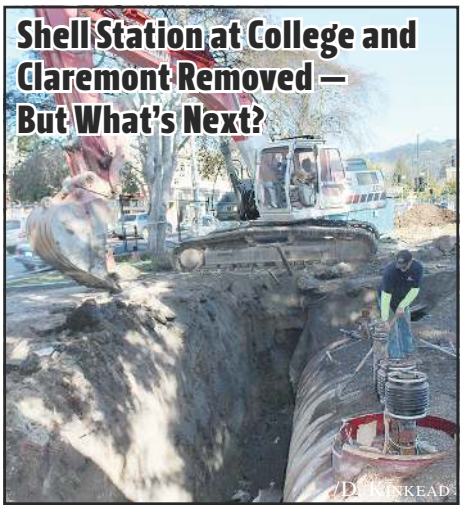
The Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

VOL. 28 ■ NO. 2 ■ ISSUE NO. 297 ■ February 2, 2013 ■ CIRCULATION: 5,800 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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

Shell Station at College and Claremont Removed — But What's Next?



Excavator John Speelman does some shovel work while digging out the Shell station gas tanks. Next, hazardous materials workers will scrub the tank interiors before final removal. What's planned for the site? The Planning Department says nothing is on file. County Assessor records show the property owner is Montrose Investment Co., Houston, TX. A commercial/residential building is rumored. E-mail editor_rn@mindspring.com with your thoughts.

Rockridge Kitchens 2013

Planning begins for the 2013 Rockridge Kitchen Tour. See page 2 for details and contacts.

A Break in the Crime Clouds?

If you follow any of the local online community forums, you might feel that if you have not been held up, burgled, or beat down on the streets of Rockridge, you soon will be. Postings such as: *Two auto break-ins in the last three hours on College*; *Just wanted to report our house was broken into*; *The man was shot in the leg and then staggered back into [a business];* are enough to give you whiplash from watching your back so closely.

But then, this, e-mailed to The Rockridge News: "I was visiting with a friend in Rockridge last week and I lost my wallet. Imagine my delighted surprise when it arrived in the mail this morning with everything – cash, bank card, driver's license, Trader Joe's gift card, and library card all still there. Some honest person anonymously took the trouble to mail this with no return address at their own expense."

The bad and the good. The ugly may soon be receding if the expectations we hold for the Highway Patrol, the Alameda County Sheriff's officers, and Commissioner Bratton pan out. At least until the PD is staffed again.

On page 2, a Rockridge resident writes to our new City Councilmember of her concerns and hopes about crime and public safety. *–Ed.*

RCPC Sets April Elections, Appoints a Board Member

The recent appointment of Benvenue Avenue resident Zabrae Valentine to the RCPC board leaves the board with two vacancies to be filled by election. The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) will hold its annual election for membership on the board of directors at the Town Hall meeting Thursday, April 18. **The deadline for applications is Thursday, February 21, 2013**.



New RCPC board member Zabrae Valentine.

What would you like to work on as a board member? Send your letter of interest to: RCPC, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618, or e-mail chair@rockridge.org.

Valentine was appointed to the position vacated when James Kachelmeyer moved out of the area. She will serve the remaining year-and-a-half of

▶ Board Elections, page 7

Jan Town Hall: Soundwall Study Decision Process

At the January RCPC Town Hall meeting, 55 interested residents listened as city representatives discussed the potential for further study of soundwalls along eastbound and westbound SR-24 in Rockridge. Funding for the study would come from the $8 million Settlement Agreement with Caltrans over the Fourth Bore of the Caldecott Tunnel, which is paying for a long list of pedestrian, bicycle and

▶ Soundwall Petitions, page 8

21 AGENDA

February 2013 RCPC Town Hall Meeting

- **1. Discussion: Caldecott settlement-funded intersection improvements**
- **2. Rockridge Shopping Center draft EIR has been issued. Discussion, analysis and response**

Topic 1: The city of Oakland presents preliminary designs of two Caldecott Settlement Agreement-funded projects:

- Broadway/Keith Intersection Improvements
- Broadway/Brookside/SR 24 On-ramp Intersection Improvements

Funded via the $8 million settlement agreement with Caltrans over the Caldecott Tunnel Fourth Bore, these two projects are being designed together based on comments the community provided in public meetings last year. At the Town Hall meeting, participants will hear a brief overview of the process that led to this

▶ Caldecott Projects, page 13

Topic 2: The environmental impact report for Safeway's second project (Broadway and Pleasant Valley) has now come out. RCPC Land Use Committee chair Stu Flashman and Transportation Committee co-chair Ronnie Spitzer will discuss what the EIR says and how we, as a community, can respond. Details: Land Use Committee Update, page 3.

Note time change

Thursday, February 21 | 7-9 p.m. Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College at Manila

Op Ed Essays on matters of local interest are invited for consideration as Op-Ed pieces for *The Rockridge News*. Please limit length to 450 words and submit to editor@rockridge.org.

Crime in Oakland: 'Dear Councilmember Kalb'

A Rockridge Resident Shares Her Concerns and Hopes

Dear Councilmember Kalb:

I am glad to see that you are making public safety and crime prevention a top priority. Having lived in Rockridge since 1985 – when some of College Avenue was still boarded up, there was a lot of crime and graffiti and only a few upscale restaurants or shops – I know well how neighborhoods, and even cities, can change over time because of public safety, or the lack of it. A few thoughts:

First, Oakland's leadership on this issue for several years has been far less than adequate, closer to abysmal. For years, the Council has been divided and ineffective with Mayors who did almost nothing, while our police force shrank, crime soared and children and adults died on our streets. Almost every time Chief Jordan quotes a statistic (90 percent of crimes related to gang or 100 blocks accounting for most crime) it's quickly disavowed by police staff; this cannot inspire confidence. Our current Mayor, who has time and time again demonstrated by actions her desire to limit police effectiveness as a Councilmember and as Mayor, consistently votes to reduce police staffing, repel innovation and reforms, and panders to anti-police groups.

Second, it's good to see that you support hiring William Bratton, and are withstanding what is an onslaught from the anti-police groups in Oakland. Sadly, they have become so intimidating that those who want to support effective, community-based policing (like me and many others I know) no longer feel comfortable speaking up at City Council meetings. When longtime community activists are verbally abused by anti-police forces at meetings, you may only hear one point of view.

Third, you've probably been monitoring the various Yahoo Groups on crime in Oakland. More and more I see people posting that others should contact you about public safety. I hope that you are indeed hearing from these folks, and I hope you are able to develop some ways that individuals and neighborhood groups can take action. It seems that the word is truly out that Oakland is an easy touch for burglars and robbers because of the lack of police coverage. For those of us who have a good block organization, are registered with neighborhood watch, have alarms and good locks and do all the things we've been told to do, the usual OPD "organize your block and get a good lock" just sounds ridiculous. When you do all the "right" crime prevention actions and people are robbed in front of your house and homes are broken into during the daytime when someone is obviously at home, the old ways clearly don't work and it's time to make some changes. This is far from the best we can do, and is no longer even adequate.

Finally, while for years the Council was divided in its actions about public safety, this is a new Council, and can organize to counter Mayor Quan's inconsistency and ineffectiveness on this issue. I hope that some of the issues that divided the Council in the past are indeed past, and that perhaps you and some of the other newer members are ready to form coalitions to take action.

Sincerely,

Theresa Nelson

2013 Rockridge Kitchen Tour Planning at Hand

This fall marks the coming of the tenth biennial Rockridge Kitchen Tour.

First held in 1995, the tour is the primary fundraising event of the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), and showcases remarkably renovated, restored or remodeled Rockridge residential kitchens that homeowners open for a day of viewing by tour guests.

As returning tour chair, Rockridge resident Natalie Mehta will supervise the selection of nine kitchens homeowners offer for viewing, and coordinate a small army of volunteer docents and writers and a host of advertisers, food providers and tour guests.

Do you know of a kitchen that should be on the tour? Contact Natalie at natalie.mehta@yahoo.com or call 415/279-5148.

ROCKRIDGE BRANCH LIBRARY

5366 College Avenue

597-5017

Hours:

Tue: 12:30 – 8 p.m.
Wed, Thu, Sat: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Friday: 12 – 5:30 p.m.

Closed: Sundays and Mondays;
***Also* Sat, 2/9 and Tuesdays, 2/12 and 2/19**

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**

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Barry Kaufman.....Food
Jo Ellis.....Advertising & Community Calendar
Theresa Nelson.....Neighborhood Merchant
Susan Montauk.....Business Manager
Don Kinkead.....Graphics & Layout

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Contact the board: chair@rockridge.org
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:

☛ **March 2, 2013**

☛ **March deadline is February 14, 2013**

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.)

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: Wednesday, February 27. February topics will include an update on the Rockridge Shopping Center Project. (*Subject to change. Check www.rockridge.org for updates.)*

■ **Land Use Meeting Agendas:** Contact Stuart Flashman (652-5373 or e-mail stuflash@aol.com) for a copy of the current Land Use Committee meeting agenda.

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee chair

■ Rockridge Montessori School Expansion Project 5610 Broadway

This project would expand the current school such that it might eventually house up to 200 students. It requires a minor conditional use permit for a school in a residential zone. RCPC expressed concerns about its traffic and other impacts. The use permit was approved administratively, and neighbors of the project appealed to the Planning Commission. In November, with a bare quorum present, the Commission preliminarily voted 3-1 to grant the appeal and deny the use permit. The matter is scheduled to come back to the Commission for formal findings. In the meantime, the neighbors and the school are attempting to reach a compromise agreement, which RCPC would encourage.

■ College Preparatory School Expansion Project 6100 Broadway

The project would expand this private high school from 340 (approved in 2009) to 375 students. The minor conditional use permit (school in a residential zone) was administratively approved, and the neighbors appealed. The Land Use Committee heard from both sides at its January meeting and decided to recommend a compromise to the RCPC board: approve expansion to 360, not 375, students; place a penalty on exceeding that enrollment cap; require the school to continue its traffic and parking demand management program; and require the school to improve how it deals with noise "leakage" into the neighborhood. The board will take the matter up at its February meeting. An appeal hearing before the Planning Commission has not yet been scheduled.

■ Draft Environmental Impact Report Issued for Rockridge Shopping Center Rebuild/ Expansion at Broadway & Pleasant Valley Road

The long-awaited Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for Safeway's proposed rebuild/expansion of the Rockridge Shopping Center was released by the city on December 26 for public review and comment.

The DEIR will be discussed and analyzed at the RCPC Town Hall meeting, February 21, at the Rockridge Library. See Agenda, page 1, for new meeting start time.

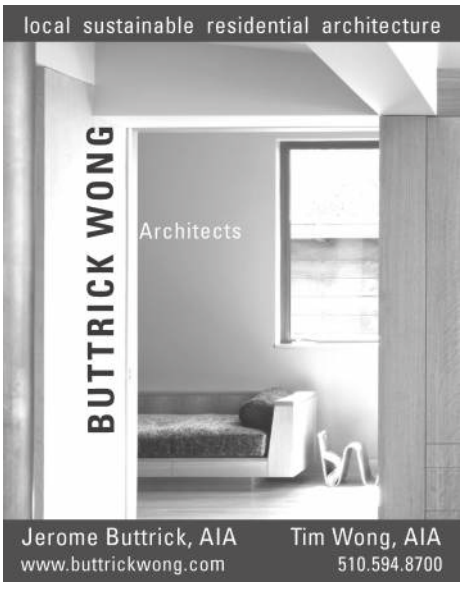
Comments will be accepted for 60 days, until February 25. Free copies of the EIR are available from the Department of Planning, Building, and Community Preservation, Planning and Zoning Division, at 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, 2nd Floor Zoning Counter, next door to City Hall, 14th and Washington streets. (Open Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesdays). The document can also be downloaded as a pdf file from the city's website at http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/PBN/OurServices/Application/DOWD009157. In addition, the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing February 20 to receive comments on the DEIR. Comments can be sent to the planner handling the project, Darin Ranelletti, via e-mail to DRanelletti@oaklandnet.com or via U.S. mail at the address shown above.

Use your smart phone, iPad or tablet to download a copy of the DEIR. Scan the QR code at right. At the Planning and Building web site, find project no. 22 in the list: Current Environmental Review Documents. Start your download.

In addition to a number of impacts that can be dealt with by mitigation, the DEIR identifies several significant and unavoidable traffic impacts, notably impacts at the Broadway/Pleasant Valley intersection and at the Pleasant Valley/Howe Street intersection. The DEIR discussed, in addition to Safeway's

Land Use Cmte., page 6







Take a stand – or a bicycle seat – for public education; help raise funds for enrichment programs in Oakland schools

Join us Saturday, May 11, for the fifth annual bike ride from Oakland to the State Capitol to support public education and raise essential funds for Oakland schools.

Last year, more than 150 students, teachers, parents and community members pedaled to Sacramento to protest the massive cuts in education funding. We raised awareness of the crisis in our schools and the need for public support for the passage of Proposition 30. But after years of disinvestment, we must demonstrate to Sacramento that Prop 30 is only the beginning; more funding, resources and support are required. We once had the best schools in the nation. Working together, we can proudly restore public education in California.

To do this, we need your support. Whether you plan to ride or not, you can help register 200 riders by sponsoring a rider (one or more), making a business or corporate donation or volunteering to help with the ride.

Our goal is to raise $80,000. Every dollar raised is shared equally by Emerson Elementary School, Claremont Middle School, Oakland Technical High School, and Oakland International High School.

Choose a fully supported 45-, 65-, or 100-mile ride. We provide SAG wagon support, rest stops, lunch, and bus transportation home from Sacramento and to the starting lines for the 45- and 65-mile rides (which are in Vacaville and Suisun). As in previous years, everyone rides to the State Capitol steps for our call to action and rally for education.

For more information, to register to ride, or to make a donation, go to: http://rideforareason.dojiggy.com or contact Mike Napolitano at 510/459-4342 or e-mail mikenapolitano5@gmail.com.

Claremont Middle School Sets Centennial Celebration

'This School Has Been Here Since 1913'



'This school has been here since 1913." Perhaps you have noticed this statement painted on the side of Claremont Middle School and thought to yourself, "One hundred years. Wow! They should really have some sort of celebration to mark the occasion of the 100th anniversary." And, that's the plan.

Note the date: June 1, 2013. All alumni, neighbors, current and former staff, students, families, and friends are invited to a centennial celebration of Claremont Middle School. More details to come as they develop.

Alumni are urged to contact Michelle Bilensky of the Claremont PTA at mdb.pta.oakland@gmail.com or Claremont PTA, 5750 College Avenue, Oakland CA 94618.

Chabot Elementary Spring Auction Gets into Full Swing

Exciting Items and Unique Experiences Up for Bid

by Jennifer James Alper, Chabot parent

The Chabot Elementary community is readying our biggest event of the year – the Gala spring auction, a school-wide effort that is the Chabot PTA's biggest and most important fundraiser. We are focused on meeting (or beating!) our $150,000 goal so we can continue to support our dynamic enrichment programs — music, science, art, media, library, gardening, P.E. and Spanish — and ensure that they thrive.

We've been thrilled with the community support we've received this year – including generous donations from parents, teachers, relatives and our neighborhood merchants.

The Online Auction, going "live" February 27 through March 7, features 350-400 items, including gift certificates to local restaurants, grocery stores, retailers and services; professional services, including photography sessions and architectural consultations; tickets to museums, movies, the theater and other cultural happenings; passes to fitness and dance classes; seats at many local sporting events, including Cal Football, the Oakland A's and San Francisco Giants; and more.

At our silent and live auctions at the March 9 Gala, we will auction off a range of exciting experiences, including individual tickets to a party for 50 at Rockridge's own Toast; a private tour of Pixar Studios; getaways to Carmel, Catalina, Portland, or Mexico; Club Level seats at a San Francisco Giants game, and more!

Chabot Elementary is especially grateful to our early sponsors who demonstrated their commitment with generous financial donations: the Grubb Company, our lead sponsor; MPR Financial; Marvin Gardens Real Estate; Red Oak Realty; Bank of Commerce Mortgage; Adventure Time Extended Day Care; Hot Studio; and Amato Architecture.

Visit the Chabot web site at http://www.chabotelementary.org/calendar/auction for the latest information, links to the online auction, and to buy tickets to the Gala event March 9 at the Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Drive, across from Lake Merritt..

Join the Auction Excitement at Fiesta de Peralta

Two Auctions, Food, a DJ: School Support Made Fun and Easy

by Michelle Quinn, Peralta parent

Peralta Elementary School's auction this year is on Saturday, March 2 and promises to be a night of great food and exciting things to bid on including a week in a beautiful apartment in Buenos Aires as well as an apartment in Barcelona.

The event is at Oakland's Uptown Body and Fender, 401-26th Street between Broadway and Telegraph Avenue. Tickets can be purchased for $20 in advance or $25 at the door. The theme is Fiesta de Peralta.

The school's nearly 300 students rely on proceeds from the auction to support what has become to be viewed as "extras" in public education – arts, music, physical education and diversity training, among many other things.

The community is invited to both the online auction and the live event. (See box for auction address.) The online auction, which features more than 300 items available only online, runs from February 18 to February 25. Among the many items to bid on are restaurant and spa gift certificates, sporting events, fun camps, as well as products and services donated by local merchants.

The big event is the auction night itself, which begins at 5 p.m. Early birds will be offered a free drink until 5:30. The main dish will be paella, served up by former Chez Panisse chef Brian Espinoza. La Farine, the sumptuous Rockridge bakery, is an auction sponsor with a $500 donation to the event. A live D.J. will be at work to keep the place rocking.

The parents and teachers of Peralta School thank you for your generous support of the school over the years.

There is Still Time for Donations

The auction committee is taking donations until February 13. To bid in the online auction, go to : http://auctions.readysetauction.com/peraltaelementarysch/. More information: e-mail the Peralta Auction Committee at peralta.auction@gmail.com.

This Is It! Oakland Tech High School Auction

Wonderful food and entertainment and the chance to bid on an enticing array of auction items await you at "This is It!," Oakland Technical High School's 2013 Auction, the school's main fundraising event.

Sponsored by the school's Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), the auction raises crucial funds that provide support to all areas of the school and its students: from classroom needs to infrastructure materials; from athletics to music; from lab supplies to technology, and more.

This year, we hope to raise over $65,000 and surpass last year's total. We encourage everyone to participate in whatever way appeals to you. For example, local businesses and community members can sponsor the event, donate merchandise and services or purchase a catalog ad.

The entire Rockridge community is invited to the party and to participate in Tech's online auction this March. Plan now to attend this exciting event on Saturday, March 16, from 6 - 10:30 p.m., at the Uptown Body and Fender building, 401-26th Street, between Broadway and Telegraph Avenue.

Tickets are $25 per person until February 28, and $35 afterwards. For more information, to purchase advance tickets, or to donate an item, contact auctiondonation@oaklandtech.com or visit: www.oaklandtech.com/ptsa/auction-2013/.

'Huge' College Prep Book Fair

by College Prep staff

The 19th Annual College Preparatory School Book Fair will be held Saturday, March 2, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, March 3, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a bargain bag sale Sunday, 12 noon to 1 p.m. This huge used book sale is held in Buttner Auditorum on the College Prep campus, 6100 Broadway. There is abundant free parking. **A bonus event during the Saturday sale will be a yard sale and car wash ($10 for exterior and $10 for interior) to benefit the school's intraterm travel programs**.

The Book Fair is a not-to-be-missed event for book lovers. Thousands of volumes for all ages are offered at ultra bargain prices: $1-2 for paperback, $3 for hardcover, with a few special or oversized books priced slightly higher. CDs, DVDs and audio books will also be available. Books are sorted by category and the sale includes many nearly new and recent works in superb condition as well as vintage and hidden treasures.

Funds from the sale are used for student financial aid and the school's Faculty Wish List. Donations are tax deductible. Books not sold are donated to local charities.

Donations of books, textbooks, CDs, and DVDs in good condition will be accepted through February 28. All contributions are welcome, but especially sought are current adult fiction, children's and teen books, art and cook books, and books on history and current affairs.

Donations may be left in the collection bins under the overhang of the building to the left as you enter the parking lot. Bins marked "Book Fair" are near the far end of the building, next to a large flight of stairs. Tax donation forms are available at the bins. Donations may be left any time, but it is advisable to avoid peak traffic periods between 7:45 and 8:15 a.m., and 3:05 and 3:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. Questions? Contact bookfair@college-prep.org.



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'Pancake Tuesday' Fun at College Avenue Presbyterian Church

by Monte McClain, Pastor

Celebrate Pancake Tuesday, aka Mardi Gras, with neighbors and friends Tuesday, February 12 from 6-7 p.m. at College Avenue Presbyterian Church, 5951 College Avenue.

We'll be serving a free pancake dinner in our gym, and leading traditional Pancake Tuesday games and family fun. Bring your skillet for a pancake relay race, a Shrove Tuesday custom dating back to the English Middle Ages. Our activities are planned for all ages from small children to the young at heart!

We'll also have information about ways to get involved in community service in and around Rockridge. Donations will be accepted to benefit our weekly free dinner for the hungry.

More information online at www.capcoakland.net or by phone at 510/658-3665.

Also, our crab feed fund-raiser is coming on February 23. See details below.

a cross-cultural congregation striving to partner with the Rockridge community in lifestyle and service.

All-You-Can-Eat Crab Fest-Fundraiser

College Avenue Presbyterian Church Gym, 5955 College Avenue, Oakland
February 23, starting at 7 p.m.
Adults $40 Children $20 Seniors $30.
This fund-raiser by the church is to start improvements to the kitchen used for the regular Friday Night Community Dinners that we do on a regular basis to allow us to better prepare those dinners for those we serve.

College Avenue Presbyterian Church

5951 College Avenue, Oakland 510 658-3665
SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30 AM • VISIT: CAPCCHURCH.ORG
OUR WONDERFUL COMMUNITY MEAL, FRIDAYS, 6-7PM
A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE

FORL: Rockridge Branch Library Thrives Despite Budget Challenges

by Jennifer James Alper, Friends of the Rockridge Library board member

Oakland's Public Library system has faced many challenges recently, but our Rockridge branch remains a bustling and vital part of our community. We owe thanks to our outstanding library staff, who have worked hard and managed to do more with less.

Branch and FORL News

■ Rockridge Branch Children's Librarian Gay Ducey has been named manager of the West Oakland branch. We will remember Gay's amazing story hours and the special gift she has for working with children. She will be missed.

■ Erica Siskind is now the Children's Librarian. She is developing wonderful programs for children and teens, and she is always ready with great book recommendations for kids of all ages.

■ Mayor Jean Quan recently appointed Kathryn O'Neal, co-chair of the Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL) to the Library Advisory Commission (LAC). The LAC has 15 members representing Oakland, Piedmont and Emeryville and makes recommendations to the City Council on library policies, including fiscal oversight of the voter approved Measure Q. Ms. O'Neal is co-chair of the LAC's Advocacy and Outreach Committee. If you have any questions about the commission and/or Oakland Library policies, contact Ms. O'Neal at onealkathryn@gmail.com

FORL thanks the community for its vital support. FORL funds many key programs and projects, including the children's summer reading program; a variety of teen programs, including a teen advisory board

continued at right



Land Use Cmte.

from page 3

proposed project, several alternative ideas, including one submitted by RCPC and one proposed by ULTRA (Urbanists for a livable Temescal-Rockridge Area). Mr. Ranelletti encourages people to submit their thoughts about potential impacts and mitigation measures, and also how they feel about possible trade-offs between reducing traffic impacts and increasing impacts on pedestrians or area residents.

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and after school-activities; improvements to our well-loved and well-used furniture; and a variety of needed books, publications and resources for our beloved branch.

To support the Rockridge branch, visit our website at www.friendsofrockridgelibrary.org and click the link to "Donate."

We thank all our donors and appreciate the support of the community to keep our library a vibrant cornerstone of Rockridge.

Experience the Unique Difference...



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Claremont School Finds 3 'Authors Among Us'

Three Claremont students were recent successful participants in NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month). Sixth graders Will Flattery-Vickness and Bella Trunzo, and 8th grader Lucy Flattery-Vickness all met the challenge of writing a set amount every single day during the month of November.

In addition to the glory of having completed a novel, each student's work will be published as a real, physical book.

Claremont Middle School hopes to add a copy of each Claremont author's novel to the school library collection.

Until then, you can learn more about our local authors and their books at: http://claremontlibraryblog.edublogs.org/2012/12/20/the-authors-among-us/

— Shona Armstrong

Board Elections

from page 1

Kachelmeyer's term. Her background is in public policy development and application.

Describing her interest in board membership, Valentine wrote:

"I work in public policy and civic engagement, with intermittent forays into the legislative and initiative process. I recently left an organization – California Forward – which is dedicated to developing non-partisan policies that improve government accountability at the state level.

"As a new member of the RCPC board, I want to explore how to continue building ever-better tools that enable us to share information and communicate effectively about critical neighborhood issues. (The Rockridge News and neighborhood websites already publicize local issues so we have a terrific foundation to build upon.) One area where this could be useful is disaster preparedness. Perhaps we'd consider setting a goal of ensuring the entire Rockridge community is "ready to rock" by a certain date.

"Continuing to improve our ability to converse, problem-solve and coordinate within the community will create other opportunities, related, for example, to improving public safety, providing constructive input related to city-wide issues, or sharing information with other Oakland neighborhoods."

Diesel Books Celebrates Two Rockridge Authors in February

5433 College Avenue | 510/653-9965

| February 7, 7 p.m. |

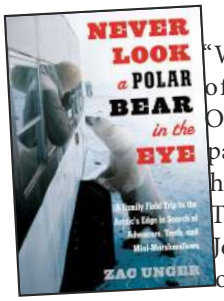
Publication Party for "Never Look a Polar Bear in the Eye" with **Zac Unger**.

| February 8, 7 p.m. |

Patricia Bracewell discusses and signs copies of her book, "Shadow on the Crown."

Fire and Ice for Local Writer

Author Zac Unger is a lifelong Rockridge resident who can often be observed shuffling around the neighborhood with the other lifers.



His first book, "Working Fire," told of his becoming an Oakland firefighter-paramedic, a job he still holds. He has written for The Economist, Men's Journal, Slate, NPR, and other media outlets.

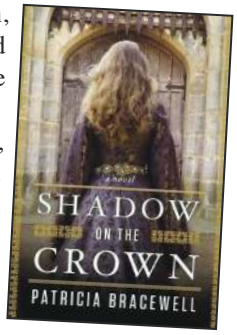
For his latest book, "Never Look a Polar Bear in the Eye," Unger demonstrated his dubious marital and parenting skills by dragging his entire family to the Arctic Circle and using his children as polar bear bait. However, in addition to his saintly wife, the three children survived the experience and now attend Chabot Elementary.

Unger has strong feelings about Safeway and weak feelings about soundwalls. Considering his writing, he says, "Looking back at both of the books I've written, 'Working Fire' was probably one of my two favorites."

— Shona Armstrong

A Star is Born

We are about to have a fascinating woman from another world enter our lives. She is Emma of Normandy who, in 1002, at age fifteen, crosses the sea to wed old King Aethelred the Unready of England.



Young and alone, Emma must fight for her survival and station as queen in an unfamiliar and treacherous world.

Centuries later, Rockridge writer Patricia Bracewell unearthed Emma's story. By dint of her devotion to this young woman, Patricia herself is about to become the newest star in the firmament of prominent writers who live in and around Rockridge.

Her novel, "Shadow on the Crown," was just published by Viking/Penguin in hardback and paperback. It is so good that it is already being translated into half a dozen languages.

Meet the author for a book reading and signing at Diesel Books on February 8 at 7 p.m.

— Ortrun Niesar

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Soundwall Petitions

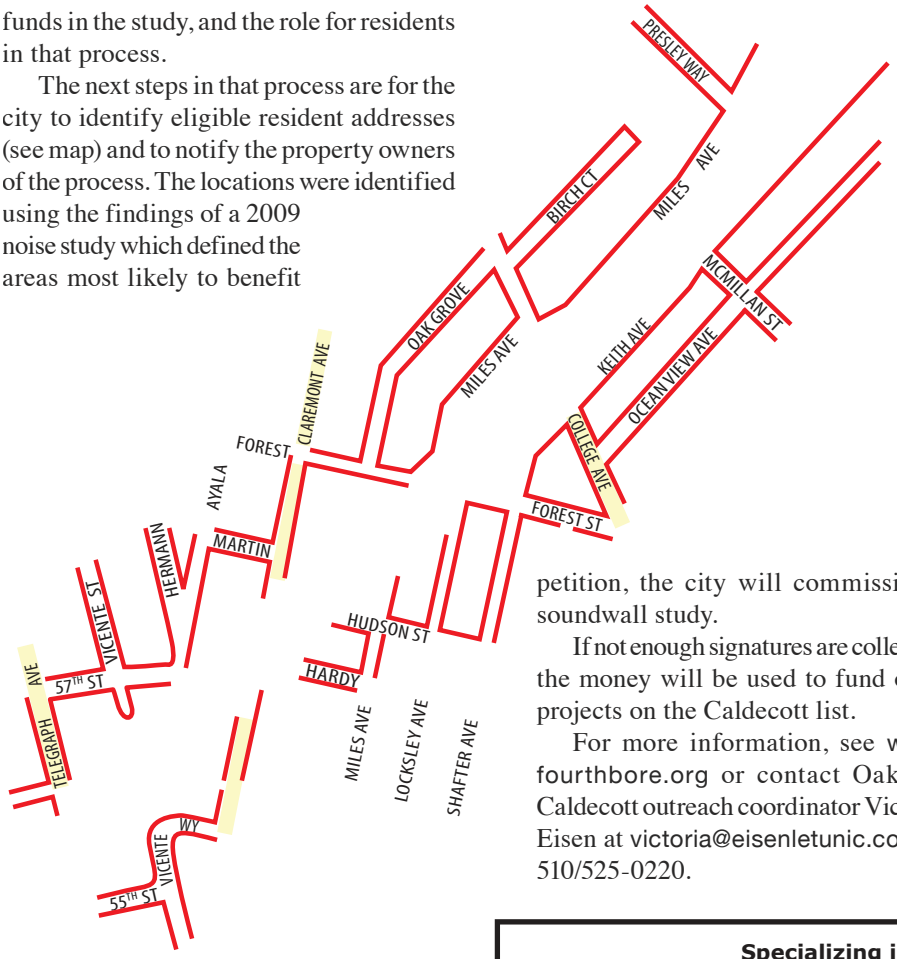
from page 1

streetscape improvements in the North Oakland Hills, Rockridge and Temescal areas. Transportation Services Manager Wladimir Wlassowsky also discussed the petition process that the city will use to determine whether or not to invest these funds in the study, and the role for residents in that process.

The next steps in that process are for the city to identify eligible resident addresses (see map) and to notify the property owners of the process. The locations were identified using the findings of a 2009 noise study which defined the areas most likely to benefit from soundwall construction.

The city will make petitions and eligible addresses available to the public. Proponents of the soundwall studies will have one year to collect signatures. If at least two-thirds of eligible property owners sign the

(cont'd below)



petition, the city will commission a soundwall study.

If not enough signatures are collected, the money will be used to fund other projects on the Caldecott list.

For more information, see www.fourthbore.org or contact Oakland Caldecott outreach coordinator Victoria Eisen at victoria@eisenletunic.com or 510/525-0220.

Thanks to New Volunteers, Just Two Routes Left

Thanks to the people who called last month to take over for our retiring block captains. Nerissa Read is taking both Claremont Avenue routes and Nathalie Jans will become a block captain for one of our hills routes.

We have a new route to add to the list this month. Fatima Ali (who lives on Boyd Avenue) has been delivering the newsletter to Locksley for close to five years and she is ready to retire.

To get some exercise delivering The Rockridge News door-to-door for a block in your neighborhood, let us know which of these routes shown below you would like to assume. E-mail smontauk@gmail.com or call 510/547-3855.

2C	6551-61 Chabot and both sides of Chabot Crest.
17F	Delivers newsletters along both sides of 5200 Locksley between Clifton and Cavour.

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Tip of the month – New Year Reminder: A little basic maintenance now can save lives and/or thousands of $ later. Change your smoke detector batteries. Make sure you have a CO detector on each floor of your home. Have your rain gutters cleaned and down spout leads draining away from your home. Paint and/or seal exterior surfaces that look worn, chipped or peeling. Call for a home evaluation!

COMING
- 2BD+, 2BA on Lawton, Chabot Dist. w/ FP, large bonus room, yard, garage, $849,000. Beg. February
- 3BD++, 3BA in Chabot District, Grand 4,000 sqft estate including legal in-law, price TBD. End March
- 3BD 2BA apt for Lease @ $2,975/mo, 1BD 1BA apt for Lease @ $1,795/mo available Beg. February

NEEDED
- Investment properties. Multiple Buyers looking for $600K to $2.5M investment properties to buy.
- Any homes. There is a shortage of supply in all size homes!



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Eyes on Rockridge

Chris Jackson Is 'About Having a Neighborhood'

by Judith Doner Berne

Your and my experience walking, biking, driving, browsing, shopping, eating along College Avenue in Rockridge is better and safer because of Chris Jackson.

Jackson, a blunt, fast-talking, intense kind of guy, is the eyes, ears and voice – okay, and the face – of Rockridge's Business Improvement District, known as the Rockridge District Association (RDA).

Businesses along College Avenue and adjacent side streets from 51st Street to Alcatraz are part of the RDA, paying an assessment based on their tax returns.

That money, says Louise Rothman-Riemer, RDA board member who works as a financial consultant, "must go back into the community."

"We have had several operations managers," Rothman-Riemer told me. "Chris is absolutely the best. He's out on the street. He knows everyone including 'the second story people,' who have offices above street level.

"What really makes Chris so good," she says, "is that he has a vision of what it takes to make this a really viable business district."

"I'm about having a neighborhood," Jackson told me, as he declines having his picture taken for this column. He feels more comfortable if he's not widely recognized by the public as he does his job.

That generally means walking both sides of College a couple of times a day, assessing and somewhat reveling in what is right and detecting and doing his best to fix what is wrong.

"I do a visual inspection of the street," Jackson says. "I try to meet with as many merchants as I can. I remove graffiti, pick up litter, look for anything amiss.

"I'm charged with looking physically at what's going on. I do whatever needs to be done, That includes interfacing with the UPS and Fed Ex guys."

On this day, it means trying to get police help with an apperently mentally ill, homeless man who was pestering a shop.

"I called the police at 10:30 a.m.," Jackson tells me as we sit down to talk at Spasso's Coffeehouse. "They're just getting there at 1 p.m." Later, as we walk to the site of the problem, a police car is there.

"I also work with social services," he says. "We're (College Avenue) not a mental hospital. We need to get these folks help. We actually got one person an apartment."

As we walk, he points out the streetlight poles. He succeeded in getting the city to paint and to replace those that were rusted out, for the first time in 17 years.

He indicated a couple of new trees ("I watered them by hand for a year") and several spaces awaiting others. "The city has stopped trimming trees," Jackson adds. "The RDA paid $18,000 to have the trees done."

His latest gripe is the wide, uneven tree wells which dot the sidewalks, just daring someone to trip over one of their rims and twist an ankle (or worse), which actually happened to him.

Jackson is hoping to get city permission to level them by filling each one with decomposed granite.

And although they are not part of the RDA, Jackson would like to see art in the windows of the student galleries across from the California College of the Arts campus on Broadway. "What a waste of window space," he says of their often-drawn shades. "That could be a focal point of that end of the street."

"I think he goes the extra mile," says RDA board president Susan Bernosky, of Strahan Insurance Services, who recommended him for the operations manager post. "It's more than just a job to him."

Jackson is also the business district's liaison to the Police Department, City Council, Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Rockridge Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) — and works to bring the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) and RDA into closer alignment. "We have to function holistically," he insists.

Another way in which he has fashioned his job is by reaching out to Claremont Middle School and its students. He's been

Chris Jackson, page 12

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Rockridge Real Estate— 2012 Review

by Ortrun Niesar, Rockridge News contributor

2012 Summary

When it comes to real estate values, location consistently remains the most important determinant. Recent national and Bay Area-wide market developments have been most exciting to read about, but they don't give us an accurate picture of how the market has affected us locally. Rockridge, like many other neighborhoods, has its own distinct market profile; it's worthwhile taking a closer look at what is happening here.

Our Profile

Rockridge as a community offers much to be thankful for. We enjoy good climate, great walk scores, lovely well-maintained craftsman homes – very popular – and an excellent commute to San Francisco and UC Berkeley. We also have good availability of necessary services, such as hospitals, shopping and restaurants, churches, good public and private schools. Further, Rockridge is lucky to have engaged residents and an effective neighborhood organization in RCPC. These factors contribute greatly to the desirability of this area and thus to the stability of home prices. Foreclosures and short sales have been practically non-existent here. A steady increase in real estate values at a rate somewhat higher than what the stock market is yielding makes Rockridge a good investment.

Our Stats

The number of homes sold in Rockridge in 2012 was not much greater than in 2011. However, this is where the similarity ends. There were no foreclosures or short sales to speak of in the mix. Due to favorable mortgage interest rates, anticipation of impending tax changes and a renewed confidence in a revitalized economy in the Bay Area, the demand for housing grew exponentially here as the year progressed. Nearly every home for sale experienced a high number of interested buyers and multiple offers. Three-bedroom homes were woefully unavailable for purchase. In fact, the inventory of homes for sale never caught up with the demand, driving sale prices anywhere from 8 to 30 percent over asking for almost 70 percent of the available properties. All-cash offers were not unusual, often generating fast closings. Looking at the statistics we have been keeping since 2002, we continue to show a steady, reasonable recovery in real estate value. There is no fear of a bubble or failure. As a result, 2013 could finally bring us a sane, more balanced market.

What Your Home Is Worth

Criteria for evaluating a home differ greatly depending on the desired goal. It is best to work with your local realtors, appraisers and mortgage brokers to get a proper evaluation. However, you can get a good snapshot yourself by visiting open houses of similar size, condition, and amenities and applying a per square foot measure to your property.

Today, a good measure for your well-maintained two bedroom bungalow would be about $545 per square foot. A good average measure per square foot for a three-bedroom home is about $501. A three-bedroom home can be expected to sell at $975,000, but in 2012, 35 percent of our three-bedroom homes sold in the $1,000,000-$1,300,000 range.

Four-bedroom homes sold at an overall average of $408 per square foot, about 5 percent more than 2011. Expect a similar increase in 2013. Homes of four bedrooms or more tend to be larger, newer homes or historic homes that traditionally fetch prices well above the $1,200,000 mark, depending upon the number of bedrooms and the overall size and desirability of the home.

Outlook for 2013

Should You Buy?

If there is a buyer still hesitating, she will certainly miss the boat if she fails to make a move. Real estate is still a bargain and should be part of anyone's investment portfolio. Interest rates have never been lower.

At the same time, local rental rates are exceeding potential monthly mortgage payments. As the mortgage market adjusts itself to new regulations, there are, according to mortgage broker John Holmgren of Holmgren Associates, words of caution to be heeded. New qualifying guidelines include debt-to-loan ratio limits at 43 percent, no interest only or other "non-vanilla" loan

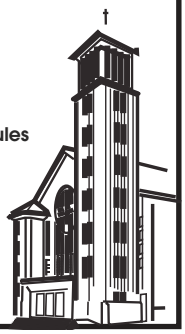
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Real Estate

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products, no stated-income loans, etc. These new guidelines may seem onerous to some, but there are many government-insured programs available. It's a matter of finding a broker who can work within your parameters. Expect a more invasive process and a greater quantity of documentation.

Should You Sell?

Sellers have been justifiably reluctant to make a move these past few years if there was no pressing need. As the market rebounds, though, it may be worthwhile to take a closer look at your property, assess the cost of improvements, remodeling, energy upgrades and issues such as size and appropriate distribution of space for a changing life style. There are certainly benefits to moving either into a smaller or larger home with more fitting amenities. Should you decide that a move is best for you, if you purchased your home before 2005, you can be certain that you will do well.

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Average Sales Price 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
2011	702,011	924,398	1,126,722	87
2012	751,185	943,017	1,325,490	88

Rockridge Home Sale Prices 2002-2011

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
2011	907,628	-5.7	837,000	0.0
2012	975,426	7.5	905,000	8.0

This analysis covers Rockridge home sales from the Berkeley border in the north, south to Broadway Terrace and 51st Street, west to Telegraph Avenue and east to Highway 13. Information supplied by EBRD (East Bay Regional Data) 2012 is deemed to be reliable but not guaranteed. Ortrun Niesar is a Realtor with East Bay Sotheby's International Realty: ortrun.niesar@sothebysrealty.com



■ **Last Chance to take the FROG Survey – Extended Deadline: February 6.** Help guide Frog Park improvements and FROG decisions, by completing our brief survey now. Please encourage your friends and neighbors to complete it, too.

Go to www.frogpark.org and click on the survey link, or copy/type the link into your browser: www.surveymonkey.com/s/FrogPark2013Priorities-Survey

Results will be available at our February 2013 committee meeting. E-mail info@frogpark.org for more information.

Thank you to those who have already shared their opinions.

■ **Frog Monthly 'First Sunday' Cleanups Continue:** Join Oakland Tech BuildOn students at our monthly first Sunday cleanups to work on the Park. Meet at Big Frog Park (Hardy Street cul-de-sac). Rain cancels. (Calendar of events: www.frogpark.org.) Next date: March 3, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

■ **Next FROG Meeting:** E-mail info@frogpark.org for meeting details.

RCPC Board Elections: April 18

Ready to join the RCPC board? Two seats are open. Statements of interest must be submitted by Thursday, February 21, to Chair, RCPC, 4123 Broadway PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611, or e-mail chair@rockridge.org.



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Rockridge Prices Continue to Rise in January

Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
1/23/13	2	1	6092 Hillegass Ave	$619,000	$619,000	13	$700,000
1/30/13	3	2	367 60th Street	$649,000	$649,00	15	$855,000

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In Memory
THE IMPORTANCE OF JANE POWELL

Oakland author, restoration authority, and preservationist Jane Powell died recently. But her books are still widely available, and will be of interest to many Rockridge residents not already familiar with her work.



Jane's enduring contribution, her legacy, will rest upon her exhaustive, informative, stylishly written books such as "Bungalow Bathrooms," "Bungalow Kitchens," "Bungalow Details: Exterior," and "Linoleum," and articles and essays too numerous to list. The immensely readable yet practical books have beautiful photographs by Linda Svendsen.

Jane's books brought her attention, her unique voice and wit brought her friends and fans. She enjoyed a period of living the privileged life in a glorious house in Berkeley. After her divorce, needing income, Jane began her project of buying houses – some eleven in all – fixing, restoring and then selling them, moving on to the next. The "Bunga-Mansion" (as she dubbed it) in the Fruitvale District became her keeper house, a daunting fixer.

We met as fellow Oakland Heritage Alliance board members, and Jane was actively involved in the battles to save landmarks like the Fox Theater and the Floral Depot. But she saw worth in more than just "A+" buildings, and as a true conservationist, she wrote about restoring old window sash, the trove of old growth timber in venerable buildings, the pleasure of vintage bathrooms and kitchens (even if a little tweaking was required).

Jane's resolve, independence, and pluck, even as she battled illness and foreclosure, were an inspiration. Her lymphoma didn't prevent her from writing her books, even the metastatic lung cancer couldn't keep her from her "Restoration Comedy" blog on her "Jane Powell – the Author, not the Actress!" website: http://www.janepowell.org/

Jane Powell's legacy will be the bungalows that find loving, more knowledgeable (thanks to her) admirers, and people who don't easily give up even when "Life backs up a giant truck full of lemons and dumps them on me," as Jane put it.

Jane's recent memorial service included testimonials by well-known authors and artists, like Paul Duchscherer and Tom Knechtel. Lexi Pandell wrote about Jane's life and work in the January 16 online issue of OaklandNorth, available at http://bit.ly/XEuVj3.

— Robert Brokl

Chris Jackson

from page 9

instrumental in pairing the Rockridge Masonic Lodge with Claremont's Dad's Club and the RDA for the annual Pancake Breakfast school fund-raiser. (This year it's set for Saturday, April 6.)

"Chris comes to all the Dad's Club meetings," says Paul Kagiwada, Claremont Dad's Club co-chair. "He always does a report on what goes on in the neighborhood. He does a lot to integrate the school and the business community."

"When we have a happy Claremont, we have a happy Avenue," Jackson says.

A 15-year Rockridge resident, Jackson traces his family's Oakland roots back to the 1930s. After attending Cal State Hayward in adaptive physical education, he taught and worked with learning disabled children and adults and later turned to high-end sales.

He was active in the Rockridge community before being hired four years ago by the RDA, including leading a movement to get children on his street included in the Peralta Elementary School district boundaries and his area adopted offcially as part of Rockridge.

"My job is really to make Rockridge work," Jackson says. And that very much includes security.

"People need to understand this is not Mayberry," he says. "This is a very urban area." He has no problem approaching a shopper or a person sipping coffee at a café and reminding them to secure their purse or hi-tech device.

"It's really all about relationship-building with the RDA members, the property owners, the residents and," Jackson says, cracking his only smile, ''most of all, the dogs."

Judy Berne welcomes your comments and column ideas. She can be reached at judyberne@att.net.

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Caldecott Projects

from page 1

effort and a presentation on the conceptual designs of the two projects.

The goal of the meeting is for participants to comment on these designs before they advance to the pre-construction stage. To help prepare participants for the meeting, the preliminary conceptual designs are posted at www.fourthbore.org. Comments will be accepted on these projects until Friday, March 1, at 5 p.m.

If you cannot attend the February 21 meeting, you may submit comments to Mohamed Alaoui via e-mail (aalaoui@oaklandnet.com); phone (510/238-3469); or U.S. Mail (Transportation Services Division, City of Oakland Public Works Agency, 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Suite 4344, Oakland, CA 94612). So the City knows what neighborhood you live in, please provide either your address or nearby intersection in your comments.

For more information, contact the City's Caldecott projects outreach coordinator, Victoria Eisen at victoria@eisenletunic.com or 510/525-0220.

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by Theresa Nelson

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New and returning students welcome. Cultivate health through this ancient gentle exercise. Methodist Church, 303 Hudson at College. Thursday 9:30 a.m. Saturday 9 a.m. Visit www.harmonytaiji.com for schedule. More info: gail@harmonytaiji.com

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Need someone reliable, efficient and available 24/7 to manage your rental property? Bringing landlords and good tenants together is my job! Contact George Vassiliades at 510/710-6826. GvRealtor@gmail.com.

Tennis Anyone?

For several decades, retirees have been playing tennis at the Montclair Park Firehouse Court. Unfortunately, our ranks thin as old comrades age and die off. Come join us Mon., Wed., Fri., 10 a.m.

Traditional Anglican Worship in Rockridge

St. Peter's Parish, 6013 Lawton at Broadway. Mass Sunday 8 and 10 am, Wednesday at noon. Sunday School and Childcare Sunday at 10. 510/597-1400. St.peters.oakland@gmail.com (corrected address) www.saintpetersoakland.com

Piano Lessons in Rockridge

Study jazz, classical piano and music theory with jazz pianist and teacher with B.A. in Music from UC Berkeley and over 15 years' experience. All ages, levels. Contact Janet at 510/653-6783, janetjazzclassicalpiano@gmail.com.

Life Story Videos by Eric Pomert

Dig out those old videos and celebrate loved ones with a breathtaking, cinematic gem, crafted by an award-winning master film editor. 510/409-5515 www.EricPomert.com

Neighborhood Women's Writer's Groups

Always wanted to write? Need help getting started or guidance getting published? Author Elizabeth Fishel (*Sisters*; *Reunion*) leads weekly or biweekly morning groups in Rockridge. Inspiring exercises, creative support. www.wednesdayywriters.com or erfishel@gmail.com.

What is Energy Healing?

Talk and demo at Rockridge Public Library on Tuesday, February 5, 5-6 p.m. Visit www.clearingclouds.com or e-mail Jyoti@clearingclouds.com.

Personal Assistant

Wish you had a Personal Assistant? I can help with your project and household or personal needs. Highly experienced, versatile, and efficient. Allow me to make your life simpler. Contact Cynthia 510/326-9985. Cd.warren@comcast.net.

You can help! The RCPC Board has two open seats. Send your letter of interest to Chair, RCPC, 4123 Broadway PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611, or e-mail chair@rockridge.org.

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Senior Help & Babysitting for Kids

Help with driving seniors to appointments and with chores, as needed. We are Rockridge residents who are very caring and considerate. 510/207-3711 or email buyali@aol.com.

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Serving Rockridge over 20 years. Friendly and personalized maintenance; expert pruning and care; garden restoration; makeovers to prepare for sale. Consultations. Non-toxic, earth-friendly practices. Reasonable rates, excellent references, free estimates. Chris 510/655-0157.

Responsible, Returning Rockridge Son

Married with baby, seeks rental from May through the summer. Duration of rental can be flexible. Call Margret or Michael. 510/655-8389.

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Shopping? Find it in Oakland!

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 engage in discussions about crime and public safety with representatives of OPD. 2nd Thursday each month, 7pm. Rockridge Library, upstairs meeting room, 5366 College Ave. Confirm mtg. info at www.rockridgencpc.com or chair@rockridgencpc.com.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

Find out how your library card** allows you to get free or discounted passes to museums and cultural institutions with the **"Discover & GO" program**. Some participating partners are the Asian Art Museum, the Aquarium, Exploratorium, Oakland Museum Cal Shakespeare Theater, and Yerba Buena Ctr. for the Arts.

FOR CHILDREN

- **Family Story Time**: Stories/songs/rhymes (to age 5); Saturdays, 10:30am.
- **Pre-School Story Time**: (ages 2 to 5); Thursdays, 10:30am.
- **Toddler Story Time**: (up to age 2); Thursdays, 10:30am, upstairs.

All story times followed by Play Time; parents and caregivers invited.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- **Make Valentines**: Thurs, 2/7, 3:30 to 5pm. We will provide all materials. Bring: colorful scraps of paper that please you; a list of classmates (you can make a hand-made valentine for everyone); a friend. All ages welcome. Kids under 8 bring a grown-up.
- **Celebrate African American History Month**: Enjoy and learn about the music and dance of Africa with **Bodac Cultural**, an international African traditional drumming, singing, dancing and performing arts group that originated in West Africa. Sat, 2/3, 4pm. All ages welcome.

FOR TEENS

- **Teen Advisory Board**: (ages 14-18) Advise the library how to better serve teens. Get community service credit for school. Snacks provided. 1st Sat. each month, 1-2 pm. Confirm: 597-5017.
- **Rockridge Ninjas**: watch Anime. 2/ 26 and 3/12 from 5-6:30 pm. Contact: Vicky Chen, 597-5017
- **Teen 'Scape**: Play video and board games; make crafts; light snacks provided. Every Wed., 2 to 4pm. Info: Vicky Chen, 597-5017.

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FOR ADULTS

- **Writers Support/Critique Group**: All writers welcome. Bring 17 copies of up to 5 pgs. (double-spaced, MS margins) of any prose for on-site reading/discussion (also welcome to come empty-handed). Third Saturday each month; 1 to 5pm. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.
- **Lawyers in the Library**: **Free legal advice and referrals**. First Tues. each month (2/5, 3/5), 5 to 7pm. (Advance sign-up starts 4:45pm at adult reference desk). Volunteer lawyer leaves before 7pm if no more people present.

ART EXHIBITS (subject to change; call to confirm)

Gallery:

Feb: Photographs by **Ira Lapidus**: Seen & Unseen: Reflections in Store Windows.

Mar: Oakland Public Library Staff Art Show

Lobby Display Case:

Feb: **Lori Fischer**; Dolls 4 Artsake

Mar: Oakland Public Library Staff Art Show

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 Sat, 2/9 and Tuesdays, 2/12 and 2/19.

Meet the Authors

Three Bay Area authors with three recent novels – each set in Paris. **Jacqueline Luckett**, *Passing Love*; **Cara Black**, *Murder at the Lanterne Rouge* and **Ellen Sussman**, *French Lessons*. Discussion and book-signing. Sat, 2/23, 1:30pm. Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College Ave. Info: (AAUW contact) 531-4275.

Diesel Book/Readings and Events

All FREE and open to the public.

- Thurs, 2/7, 7pm. Publication party for Rockridge author **Zac Unger**: *Never Look a Polar Bear in the Eye: A Family Field Trip to the Arctic's Edge in Search of Adventure, Truth, and Mini-Marshmallows*.1/13, Mon, 2/11, 7:30pm.
- Fri, 2/8, 7pm. Local author **Patricia Bracewell**: *Shadow on the Crown*.
- Mon, 2/11, 7:30pm. **Amnesty International Meeting (2nd Mon. each month)**: All invited to exchange ideas on action.
- Fri, 2/15, 7pm. local author **Phil Lapsley**: *Exploding the Phone: The Untold Story of the Teenagers and Outlaws Who Hacked Ma Bell*.
- Mon, 2/25, 7pm. SF author **Joshua Mohr**: *Fight Song*. Joined for this event; Oakland author **Samuel Sattin**, whose debut novel, *The League of Somebodies*, is forthcoming in this April.
- Sun., 3/3, 3pm. Publication party for **Sophie Littlefield**: *Garden of Stones*.

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

School Fundraisers

Once again, our community is being asked to give generously to make up for the lack of public funding that would provide our local schools with art, music language and science programs; field trips; gardens; and many other enrichment programs. But your generosity will be well rewarded with exciting Auctions, Fairs, Galas, great food and entertainment. Join your friends and neighbors and attend one or more of the following events:

- **CHABOT Elementary Online Auction and Gala**: starts February 27, ends March 7. The gala party is Saturday, March 9, at the Scottish Rite Temple in Oakland. **Details page 4.**
- **PERALTA Elementary School Auction**: Fiesta de Peralta: March 2, Uptown Body and Fender, 401-26th St. Among bid items: a week in a beautiful Buenos Aires apartment. **Details page 5**.
- **COLLEGE PREP 19th Annual Book Fair and Car Wash**: Sat. and Sun., March 2 & 3 on the campus, 6100 B'way. Thousands of books for all ages at bargain prices; also CDs and DVDs. **Details page 5**.
- **THIS IS IT! Oakland Tech Auction/Party:** Sat., March 16 at Uptown Body and Fender 401-26th St. Donations of merchandise and services still needed. **Details page 5**.

All-You-Can-Eat Crab Fest

Fundraiser to provide equipment for Friday Night Community Dinners at the College Ave. Presbyterian Church. Feb 23, 7pm. (Adults $35; kids $20; Srs. $30). 5955 College Avenue, 658-3665.

Wisteria Ways House Concert

- **Oakland Folkharmonic & Teslim**: string ensembles playing traditional modal music of Greece, Turkey and the Middle East; medieval and Sephardic music on traditional instruments; and original compositions. Saturday, Feb 9, 8pm (door opens 7:30pm) Inside venue; not wheelchair accessible.
- **Small Potatoes**: Folk duo of **Jacquie Manning** and **Rich Prezioso**. "Celtic to Cowboy" – from Irish, country, blues, and swing to original songs. Sunday, Feb 24, 3pm.

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

Oakland Museum (OMCA) White Elephant Sale

Northern California's biggest and best rummage sale to support OMCA exhibits and acquisitions. Mar 2 and 3; 10am to 4pm. 333 Lancaster St. **Free admission and free shuttle service from the Fruitvale BART station**. Info: www.whiteelephantsale.org or 536-6800.

Square Dance In North Oakland

Music by **The Squirrelly String Band**. Calling by **Jordan Ruyle** (with occasional guest performers). 1st and 3rd Fridays each month, 8-10pm. All levels welcome; all dances taught on the spot. $5-10 sliding scale donation. The Niebyl-Proctor Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave. Info: http://squirrellystringband.com.

North Oakland Senior Center

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

- **AARP Tax Help: Thursdays, February 7 – April 11**. To schedule an appointment: 597-5085 or come to the office.

Annual $12 membership entitles seniors 55 and older to discounts on activities and trips. Mon. – Fri., 9am to 4:30pm. 5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way.

Temescal Farmers' Market

Open Sundays, 9am to 1pm (all year). Locally grown fruits and vegetables; fresh ranch eggs; home-made bakery items; fresh cut flowers; unique prepared foods, fresh locally caught fish, handcrafts and more. Sample the goods; meet the grower; live music. **Bring your own reusable bags**. 5300 Claremont Ave. (off Telegraph) at the DMV parking lot.

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