the Rockridge library
   - **0** Subscription delivered by mail

3. Which features do you read most often?
   - **43** Land Use Committee report
   - **43** Letters to the editor
   - **30** Community Calendar
   - **27** The Neighborhood Merchant
   - **23** Classified ads
   - **23** The Rockridge Muse
   - **22** Rockridge Cornucopia
   - **15** FROG Park reports

4. What local news topics do you look for in each issue?
   - **43** Local building projects
   - **42** Planning and Zoning
   - **34** City Council decisions
   - **33** Traffic issues
   - **31** Local restaurants
   - **30** Local arts, entertainment
   - **30** Transportation
   - **27** Mixture of local businesses
   - **27** Pedestrian safety
   - **25** Merchant/Business affairs
   - **24** Parks
   - **22** Rockridge Branch library
   - **21** City budget
   - **21** Food
   - **18** Local schools
   - **17** Education issues

Remarks:

✓ "I would like to see a city-wide perspective with Rockridge shown as a part of Oakland, not an island."

✓ "I am interested in urban farming and animal husbandry."

✓ "I want to see more about special events."

5. What do you think of the proportion of display advertising to print content?
   - **45** About right
   - **2** Too many ads
   - **1** Not enough ads

✓ "More content, fewer commercial ads. It seems like the ads are getting BIGGER. How about small and medium sizes for commercial ads? (Too many realtor ads!) More space for RN classified. OK to have the back page for commercial ads."

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

✓ "Personal stories of residents"

✓ "Bike commuting ideas. Police activities and crime watch. Traffic and car issues. City-wide and council activities."

✓ "Neighbor profiles: who are the people living in the neighborhood? What do they do? What do they like most about Rockridge, etc…."

✓ "Crime reports, maybe more letters to the Editor. More Neighborhood Merchant columns."

7. What would you like to see LESS of?

✓ "Cranky stories by old people complaining about how things are changing, how loud it is in the city, why it is not as good as the 'old days,' etc."

✓ "Local residents being so over reactionary about businesses wanting to come into Rockridge."

✓ "Less demonizing any organization - CalTrans, BART, or employer like Dreyer's, Safeway. These are our neighbors just as much as Yasai, La Farine, or Cole Coffee."

✓ "RCPC posturing as being representative of Rockridge. You're not – not even close."

8. Additional Comments:

✓ "Thank you for producing this useful publication that helps our community!"

✓ "I enjoy reading a local-focused publication, and look forward to each issue. Thanks for your work."

✓ "Thank you for a great paper. I read it cover to cover."

Respondents by street name and hundred block number. Not all respondents provided this information.

Street	Hundred Block
61st Street	45x
62nd Street	34x, 36x
63rd Street	30x, 36x
Armanino Court	[No entry]
Avon	41x, 43x
Ayala	59xx
Benvenue Ave	64xx
Boyd	52xx
Broadway	59xx
Bryant	53xx
Chabot	64xx
Claremont	54xx
Clifton	32x, 36x
Colby	60xx, 62xx, 64xx
Contra Costa Road	62xx
Florio Street	63xx
Forest Street	32x
Harwood Avenue	61xx
Hemphill	31x
Hudson Street	46x, 44x
Kales	54xx
Keith	56xx
Lawton	53xx
Locksley Avenue	53xx
Manor Crest	67xx
Mendocino	58xx
Miles Ave	56xx
Oak Grove	56xx
Ocean View Drive	56xx
Presley Way	58xx
Rockwell Street	60xx
Ross Street	58xx
S. Rockridge Blvd	61xx
Shafter Avenue	54xx
Taft	55xx, 55xx, 59xx
Thomas	53xx

From Rockridge to Cairo and Back

10 Days in Tahrir Square

by Noha Radwan, Rockridge resident

THE Rockridge MUSE

Submitted by Ortrun Niesar

I was cooking dinner in our new Rockridge house when the early stirrings of the Egyptian revolution reached me via the Internet. I followed closely. On January 25, I saw the footage of young Egyptian men and women taking to the streets in the city where I was born and raised. They were demanding an end to a brutal, oppressive and corrupt regime that had been led by Mubarak for 30 years. Facing a brutal riot police that tried to stop them with water guns, shotguns, rubber bullets and finally live ammunition, they seemed unstoppable. The following day, I decided to leave for Cairo. I flew from SFO to Heathrow, only to discover that my London-Cairo flight was cancelled. Telephone communication was almost non-existent. When I finally got through to my parents, they told me to go back to California, that it was too dangerous for me to be there.

I arrived in Cairo on the morning of Saturday January 29. By then the revolution was well underway. I knew that all of you were watching. The whole world was watching. In San Francisco that weekend, the solidarity demonstration was almost 4,000 people strong. I could not follow it but I knew that my daughter was there too.

I joined the Tahrir Square protests for a total of 10 days. I only saw my parents on the first and last of these days. Traveling around the city was limited by curfew that began at 4 p.m. I stayed with a friend who lived only a few blocks away from the square. Her apartment had become "Revolution Central," housing 10-15 women who were always coming in and out for showers, food and a few hours of sleep. The television was turned to al-Jazeera at all times of day and night, and once cell phone service was restored, phones were chiming around the clock. Many of my friends were journalists and were reporting to various news agencies.

I went to the square from morning 'til about midnight. Some of my friends spent the nights there as well. The square was amazing. Everyone was represented and the participation of women was spectacular. We all shared the space, the food and the water. People whose apartments overlooked the square provided venues for the press, toilets, and electrical outlets for the protestors. We all felt like part of a big family.

A Mob Attack

On February 2, I gave a live interview to "Democracy Now" in New York, and told them that Mubarak's regime is bringing out paid mobs to support it. When I left the studio, I found out the hard way that the mobs were doing more than stage a show of support. They were attacking the journalists and the protestors. I could not return to Tahrir Square that Wednesday afternoon because I was assaulted on the way and ended up in a nearby hospital.

I went back the next day and again on Friday. The protestors named Friday, February 4, the "Friday of Departure." They had high hopes that Mubarak would step down by the end of the day. He did not. They vowed to continue, but unfortunately I had to leave and return to my job at UC Davis.

I thought that Egyptians were in for the long haul, but it was on the morning of Friday, February 11 (PST), only a few days after I had returned, that I heard the news on NPR: Egypt's president of 30 years had finally surrendered to the will of the people.

For 18 days, united and steadfast, Egyptian men and women, Muslims and Christians of all age groups and political orientation, staged a non-violent protest. And on February 11, they gave us all an Egyptian gift: a renewal of our faith in the ability of non-violent protests to change the course of history. Now I am back in Oakland, watching my people take their first baby steps toward democracy and social justice.

Noha Radwan is assistant Professor of Arabic and Comparative Literature at UC Davis. She lives in Rockridge with her husband and children.



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Plans for Rockridge BART Plaza on Track

by Don Kinkead, editor

Creating attractive and useful public space is never easily or quickly done. Eight years after RCPC first proposed improvements to the area outside the BART station area at Keith and College avenues, an approved redesign of the space is in hand and closer than ever to becoming a reality.

Residents attending the RCPC April Town Hall got an early peek at the most current development plans for the area to be known as BART Plaza. Seen as a destination for BART passengers and College Avenue strollers and shoppers, the area's design is keyed on the Rockridge name. A variegated line of large stones — "A ridge of rock," said volunteer designer and Rockridge resident Greer Alley — capped by brawny metal letters spelling the well-known area's name, will be on the College Avenue side of the plaza area. On the other side, a serpentined concrete bench generally facing Keith Avenue will be positioned to receive as much sunlight as possible. Native grasses and ferns planted at the bases of the existing redwoods will replace the current blanket of ivy.

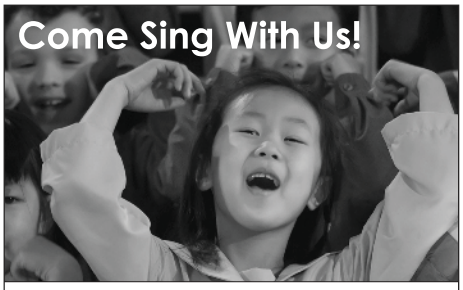
Public art is also included in the design features. A bronze compass rose set into the sidewalk is planned to be the initial piece to emphasize the sense of location and travel. It will be oriented to areas of interest near and far.

An eight-year-long project is bound to move in fits and starts; this one is no exception. Still, as people interested in the project came and went, it stayed alive, gathering the support of the Rockridge District Association (RDA), the city of Oakland, and BART itself.

One meeting attendee was concerned this latest iteration of the plans was developed without sufficient public participation. Another person, recently learning of the project, said she found it a successful design.

Project presenters Greer Alley, Bob Franklin of BART, Sara Wilson of Market Hall and RDA, and Ann Winterman of RCPC said money for the project and approval for the plans are in place. Franklin, a Rockridge resident and an early project supporter, obtained BART support and funding. Councilmember Jane Brunner's office developed city funding and RDA, with the support of Sara Wilson of Market Hall, spearheaded merchant money donations and support. In addition to the effort, time and support of board members through the years, RCPC has also donated funds.

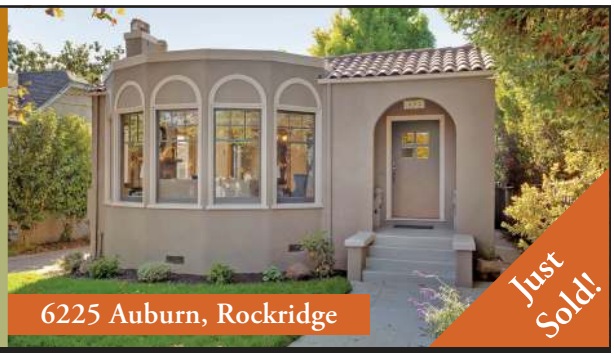
The presenters said invitations for bids will be issued soon.



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Earth Day Cleanup at the Rockridge Library

A half-dozen volunteers spent more than three hours on the 3rd Annual Earth Day cleanup organized and led by Jennifer Kaplan of Rockridge Home (5418 College Avenue), sprucing up the library grounds. The hard-working gardeners pruned dead branches off trees, pulled weeds, and raked and trimmed and groomed.

Amazing trash finds: a broken snorkel, and a pair of slightly rusted 5-pound dumbbells, with a pair of 5-pound ankle weights. Thank you, Jennifer and everyone.

Jennifer's next cleanup of the library grounds will take place over Labor Day Weekend 2011.

— Adapted from FORL's new web site: http://www.friendsofrockridgelibrary.org

Adam's Walk: Almost 300 students from Peralta Elementary "walk for peace" from the school to College Avenue in memory of after-school instructor Adam Williams. Williams was killed by would-be robbers at Jack London Square April 24. Donations to a memorial fund can be made at: http://www.peraltaschool.org



Text and Photo: Chuck Afflerbach

Record Earnings from Peralta Yard Sale Benefit Two Local Schools

by Nicole Aruda and Heather Grillmeyer

We, this year's LRPG Yard Sale Captains, thank all those generous people who gave their time, goods and energy to support another successful Lower Rockridge Parents Group yard sale. This year, we did more with less, earning a record $6,100 to support both Peralta and Claremont schools. The whipped cream came in the form of being cleaned up and done by 2:30 p.m. – two hours earlier than usual.

During this period of uncertainty that faces our schools, we proved that ours is a community that knows how to come together for a greater good. We fight cynicism with hard work and open hearts. It is our community that will sustain us in difficult times. We see the commitment to the common good that characterizes this community — more importantly, our children see it too. They are growing up knowing they have the ability to work for positive change in the world.

We cannot list all the people who helped to make this year's sale a success, there are too many. However, your hard work and generosity has made a positive difference in the lives of many beautiful children.

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Rockridge Holds Strong in April!

Closing Date	BR	BATH	Address	Original Price	List Price	DOM	Selling Price
4/19/11	3	1.5	6072 Chabot Road	$1,100,000	$1,100,000	16	$1,180,000
4/13/11	2	2	5335 Broadway Terrace	$445,000	$429,000	152	$410,000
4/12/11	3	2	442 60th Street	$785,000	$785,000	12	$800,000
4/10/11	2	1	5309 Shafter Avenue	$865,000	$865,000	0	$880,000
4/08/11	4	3	5266 Manila Avenue	$898,000	$898,000	7	$914,000
4/01/11	2	1	5515 Broadway	560,000	$560,000	8	$612,000

• Rockridge currently has just over a 1.9 month supply of inventory • Average list to sell to date April of this year was 103% - virtually the same as last year • Average market time is currently 33 days in Rockridge - compared to an average of 17 days a year ago • Median sales price has increase by 13% over last year. • Sales are down from 10 last year to just 6 this year

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Earth Day at FROG Park

from page 1

pictures, visit www.frogpark.org and view our Flickr feed.

New FROG committee member Carol Behr chaired the cleanup and Family Fest this year, backed by other committee members. Carol said, "I'm in awe of the seasoned FROG committee members, Ronnie, Theresa, Howard, Jimmy, Jennifer, and community volunteers who were vital in the planning and the doing to make the day. It was also great to see all the families participating in the festivities." A certified project manager, Carol organized the hundreds of tasks, materials, communications and activities needed to make the event smooth and effective.

Many thanks to neighbors

Our thanks to Mara Glendell who created the festive graphics, with new posters and flyers.

We are grateful to the dedicated captains who supervised volunteers and led the many projects accomplished on Saturday: Howard Ferrier, Barney Smits, Jimmy Pedersen, and Jennifer Cooper. Our thanks to Ronnie Spitzer, who solicited donations of food and beverages to keep our volunteers refreshed throughout the morning and was our "gofer." A special thanks to Rockridge's Girl Scout Troop #32619 and Cub Scout Troop #274 for their hard work all morning. And thanks to Barney Smits who built the new "feed the frog game" that will re-appear at future Frog Family Fests (the frog painting was done by yours truly, re-awakening those dormant arts-and-crafts genes).

This year, FROG sponsored a Family Fest with games, crafts, bubbles, face-painting, planting, and other family fun, organized by Carol Behr and Ronnie Spitzer. We appreciate the game and activity supervision from Barney Smits and Joan Bletch, and teen volunteers Daniel Orenstein, Tyler Lee, and Ruby Spring, who handled face-painting. Thanks to John Gomes for his wonderful kid-friendly music, and to Annette Floystrup for storytelling. Chabot Elementary School lent us the hula hoops, Daniel Brownstein from the Peralta Parent Teacher Group and Chabot PTA President Kelly Weigel helped with activity suggestions, and Michelle Blakely connected us with the East Bay Depot for Creative Re-Use. Thanks to Howard Ferrier, Jimmy Pederson and Gideon Ur for many planning, setup and shut-down activities.

Thank you, business neighbors

We're grateful to our neighborhood businesses that donated for the event:

- Rockridge Kids for stickers
- Starbucks for hot coffee
- Katrina Rozelle Bakery for delicious cookies, cupcakes and cheesecake
- Grand Lake Ace Hardware for hand shovels and weeding tools
- Bakesale Betty's for their wonderful banana bread
- Trader Joe's for fruit and snack bars
- We are also grateful to local businesses and the Rockridge Library for posting flyers and announcing the events.

These Earth Day events show that Rockridge and Temescal neighbors know how to get things done.

Everyone is welcome to be part of planning and to participate in our fall cleanup and festivities celebrating the restroom opening this summer.

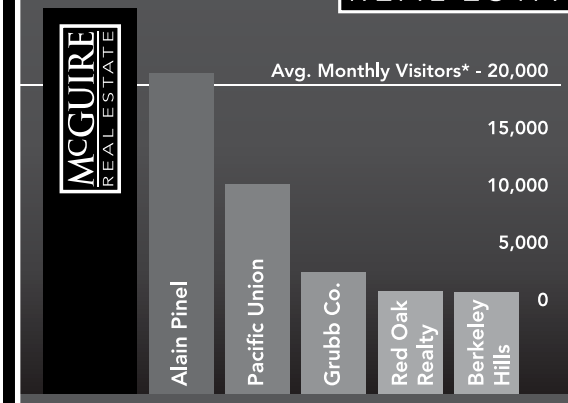
We'll have a FROG planning meeting in June, to be announced in The Rockridge News and the Frog Park e-news.

Please let us know if you'd like to get involved by emailing info@frogpark.org.

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Photos: Earth Day at FROG Park


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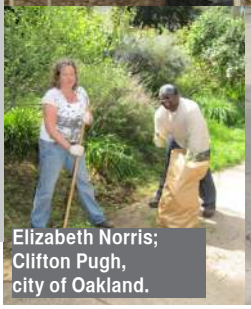

Ronnie Spitzer; Herman Miller, parks supervisor; Carol Behr with Sara; Tyler Lee; Theresa Nelson.

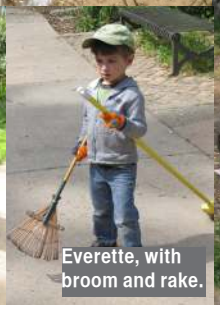

Herman Miller, left and co-worker.






Brownie Troop 3261.


Elizabeth Norris; Clifton Pugh, city of Oakland.


Everette, with broom and rake.



Barney Smits, left above.

Jennifer Cooper delivering trash bags.

Carrie Jacobs and Ava, front; Eric and Ericka McConnell, and Haven and Flora.

Photos: D. Kinkead

Spread the News: Join the Rockridge News Team

Thanks to Sara Cluff for her many years of service as The Rockridge News Block Captain for Broadway Terrace. Sara is no longer able to deliver papers on her block. If you like to walk and you live on or near the 5400 block of Broadway Terrace, let us know that you would like to take over route 08B. This would involve about 20 minutes of delivery to neighborhood homes once a month. To volunteer, call Susan at 547-3855 or email her at smontauk@gmail.com.

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Upper Rockridge Digital Artist

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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

Councilmember Jane Brunner's Community Advisory Meeting

Informational Budget Meeting for District 1. Saturday May 21, 10am to noon. Peralta Elementary School: 460 63rd St. (parking on Alcatraz, east of Telegraph). Info: 238-7001, or view Brunner Report at www.oaklandnet.com (the site for all City-related information).

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. 2nd Thursday each month, 7pm. 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:

- **Tea Ceremony in Celebration of Asian and Pacific Islanders Heritage Month**: led by **Miss Shin** of Itsy Bitsy. Tues., 5/17, 7pm. All ages welcome.

FOR TEENS

- **Rockridge Ninjas Anime Club: Ages 13 and up**, watch and talk about anime (Japanese animation). Second Tues. each month (5/10, 6/14), 5 to 6:30pm.
- **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 (6/4), 4 to 5pm.
- **BOOK BUDDIES: Teen Volunteers,** see Susy to sign up for reading to and with children, ages 1 to 7, this summer. Will take place on Saturdays, 2 – 4 pm, from June 18 to Aug., 31.

More info: Susy, 597- 5017 or smoorhead@oaklandlibrary.org.

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.
- **Randy Rutherford**, folksinger and storyteller reads from new work in progress. Tues., 6/7, 6pm, upstairs.
- **Lawyers in the Library: Free legal advice and referrals.** First Tues. each month. 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:

- May: Merritt College Portrait Class.
- June: **Darril Tighe**; abstract watercolor.

Lobby Display Case:

- May: **Diane Jacobson**: Glass works.
- June: Rockridge Teen Advisory Board display.

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 Tues., 5/31 for Memorial Day.

Diesel Book/Poetry Readings

All events are FREE and open to the public.

- Mon., 5/9, 7:30pm. **Amnesty International Meeting** (2nd Monday each month): All invited to exchange ideas on action.
- Tues, 5/10, 7pm. **Sloane Crosley:** *How Did You Get This Number.*
- Sun., 5/15, 3pm. Local cartoonist **Paul Madonna** (creator of *All Over Coffee*): *Everything Is Its Own Reward.*
- Sat., 5/21, 7pm. **John Sayles: A Moment in the Sun**.
- Sun., 5/22, 3pm. **UC Berkeley Extension Writers** annual student reading event. Poetry, fiction and non-fiction.
- Sun., 5/29, 3pm. **Poetry Flash:** local poets **Juliana Spahr** and **Genine Lentine**.
- Thurs., 6/2, 7pm. Publication Party for **The Lazy Gourmet** with **Robin Donovan** and **Juliana Gallin**.
- Thurs., 6/9, 7pm. **The Free Beer Tour: An evening of pairing great books with great beer.** Readings by **Josh Wilker, David Anthony** and **Pete Nelson** with beer tastings featuring the Lagunitas Brewing Co.

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

Rockridge Artist's Open Studios

Liz Maxwell: paintings, prints and drawings. Sat. and Sun., 6/4, 6/5 and 6/11, 6/12 from 11am to 6pm. 5808 Chabot Road. lizmaxwell@prodigy.net.

Ann Daniels: *Cool Jools* jewelry. Sat and Sun, 6/4 and 6/5 from 11am to 5pm. 5599 Lawton Ave. 290-2866 or www.annscooljools.com/.

Info about other artists participating in ProArts Open Studios 2011: www.proartsgallery.org.

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.

Peralta in Bloom Spring Festival

Traditional cakewalk, carnival games, small petting zoo, vegetable art projects (with edible dirt), and more. Learn to reduce, reuse and recycle. Bring old clothes for repair or quilting and visit the zero-waste center. BBQ and other great food. **May 14, from noon to 4pm,** Peralta Elementary School, 460 63rd St. PTA fundraiser to support music, art, gardens and other enrichment programs. Info: www.peraltaschool.org.

North Oakland Senior Center

Programs include: Arts/crafts; health insurance counseling; dancing and exercise; trips, tours and theater outings; Alzheimer's Caregivers support groups, computer classes and more.

- **Free group tour of the Fox Theater** and lunch: Wed., 6/8.

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

- **ProArts**

Looking for Curatorial interns, Publicity interns and Strategic Planning Partners to work with our extraordinary team of artists. For details: info@proartsgallery.org or www.proartsgallery.org.









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