The Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

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20 Joint RCPC-NCPC Town Hall Meeting, June 20

Mayor Jean Quan and Interim Police Chief Sean Whent

How are you faring during Oakland's crisis of crime? Do you find news of more police academies encouraging? Are you seeing more police on the street?

What other steps are city administrators and police managers considering to improve public safety and peace of mind?

Get first-hand information when Mayor Jean Quan and Chief of Police Sean Whent speak to these issues and respond to audience questions at the annual joint RCPC-NCPC meeting **Thursday, June 20, 7:30 p.m.**

RCPC and the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (GRNCPC) hold an annual joint meeting. The Rockridge GRNCPC is part of Oakland's Community Policing Program with the Oakland Police Department, combining Police beats 12Y and 13X in North Oakland. See http://www.rockridgencpc.com/.

To Speak at June Town Hall



Mayor Jean Quan



Interim Police Chief Sean Whent

Thursday, June 20 | 7:30-9 p.m. Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College at Manila

RCPC Election Puts Board Near Full Complement

In the RCPC election held in April, the following persons were elected to two-year terms on the board: Andrew Charman, Michael Kan, William Kaufner, Lisa McNally, and Greg Pasquali.

At the next meeting of the board, these members were selected as officers: Zabrae Valentine, Chair; Christopher Chin, Vice-Chair; Laura Schlichtmann, Secretary; and Bernard Baltaxe, Treasurer. A complete list of board members is on page 2.

Two board seats are currently open. The first seat, not having been filled in the election, may now be filled by board appointment for a term ending in April 2015. The remaining spot is an appointive seat open to any Rockridge merchant or resident, and has a limited term ending in April 2014.

The board will continue to solicit interest in membership over the next few months, with the expectation of interviewing candidates and making final appointments during the September - October time-frame. To discuss your interest in board service,

▶ Board Positions, page 10

Make it a Date: Rockridge Kitchen Tour 2013



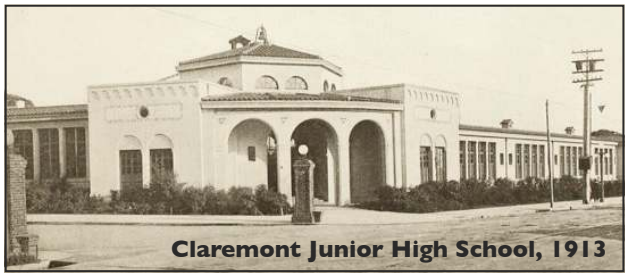
Rockridge Kitchen Tour: September 29

This School Has Been Here Since 1913!

Celebrating Claremont Middle School's Centennial

by Tess Falkner-Kenny, Seventh Grade, Claremont Middle School

For one hundred years, the dark gray, cast-iron gate now at the corner of College Avenue and Birch Court has had historical significance, proclaiming the neighborhood school to be "Claremont Junior High, 1913." The weathered-looking gate has remained a sentinel, watching over years and students gone by, showing veritable proof of the school's age.



Claremont Junior High School, 1913

In August of 1913, the school opened as an elementary school, beginning a rich history in the heart of Rockridge. I feel privileged to have learned so much about this history as part of the 2012-2013 Yearbook Committee. I had access to the archives, which contained lots of photos and mementos including the

▶ Claremont Centennial, page 2

Claremont Centennial

from page 1

photograph of the class of 1917, below.

While looking through the archives, I found intriguing items like a program titled "Graduating Exercises, Claremont School," dated December 17, 1915. The program lists many musical performances, ranging from solo to class pieces, followed by literary readings, speeches, and a farewell song. The same file includes a document with historical facts about the school and a list of the principals beginning in 1913. It tells how junior high school grades were added in 1925, and elementary grades were transferred out in 1927 when a new building was constructed northeast of the school on Chabot Road and called the Annex, which later became Anthony Chabot Elementary School.



Claremont School, Class of 1917
/Courtesy Claremont Middle School

This April, the Yearbook Committee was honored with a visit from two Claremont alumni, who described the school as it was in the 1940s. They told us about lunchtime Jitterbug dances, after-school jobs, and the importance of patriotism inspired by World War II. One of my favorite stories was that in keeping with the trend of the time, most girls wore white buck shoes, which left white powder marks on carpets and floors.

In 1950, 28 classrooms were added to the Claremont campus, plus a cafeteria and gymnasium. In 1954, the Supreme Court's *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision led to racial diversity at Claremont that continues today. An exciting moment for the entire community was when Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, visited Claremont in 1997, accompanied by School Board President Jean Quan, now our mayor. Also in 1997, the Student Council petitioned the BART system to develop a youth fare for students, which was successful and is still in effect today.

This year, Reginald and Ronald Richardson joined the Claremont leadership team, making a new kind of history as the school's first-ever co-principals. As twin brothers already creating positive results at our school, they have been featured on NPR's "This American Life" and the CBS Evening News.

On June 1, the school hosted a centennial celebration which included visits from Claremont alumni, a festive party open to all, and a preview of the commemorative yearbook that includes a special story devoted to the occasion.

The venerable gate, a highlight of the event, will continue its affirmative declaration that the school has been open for a full century.

Happy 100th Birthday, Claremont.

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Sunday and Monday: **CLOSED; Also, 6/18**

Library program details: See Calendar, page 15.

The Rockridge News

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

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- Would you like to write a letter to the Editor?

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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/Deadline
Publication date of the next issue is:
☛ **July 6, 2013**
☛ **July deadline is June 20, 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, June 26.

Topics will include an update on the College Avenue Safeway and Rockridge Shopping Center Projects, as well as possible discussion of the zoning ordinance's off-street parking requirements. Check www.rockridge.org for updates.

Agendas: Check with committee chair Stu Flashman, 652-5373, or stuflash@aol.com the week before the meeting for an updated agenda.

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee chair

■ College Avenue Safeway Project, College and Claremont Avenues

This project, modified extensively by a settlement agreement between Safeway and community groups in Rockridge and Elmwood, is moving toward closing and demolition of the current store this summer. (If you see people in white "hazmat" suits on the site, they're exploring to ensure that hazardous or toxic materials such as asbestos or PCBs are identified for safe disposal.) Construction of the new store and shopping building should begin late this year, and is expected to take approximately a year.

The 60 percent construction drawings have been released and will be reviewed by the three community groups to ensure that "value engineering" – i.e., reducing project costs – doesn't cheapen the store or eliminate any hard-fought concessions extracted from Safeway during the settlement negotiations.

Safeway has leased the former Shell station site on the southwest corner of College and Claremont avenues to serve as an equipment staging area during project demolition and construction phases.

■ Rockridge Shopping Center Rebuild and Expansion Project, Broadway and Pleasant Valley Avenue

Safeway's second Rockridge area project is to rebuild and enlarge this major shopping area, adding about 120,000 sq. ft. and including a larger (65,000 sq.ft.) Safeway. City planner Darin Ranelletti (238-3663; DRanelletti@oaklandnet.com) reports that additional traffic measurements and analysis are being done to address community concerns about cut-through traffic on residential streets, including Coronado and John streets. He expects the final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to be released in July, after which the Planning Commission will hold a hearing to consider project approval.

Project documents are available on the Planning Department's website: http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/PBN/OurServices/Application/DOWD009157 (see QR Code below), and the draft EIR is available at the Rockridge Branch Library.

■ Offstreet Parking Requirements, Citywide Rezoning, Phase 2

Based on many comments received (especially from the owners of commercial buildings) during phase 1 of the citywide rezoning two years ago, the Planning Department is considering modifying offstreet parking requirements for commercial and residential projects. This fits with the General Plan's emphasis on encouraging transit use at transit hubs and along major transit corridors. This may reduce the minimum parking requirements for new development in such areas, including Rockridge. This is a matter of concern if it would lead to more severe parking "crunches" in the bordering residential areas, especially when many older homes and apartment buildings have neither garages nor driveways. According to planner Darin Ranelletti, the department expects to release a report and perhaps an accompanying proposal by July. RCPC will be following this issue closely.

Rockridge DVD Project Is a Wrap: Check it Out

by Jon Gabel & Annette Floystrup, Co-Chairs, Rockridge DVD Project

The Rockridge DVD Project has been completed. All of the DVDs rescued when the former Videots video rental store in Berkeley's Elmwood District closed have been catalogued and delivered to the Rockridge Branch Library.

Many thanks are due to the community for supporting the project with cash donations; to the staff and volunteers of the Oakland Public Library for their work, particularly in cataloging the DVDs; and to RCPC, for lending the project $13,000 and providing fiscal sponsorship, which allowed donations to be tax-exempt.

By purchasing used DVDs which were in excellent condition, the project was able to obtain four to five times as many titles as would have been possible if new DVDs had been bought. The purchase included a state-of-the-art machine to help maintain them in great shape.

The DVDs donated by the Rockridge DVD Project include foreign films, Pre-Code Hollywood movies, film noir, silent classics, Hollywood films, television series (including many British PBS favorites), documentaries, and musical performances. For a complete list, see www.RockridgeDvdProject.org.

The expansion of the Rockridge Branch Library DVD section was coordinated with the construction of the Teen Zone and the new computer area. DVDs now occupy both sides of a full aisle in the stacks, and the enlarged DVD collection has proven very popular with patrons. The success of the Rockridge DVD Project has inspired other Oakland branch libraries to expand their DVD collections, and librarians report that the DVDs are bringing in new patrons who come for the DVDs, but stay for the books.



Jon Gabel and Annette Floystrup in the well-stocked DVD aisle at the Rockridge Branch Library. /Don Kinkead

If you have not yet taken a look, you may be surprised at the size and quality of the collection. And you can check out up to four DVDs at a time for free. All you need is an Oakland Public Library Card. *Enjoy.*

Join Oakland Neighbors in National Night Out Celebrations



National Night Out (NNO) is the nation's night out against crime. In this event, sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch (http://www.natw.org/), Oakland residents are encouraged to join with their neighbors to have a neighborhood block party, ice cream social or other outdoor event to build neighborhood spirit and unity – the first defense against crime. Research shows that when neighbors know each other and look out for each other, crime goes down.

It's time to organize your block party. Register for National Night Out 2013. Registration deadline: 6 p.m. Monday, July 29.

Register early to receive a visit from city staff.

Keeping Crime at Bay: Steps to Take While the Police Department Rebuilds

End Victimhood: Be Proactively Defensive

Following a brazen assault in March on a pedestrian near Chabot Road and Claremont Avenue, nearby residents mobilized to "make our neighborhood less easy of a target." (The Rockridge News, March 2013, page 4.) Steps taken included revitalizing their Neighborhood Watch program and signing up with nextdoor.com for closer communication. Neighbors also noted what they had learned and added their lessons to existing Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) and police department lists of protective steps, developing the following tips for safety and crime avoidance actions.

Get to know your neighbors. Form a Neighborhood Watch group at http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/PSP/index.htm; see "Get Involved." Join nextdoor.com to stay connected.

Report every crime! Filing a report online at oaklandpolice.com is quick, easy and alerts OPD to trends and problem areas.

Record the serial numbers of your electronics. Store them at reportit.leadsonline.com which may enable law enforcement to locate stolen goods at pawn shops and on eBay. At a minimum, write the serial numbers down or snap pix and save the document as a draft in your e-mail box (where you will be able to retrieve it even if your computer is stolen).

Avoid using your cell phone on the street. Expensive electronics are targeted in most street robberies. Activating your phone's tracking device can help OPD locate the thief.

Cross the street if you feel uncomfortable. Be aware of your surroundings and listen to that voice in your head. Walk in the empty street if the sidewalk or nearby yard is poorly lit.

Avoid walking alone at night. Walk close to others. When leaving BART at night, ask the station agent to call a BART Police officer to accompany you to your car.

Consider a personal keychain siren or pepper spray. Using pepper spray for self-defense is legal in CA. See amazon.com

Make use of your car alarm's panic button. Walk to and from your car with a finger on the button. Keep your keys next to your bed at night and activate your car alarm if you hear trouble around your home.

Never leave anything visible in your car. Thieves can't tell what's valuable until after they've broken in to find out.

Light up dark streets, driveways and yards. Swap out existing exterior lights with automatic dawn-to-dusk or motion fixtures. See amazon.com

Keep doors and windows visible to neighbors. Regularly trim overgrown shrubs and trees that could provide cover.

Install a simple home alarm with a loud siren. New wireless models are affordable, easy to install and do not require a monthly contact. Exterior sirens alert neighbors who may see the intruder. See simplisafe.com.

Install video recording cameras. Most criminals are repeat offenders. Video footage can help OPD identify known criminals These systems are increasingly affordable. See costco.com or rockridgencpc.com

Keep your shades drawn on lower level rooms. Burglars like to know what's inside before they break in. Is there good stuff? A guard dog? Keep them guessing.

Stash your stuff. Many home burglaries happen in a flash. Small valuables such as laptops, ipods, jewelry, cash and credit cards are easy to grab for a thief in a hurry. Hide them before you leave home.

Reinforce glass panes in vulnerable windows and doors. Add clear Remlor film or Lexan inserts which resist multiple blows.

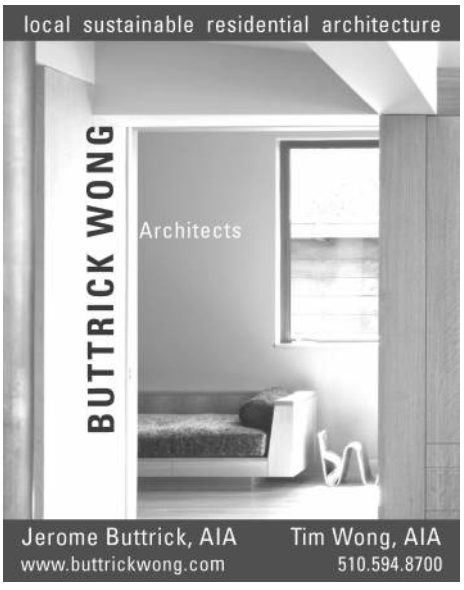
Install exterior security gates, especially over older doors. Burglars commonly kick in old or historic doors whose weak frames can make deadbolts vulnerable. Metal security gates are nearly impossible to kick in and also make it safer to speak to unfamiliar visitors.

Never open your door to someone you don't know. Talk through the door and ask service people to show an ID through the window. Safety matters more than politeness. Report suspicious visitors immediately – it may be a criminal casing your home.

Avoid having packages left at your front door. Post a sign advising UPS to return another day or arrange to have parcels left with a neighbor.

Post a 'No Solicitors' sign at your front door. Suspicious visitors will have no excuses for loitering outside your home.

If you see something ... Say something. Report suspicious persons or activities to the OPD non-emergency number at 510/777-3333 from home or 510/777-3211 from your cell (add this number to your call list now).



Readying Trees and Creeks, Stones and Parks for Adventures to Come

FROG Park, DMV Creekside: Restoration Update

We are pleased to announce the DMV Creekside Restoration continues with the second phase of the plan nearing completion: the delivery and installation of 10 creekside boulders.

The city's Public Works Agency selected and purchased specified boulders and, along with landscaper MIG and community representatives, marked the location where the boulders were to be placed. The second part of the restoration plan, now nearing completion, is installation of the boulders.

The first phase of the DMV restoration was the planting of the DMV parking lot trees last year. The trees continue to do well, largely due to local community volunteers who watered the trees during last summer. We may need additional help this summer: please e-mail Leonora Sea at leonorasea@yahoo.com if you can help.

The next time you walk along the greenbelt, shop at the Farmers market, or visit the DMV, take a look at the new boulders, where you may envision the final restoration phases, which include planting about 13 new trees along the DMV Creekside and installing one new picnic table. To review the plan as we await DMV's timing for the final phases of the restoration, see www.frogpark.org. To request information or to volunteer, e-mail: info@frogpark.org.

FROG-DMV June Work Party

Join us at a special June community workday held jointly with the DMV Neighbors on June 15, 9 a.m.-noon.

See details in story below.

Frog Monthly 'First Saturday' Cleanups:

Upcoming "First Saturday" workdays: Saturday, July 6; Saturday, August 3, 10 a.m.- 1 p.m., park remains open.

Next FROG Meeting:

Next Frog meeting: June 11, 7:30 p.m. Please e-mail info@frogpark.org for meeting location and details.

Come Play in the Creek: Temescal Creek and FROG Parks Interim Work Party, Mid-June

by Leonora Sea, DMV Neighbors

The DMV Neighbors Association and FROG had spirited and enthusiastic volunteers turn out for Earth Day, and they accomplished a lot of good work along Temescal Creek and at Big and Little Frog parks. Thank you to everyone who came and worked so hard, and to neighborhood businesses: Alem's Coffee for morning coffee, Café Mariposa for pastries, and MailMax for printing services.

June Interim Work Party

Nature doesn't stand still, though, and there's a lot to be done throughout the Greenbelt to get ready for summer. Our annual June Interim Work Party will be sponsored by the DMV Neighbors Association and FROG this year on Saturday morning, June 15, 9 a.m. to noon.

Priority projects are pruning, weeding the creek bed (especially the stretch between the Redondo lawn and Little Frog), spreading mulch in the rose garden, replanting and mulching the butterfly garden, spreading wood chips by the play structure, moving sand into the sandbox, and, of course, the Sisyphean tasks of cutting back ivy and grubbing out blackberries.

Come sign in by the big eucalyptus at the corner of Redondo and Cavour or at Big Frog park, and pick up tools and gloves, on loan from the city of Oakland. Or bring your own tools, well marked. The creek will not be turned off, so wear boots or closed-toe shoes that can get wet and muddy if you want to work in the creek.

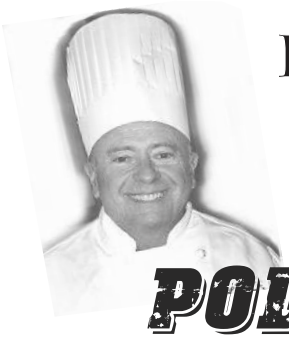
As with all volunteer activities in the park, minors must have signed parental waivers to participate. The DMV Neighbors Association will provide morning pastries and coffee at our sign-in table at Redondo, and light snacks afterwards.

Everyone is welcome: Come for the morning or come for an hour; you'll be welcomed.

Contact Leonora Sea, DMV Neighbors Association, leonorasea@yahoo.com, or Ronnie Spitzer, FROG Park, rcspitzer@yahoo.com.







Rockridge Cornucopia

Barry A. Kaufman

POLITICS AND FOOD

We arrived in Buenos Aires on the anniversary of the return to democracy in Argentina. We dropped our bags at the hotel and immediately headed for Plaza de Mayo in the center of the city.

The Plaza was the gathering place every Thursday of mothers, grandmothers, sisters and wives of persons who disappeared during the dark days of Argentina's Dirty War. On that day, the Plaza was alive with young people celebrating with political art, street theater, music and a huge *parrilla* grilling traditional Argentine sausages. The joy of celebrating democracy and the wafting aroma of the sausages said it all.

Throughout our travels, I'm always struck by how the dual passions of politics and food animate a culture. I find this missing in American in society. Yes, we have the traditional July 4th backyard barbeques, but it's not quite the same as the large community celebrations found in other cultures.

Argentines use the term *asado* for both a range of barbeque techniques and a social event.

We immediately purchased celebratory T-shirts and joined the festivities. What a wonderful way to start our trip.

In more formal events and restaurants, food is prepared by an assigned *asador* (barbequer) or *parrillero* (griller). In informal settings, this is customarily done in a collective manner by volunteers. Perhaps this collective process contributes to the political passion.

The meat for an *asado* is not marinated, the only preparation being the application of salt before and/or during the cooking period. Also, the heat and the distance from the coals are controlled to provide for slow cooking; it usually takes around two hours to cook *asado*. Furthermore, the cook should try not to let fat from the meat fall on the coals and create smoke that would adversely flavor the meat. The *asado* is usually placed in a tray to be immediately served. *Chimichurri*, a sauce of some combinations of chopped parsley, dried oregano, garlic, salt, pepper, onion, paprika and olive oil – or salsa *criolla*, a sauce of tomato and onion in vinegar – are common accompaniments to an *asado*.

Buenos Aires is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique architecture and history. Binding each neighborhood together are the ubiquitous *parrillas* where neighbors gather to enjoy freshly grilled meats, talk politics and sip *mate* tea. The typical *parrilla* menu includes a variety of steaks, short ribs, and various sausages. *Parrillas* can be small neighborhood places with a few tables out on the sidewalk or very elaborate high-end restaurants catering to large crowds. Small or large, it's all about the beef.

While in Buenos Aires, we spent a morning with a guide to tour a Dirty War detention center in the middle of the city. It is estimated that over 30,000 people disappeared during the period of the war. Today the outer walls of the detention center are covered with political graffiti and murals that tell the story of the people who disappeared. Although democracy has returned to Argentina, every Thursday women still gather at the Plaza de Mayo in memory of those that never returned.

This month's recipe is for *chimichurri* found at every *parrilla*. This famous Argentinean sauce is ideal for any grilled food.

Chimichurri

Ingredients

1 cup Italian flat-leaf parsley
1 teaspoon salt
¾ cup extra virgin olive oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
Hot pepper sauce to taste

Preparation

Place all the ingredients into a blender. Blend on medium speed until ingredients form a smooth paste. Chimichurri can also be used as a marinade for chicken or fish.

Barry Kaufman is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. He is available for cooking classes and tours of East Bay ethnic markets. Barry's e-mail is kaufman42@comcast.net

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Our analysis of Rockridge sales indicates market prices peaked in 2007 even though activity may have started to subside by then. We experienced the financial meltdown in late 2008 with prices hitting bottom by 2011. Increases became apparent by February 2012 and now, after a 30% increase in prices and 40% decrease in inventory over the last 18 months, we are hitting price levels of 2007 again. A two bedroom we sold in 2010 for $710k just sold last month for $940k. Bernanke just announced that the Feds may not act to protect rates going forward. Market responded negatively and rates went up about 1/4 %. Rates do fluctuate on a daily basis but we may see a slow to medium upward pace in rates continue throughout the year as they were historically low with only one way to go. This is speculation as no one has the 'crystal ball'!

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• 3BD++/2BA historic and charming Tudor in Chabot District @ 5809 Ross St, Sold at $1,375,000

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• 2BD, 2BA Farmhouse cottage, Peralta Dist. Detached barn/office, sweet brick patio/garden, parking. 434 North St, asking $749,000

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* 3BD, 2BA updated period home for sale with formal liv rm, din rm, family room, yard, close to Farmer's market. 3rd week of June.
* 4BD 2.5BA for sale, stately home w/ studio in-law cottage on double lot, gorgeous Chef's kitchen, Chabot District
* 4BD 2.5BA for lease, over 2,500 sqft, beautifully remodeled.
* other rentals of varying sizes coming available July 1.



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DaVita Dialysis Breaks Ground on Long-Promised Landscaping

by Nancy Schaaf, Local Resident

Local residents are pleased to see landscaping improvements underway at last at the corner of Claremont Avenue and Clifton Street.

The site of a former supermarket occupied by DaVita Dialysis for the past several years, the corner has been widely regarded as a prominent eyesore near the Rockridge-Temescal Gateway. The renovations were negotiated by local volunteer landscaping group Scenic Streets.

These improvements, estimated to cost over $20,000, are being funded mostly by DaVita. A new ornamental perimeter fence has replaced the nondescript chain link that was beginning to sag. Damaged fencing along the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt path has also been mended. And the barren parking lot's most prominent corner will soon feature greenery where remnant signposts and concrete footings once stood. Scenic Streets added nine sidewalk trees at its own expense last month.

Apparently, it was Scenic Streets' landscaping of the adjacent Highway 24 off-ramp spurred DaVita into action. The company had pledged to match the community's efforts at a neighborhood meeting last summer. A company spokesperson then assured a near-capacity crowd of local residents that renovations would follow shortly, but neighbors began to have doubts when months passed without any visible progress.

Monitoring the proposed project, Scenic Streets founder Peter Lund says DaVita needed extra time to provide appropriate documentation to the property's owner, Jim Falaschi of Transbay Holding Company. "DaVita was clear about what neighbors wanted to see improved, but needed to make sure it had approval since it doesn't own the property," Lund explained.



The long-overdue makeover of the corner of Clifton Street and Claremont Avenue is underway as a more decorative fence is installed, and sidewalk trees are planted. Next: new landscaping to soften the view of the parking lot.

/Scenic Streets

Judy Belcher owns a home adjacent to the facility and says she is encouraged that property is finally on the right path. "I am hopeful they have a plan in place to keep it looking nice," Belcher says, noting that weeds and trash have routinely built up along the parking lot's perimeter for months on end. "We expect DaVita to be a good neighbor and keep its property up to community standards."

In fact, public ordinances require most commercial properties to keep their exteriors tidy, and mandate regular removal of litter from adjoining sidewalks and gutters. These obligations typically fall to lease holders such as DaVita, and a company spokesperson assured Lund that, going forward, weekly perimeter sweeps will be conducted by a

DaVita Renovates, page 12

Donations Support Scenic Streets Projects

by Tony Bolton, local resident

Scenic Streets, the local volunteer group that has been landscaping Claremont Avenue near the Highway 24 off-ramp at Clifton Street, received three sizable donations this spring. The timing couldn't be better, as the group prepares for its next phase of work, which includes improving the safety and functionality of dilapidated Hardy Park Dog Run.

An anonymous donor sent a check for $5,000 in February. Oakland real estate developer Jim Falaschi sent a check for $2,500 in April. And in May, Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream pledged $6,000 to upgrade the watering stations at the dog park.

Dreyer's product line includes Frosty Paws frozen dog treats. Many employees and visitors approach its College Avenue headquarters via southern Claremont Avenue, so the company was an early supporter of Scenic Streets' vision. The company hopes more local businesses will

Donations Support Projects, page 12

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The Neighborhood Merchant

by Theresa Nelson

NATHAN&CO

The store NATHAN&CO bursts with color, beautiful design, and charming items – for yourself or others – at every turn. It's a perfect place to find something to brighten your home, or a creative birthday or hosting gift.

What's new and exciting at NATHAN&CO right now? Quite a diverse collection of items. Visit the kitchen department first, in the front of the store, where they offer the Mason Cash mixing bowls from England, a design that goes back a few hundred years, and used by Alice Waters, among many others. A huge variety of tea towels beckons, unusual patterns designed in Australia and made in India, with matching aprons and mitts nearby. The clever white ceramic "Brooklyn" dishes are labeled "cawfee," "creamuh" and "buttah." Nearby, the cork coasters in the shape of whole-wheat toast are both fun and functional. An array of cookbooks, many by local authors, fits almost every food interest.

The men's section has some interesting items for upcoming Father's Day, such as the boxer briefs made from bamboo with clever graphics. Nearby are unique wallets made from recycled flannel shirts and old ties, and shaving items of all sorts. For children, they offer gifts for newborns and unique children's toys and accessories. Many parents are seeking alternatives to plastics, and the colorful children's bamboo dinnerware is made from renewable resources, and is safe, as well. In personal care, the Italian Borotalco talcum powder is popular for its fine texture, with the nearby Botot French toothpaste and mouthwash, and the Italian laundry soap

NATHAN&CO
Owner: Nathan Waldon
5636 College Avenue, Oakland
510/601-1677
www.nathanandco.com
10:30 - 7:30 M-F | S/S 10:30 - 6:30



Nathan Waldon, among his wares. /Don Kinkead

Marsiglia, apparently a favorite of everyone who has used it in Italy, now available in the U.S.

The party and entertainment department really shines: gleaming bar accessories, books and bottle openers in the shape of imaginary animals, and a wooden board with 6 slim glasses for beer-tasting flights, made in Sausalito. A beautiful, old-fashioned picnic hamper is ready for any adventure, with place settings and utensils for two, condiments, storage containers, wine opener and glasses, and a matching picnic blanket.

Owner Nathan Waldron explains his store philosophy this way: "I love good design and products that are fun, practical and attractive or clever in some way. If you have to open a can, you might as well use something that is fun to look at. We're always searching for those everyday items that will add a little fun to your life, and can meld into your existing décor."

Gifts for the home range from tiny succulent gardens in vintage tins and cans, to sets of tasting spoons and tiny bowls. There are rugs, lamps and other home décor items with a sense of whimsy, and that integrate easily into today's often eclectic style. A selection of cards lines part of one wall, many from local artists, including two staff members who have their own line of cards. The jewelry department along the back wall and counter features items for every price point, in sterling silver, gold and various stones, and styles ranging from elegantly simple to exuberantly bohemian. Here again, the store features local designers who make their own jewelry, for a distinctive look.

Nathan, who lives in Oakland, had worked for years on the product development side of retail, designing for firms like FOSSIL, and his childhood dream was to open his own store. The first NATHAN&CO opened on Piedmont Avenue in 2006. Nathan hoped to grow the company, and searched for the right new location. When he crossed the bridge and travelled through the tunnel, nothing seemed right; he kept coming back to Oakland. Realizing that people in Oakland want to patronize local merchants, and since he's always loved Rockridge, when this space came available, Nathan was ready.

He notes: "What I like best about Rockridge is that it is such a great neighborhood, with people who appreciate the idea of shopping locally and supporting the community. People here are very connected to each other and to the community, and it is so wonderful to see how proud they are of the variety of retail stores here … that means a lot to us."

For a last-minute gift, NATHAN&CO offers beautiful giftwrap, sheets of unique, locally-designed wrap pretty enough to frame on their own.

Stop by, enjoy the fun yet practical designs; you'll surely find something for almost anyone on your list, including yourself.

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Scene at the Claremont Middle School Centennial Celebration

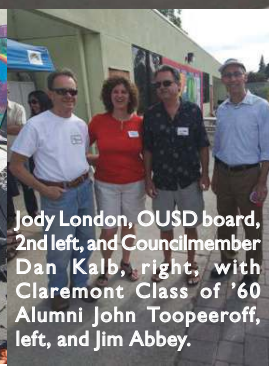


/Don Kinkead

Centennial celebrants dine and talk on the playground.



Roasted pig donated by Oliveto. Another was donated by Devil's Gate.



Jody London, OUSD board, 2nd left, and Councilmember Dan Kalb, right, with Claremont Class of '60 Alumni John Toopeeroff, left, and Jim Abbey.



Above: Claremont Middle School parent Kristofer Brekke is pictured with the iconic Claremont School gate at the corner of Birch Court and College Avenue. Brekke heads a fundraising campaign to complete a full restoration of the gate. Donate online at http://www.claremontms.org/claremont-pta/online-contributions, or mail checks (note: "Gate") to Claremont Middle School, 5750 College Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618.

Claremont Middle School Library News

Claremont Wins School District Library Program Award

At the year-end school district meeting, Claremont School Library was presented with the Oakland Unified School District's (OUSD) award for "Best Innovative Practice in School Libraries" for 2013.

The 7th grade "Blind Date With A Book" project was judged to be the most inventive program in the district this year.

Thanks again to Dorice Velez, Jen Vetter and Beth Johnke for helping pull it together, and to Ms. Solomon – and her students – for being wiling to try something new.

— from a report in the Claremont Middle School Knightline newsletter. The Knightline offers up to date information about Claremont School's activities and achievements. Sign up at http://www.claremontms.org/

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See you at the RCPC Town Hall meeting June 20; Rockridge Library, 7:30 p.m. 2nd floor meeting room.

Letters to the Editor

The Rockridge News welcomes letters to the editor. Your name, address, phone number, e-mail address and city/neighborhood must be included for verification. Only your name will appear with your letter. Letters may be edited for clarity and brevity at the editor's discretion. Views expressed in any letter are the writer's own, and may not necessarily be shared by the editor, or by RCPC.

Editor:

Recently, I was driving down Broadway, about to turn left on Lawton, when I saw a bicyclist crashed on the road, still laying in the street on Lawton. I did not stop as there were many people already there and I did not want to add to the chaos. However, I am still disturbed, hoping that the bicyclist is okay.

I've been hoping for years that we will get a traffic light at Broadway and Lawton because it is so dangerous there – especially for pedestrians – and now this accident, which looked pretty bad.

— Sharon Taylor

Lost and Found

One of the first things Mary did after her husband of 60 years passed away was to have a memorial locket made honoring their years together. It was a small, hexagonal pill box that opened on two sides. One side had their initials engraved on the face, inside was a lock of Bob's hair and a photo of them on their wedding day. The other side had a photo of each of them in Hawaii, one of their favorite vacation spots. Bob and Mary were avid College Avenue shoppers, supporting many small businesses in the neighborhood. Last week Mary was shopping at Tootsies and Trader Joe's. She was wearing the pill box affixed to a bow style pin. She lost it and she is heartbroken. She says it is almost like losing Bob again. If anyone has any information regarding the memorial piece, please call 510/484-8866.



Board Positions

from page 1

e-mail chair@rockridge.org. To contact the board with questions or to discuss an issue, e-mail info@rockridge.org.

Address handwritten correspondence to RCPC, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611.

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5/15/13	2	1	5268 Shafter Avenue	$678,000	$678,000	12	$790,000
5/16/13	1	1	5343 Broadway Terrace	$325,000	$325,000	21	$312,000
5/17/13	2	1	5527 Broadway	$599,000	$599,000	14	$780,000
5/22/13	3	1	6667 Chabot	$895,000	$895,000	21	$910,000
5/23/13	2	1.5	5344 Shafter Avenue	$699,000	$699,000	13	$925,000

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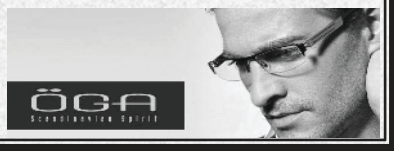
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Eyes on Rockridge

'Ten years ago, no one thought to kick down a front door...'

by Judith Doner Berne

It's two years this month since my husband and I moved to Rockridge.

In my first Rockridge News column, I spoke of the walkability, neighborliness, land/seascapes and amazing weather that definitely differentiate Rockridge from the metro-Detroit suburb we had lived in for nearly 40 years.

I still love it here – and am very glad we made the move. But the current Oakland crime statistics, which certainly include Rockridge, put a damper on the joy of living here.

Before I moved, I never knew anyone personally who was burglarized or robbed (much less shot or murdered) in my safe suburb where I often left doors unlocked and windows open if I were going out for a run or walk. There was a slight chance that if you left something valuable in an unlocked car in your driveway overnight, it might not be there in the morning. But the car certainly would.

But here City Councilman Dan Kalb, who lives around the corner from me, was robbed during his campaign for office last fall. A young man I met when I was reporting on Boyd Avenue's monthly soup parties had recently been mugged on his way home from California College of the Arts. Another Rockridge woman who I wrote about, and has become a friend, was the victim of a home invasion on a recent weekday.

"The scary part," she details, "is that they managed to break open our front door using crow bars, breaking through the panels and popping out the mortise lock and dead-bolt. This all in a neighborhood where everyone is generally watchful." According to the police, she says: "They were young and this wasn't their first rodeo."

My neighbor, Beth Johnke, last month alerted the community through the Nextdoor Shafter listserv that, while walking home from Kaiser in broad daylight, she witnessed



Yard signs planted firmly in many Rockridge gardens advertise the protective measures some homeowners have taken in response to diminished police services and reports of increasing crime. /Don Kinkead

the robbery of an older woman walking up the steps to her house pulling her shopping cart. It happened just south of the Rockridge border at John and Howe streets.

"An African American man ran up the steps, grabbed her groceries and purse," Johnke reported. "He jumped in a waiting car with a driver yelling, 'Thank you very much' as they sped off in a black sedan."

And that's just the people I know. It doesn't include the attempted mugging two blocks away of a couple who had just moved here, as they were walking home from College Avenue after dinner. He was shot in the shoulder, somewhat inadvertently. But inadvertently happens when guns are present.

And it doesn't count the numerous strangers who appear to be casing homes and run off down the street when they are sighted.

Meantime, of course, we experienced three Oakland police chiefs within three days, giving at least the impression of further disarray. And when was the last time you saw an OPD car actually patrolling Rockridge streets and not here to investigate an incident after the fact?

It's no wonder that the listservs are bursting with suggestions for attacking crime including passing a special assessment to procure policing of this area, hiring private security guards, mounting surveillance cameras, knocking down trees that are blocking light sources and improving street lighting.

"We're getting more business from the Rockridge area," says Randy Reed, of Reed Brothers Security. For example, "instead of just re-keying newly-purchased homes, we're doing major door hardening." He's also selling more alarm systems, surveillance cameras and stocking commercial quality dead bolts for home use for the first time.

"Ten years ago, no one thought to kick down a front door," Reed says. He cites decreased police presence, criminals' ability to stake out an area and communicate by cell phone, and the street value of smart phones and tablets (known as itheft), as reasons why Oakland is the robbery capital of the country.

More muggings are occurring in Rockridge, Montclair and the Oakland Hills than in Temescal where his business is located, says Reed, who keeps close track. "The police call them 'target rich' areas. You're likely to get more for your mugging. And there's easy access to the freeways."

"I want people to put the police on the hook," says Councilman Kalb who says he will arrange a meeting with police for Council District 1 (which includes Rockridge) later in the summer. The increase in crime "is very serious," he says. "When I walk home, I avoid neighborhood streets. The need is to do something to reduce crime and get back to a sense of safety. The police need to hear from the people."

He backs both a budget that will increase the police force to more than 800 over the next two years and the recent Bratton Report that focuses on reducing violent crime immediately.

It calls for dividing the city into five geographic areas, each headed by a captain accountable for crime, and building

Impact of Crime, page 12


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Impact of Crime

from page 11

community collaborations in his or her area. It also moves investigators down to the district level to work with beat and problem solving officers.

Importantly, it also makes solving property crimes a priority. Reportedly, only one part-time investigator was assigned to the 10,000 burglaries committed in Oakland last year, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Bratton calls for a burglary unit in each of the five districts.

Meantime, we must band together. Rather than barricading ourselves in our homes and abandoning our streets, we must use our communication tools and sensible precautions to outsmart would-be criminals, many of whom are reportedly in their teens.

Attending the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council meetings, forming and being active in Neighborhood Watch groups, joining the numerous listservs and heeding the generally good advice that your neighbors give are some of the basics.

As eight-year Rockridge resident Monica DiPerna passionately reminded on a recent listserv: "Please remember to leave your lights on in your house… Also, look out your windows, walk out onto your porch, look around... If we all did this a little bit more…in the evenings especially, that could really help. Please turn on your porch lights at 8 pm... NO MORE CRIME IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. We are done. Thank you!"

Judy Berne welcomes your comments and column ideas. Contact her at judyberne@att.net.

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Donations Support Projects

from page 7

join the campaign.

Falaschi is the owner of 5354 Claremont Avenue, the former supermarket site now occupied by DaVita Dialysis Corporation of Denver. He recently permitted Scenic Streets and its partner, Urban Releaf, to plant nine sidewalk trees around the property and has been working with tenant DaVita to approve its own proposed landscaping renovations which are now underway.

"We are deeply grateful to all of our donors," says Scenic Streets founder Peter Lund. "And these very generous contributions put us even closer to beginning our most ambitious improvements yet to the Rockridge-Temescal Gateway."

Scenic Streets still has some fund-raising to do before its next phase of work can begin, but Lund says he is optimistic that funds will be donated, noting that the community has provided the vast majority of the group's funding to date. He reports that many enthusiastic supporters have made two or three contributions via the group's web site – www.scenicstreets.org – which also features detailed plans of coming projects.

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DaVita Renovates

from page 7

hired team. Scenic Streets is also petitioning the Public Works Department to add a sidewalk trash can near the corner to help control litter from pedestrians.

DaVita is expected to wrap up its renovations by the end of June. Scenic Streets will then plant additional shrubs and trees in the surrounding area in the fall.

The volunteer group will then shift its focus to renovating Hardy Park Dog Run if a fundraising goal for that project is achieved.

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Changes on College

by Theresa Nelson

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4th Pancake Breakfast Sets Record; Claremont Middle School to Benefit

by Kevin Keck, Claremont Dads Club

On April 6, the Rockridge Masonic Lodge hosted the Fourth Annual Pancake Breakfast to support Claremont Middle School. Working closely with the Masons were the Claremont Middle School Dads Club and the Rockridge District Association (RDA).

The record $5,200 raised by the event will be dedicated to help support school programs focusing on fine arts, music, and the school's state-of-the-art computer lab. The breakfast continues to serve as an important community builder as people from the school, residential and business communities come together for a delicious meal.

The Dads Club worked with Claremont Middle School faculty to distribute tickets to deserving Claremont students who might not have been able to attend.

Once again the Masons put on a great spread and graciously opened up their beautiful facility to the community. This event would not have been possible if not for the efforts of so many who volunteered their time and energy to make it happen.



Breakfast in the Masonic Lodge. /Kevin Keck

Special thanks must go to David Forsyth and all the Rockridge Masonic Lodge members who continue to host this annual event, and to Chris Jackson and the RDA for their generous support. Thanks as well to our local merchants, including Market Hall, Trader Joe's, Bosko's Picture Framing, Fit, Nathan & Co., Cutting Up on College, DHR Investment Council, Rockridge Cleaners, Tip Top Bike Shop, and all the teachers, students, families and members of our Claremont community who attended.

We'll see you again next year.

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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

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

Free computer tutoring for all ages**: Download e-books. Help with e-mail and basic computer skills. Tuesdays from 3:30-7pm. Make appt. at 587-5017.

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.

****SUMMER READING PROGRAM** – sign-up starts Saturday, June 15. Get your reading log; choose what you want to read and start reading. Count time whenever you read or someone reads aloud to you. **GET PRIZES at 4 and 8 hours.**

Special Events:

- **City-wide Bubble Party:** Sat., 6/15, 11:30 - 12:30. Celebrate the start of summer by blowing and popping bubbles. Will be happening at other locations the same day.
- **National Paper Airplane Day:** Fri., 6/ 21, 4:30-5:15 pm. Make awesome paper airplanes & launch them from our balcony.
- **Xtreme Science Magic:** Sat., 6/ 22, 2:30pm. Combination of science & magic for all ages.
- **Magical Moonshine Theater:** Tues, 6/25, 7pm. Bilingual musical performance with puppets & masks.

FOR TEENS

****Volunteers needed (ages 11 to 16) to help with the Summer Reading Program:** register kids and explain the game; show them how to record their time on their reading log & on the computer; give out prizes; assist with special activities.

****Also: help with regular library tasks** like sorting and shelving books & movies. Call Erica (597-5017) with questions or to attend a brief orientation.

****Teen Summer Passport Program:** explore Bay Area hot spots or write book reviews to earn prizes and raffle tickets. **Runs June 15; ends Aug 10.** Info: Teen Librarian Vicky Chen.

- **Go Game Workshop:** taught by **Steve Bloom** of *It's Your Move Games and Hobbies*. 6/11, 5pm.
- **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, 2nd Tues each month from 5-6:30 pm.
- **Teen 'Scape:** Play video and board games; make crafts; light snacks provided. Every Wed., 2 to 3:30pm.

FOR ADULTS

- **East Bay Chronic Pain Group:** First and Third Tues. each month, 3-5pm. (**NOTE: no mtg Tues, 6/18).** Info: Susan Malley, 655-3278 or susanmalley@yahoo.com.
- **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, 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:

June**: To Be Assigned.**

July: **Benny Alba;** "Road Series" Prints

Lobby Display Case

June: **Lori Fischer;** Dolls 4 Artsake.

July: **Kim Anderson;** "Adornment" Jewelry 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, 6/18.**

Diesel Book/Poetry Readings/Events

All FREE and open to the public.

- Sun., 6/9, 3pm. **Poetry Flash** with **Natalie Diaz, Tomás Q. Morin**, and **James Arthur**.
- Mon, 6/10, 7:30pm. **Amnesty International Meeting** (**2nd Mon. each month**): All invited to exchange ideas on action.
- Wed, 6/19, 7pm. local poets **Jennifer Foerster**; *Leaving Tulsa* and **Shane Book**; *Ceiling of Sticks*.
- Thurs, 6/20, 7pm. editors **Marc Weingarten** and **Tyson Cornell**; *Yes is the Answer: and Other Prog- Rock Tales*.
- Sun., 6/23, 3pm. Local author **Amy Lynn Reed**; *Over You*.

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

Wisteria Ways House Concert

Molly's Revenge: Celtic trio summer CD Release Party. Scottish and Irish music on traditional instruments with **David Brewer, John Weed** and **Stuart Mason**. Hear them at www.mollysrevenge.com. Sunday, 6/23, 3pm. (Doors open 2 p.m.) Outside venue; wheelchair accessible. Bring a blanket, lawn chair and picnic. $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.

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.

Volunteers Wanted at Chabot Space and Science Center

Learn about volunteer program, training and perks. Register now for next Volunteer Orientation on Saturday, June 29, 10am to 2pm. Welcome visitors, share exhibits and historical telescopes, and learn how to make earth and space science come alive for visitors through interactive experiences. A variety of volunteer shifts and times are available. 10000 Skyline Blvd., 336-7300. More information and to register for orientation, visit www.chabotspace.org or email volunteers@chabotspace.org

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We Need More Rockridge Homes to Sell

As of press time, there were only 16 Homes for Sale in Rockridge. Normally there would be approx. 30-34 Homes actively on the market right now in Rockridge. Sellers are seeing multiple offers and over asking offers because of the continued tight supply of homes for sale. If you had thought about selling in the past, but thought prices were too low, you might be surprised as prices have increased significantly. Call me for an evaluation of your home and its value in today's seller's market

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Lawton Avenue Bungalow & Cottage
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SOLD $1,100,000

*NOTE: Because of Rockridge Newsletter lead time, all the prices are not available at print deadline.

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