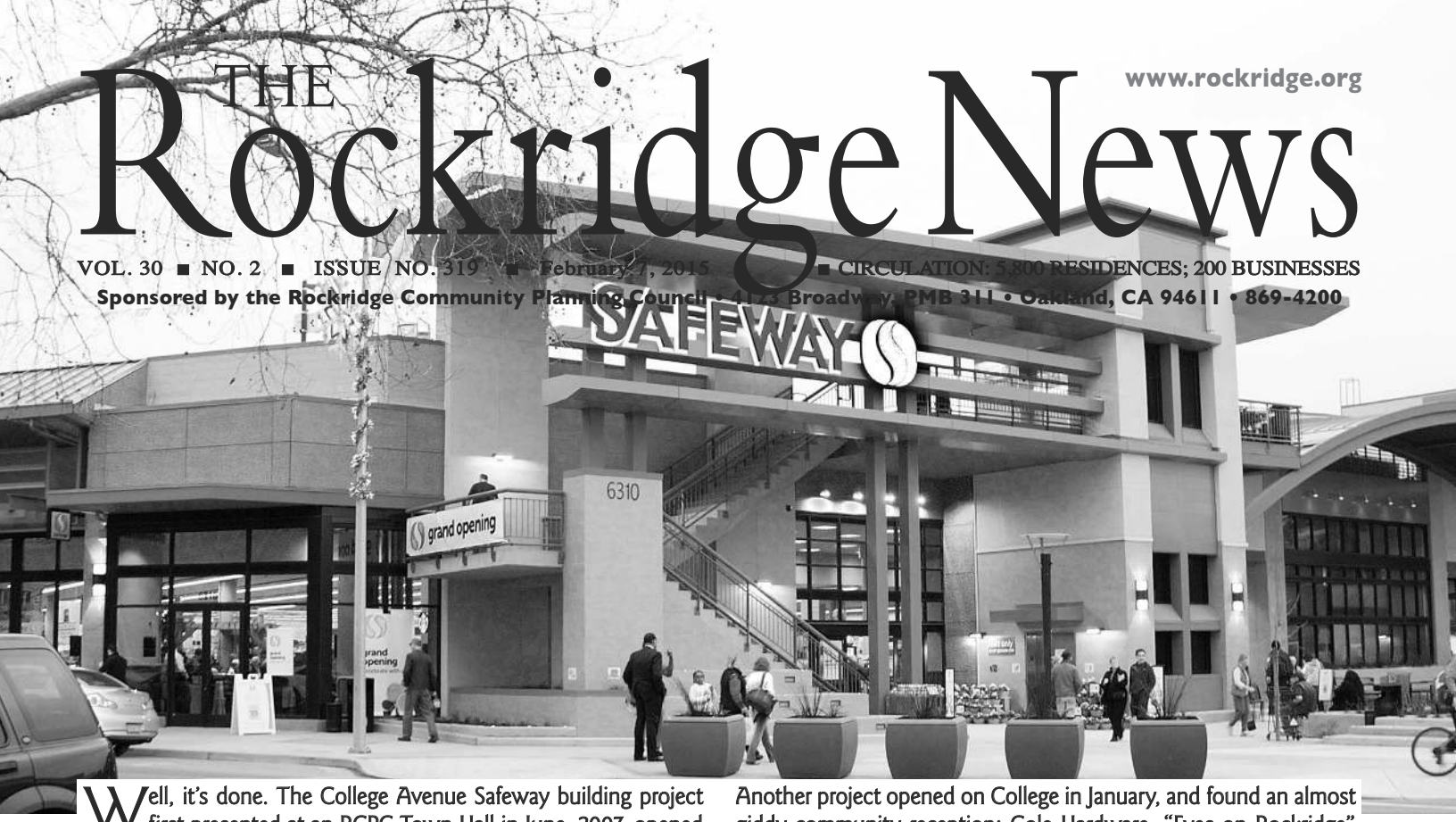
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THE Rockridge News

VOL. 30 ■ NO. 2 ■ ISSUE NO. 319 ■ February 7, 2015 ■ CIRCULATION: 5,800 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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Well, it's done. The College Avenue Safeway building project first presented at an RCPC Town Hall in June, 2007, opened for business January 15. Opened to mixed opinions, it must be said, but that can't be surprising, given the scope and scale of the project. Another project opened on College in January, and found an almost giddy community reception: Cole Hardware. "Eyes on Rockridge" writer Judith Doner Berne visited each opening, querying customers and staff for their impressions. Read her findings, beginning on page 6.

Results: Rockridge Vision Survey

Comparing Rockridge Today to 'Ideal' Urban Setting

by Zabrae Valentine, chair, RCPC

Knowing what Rockridge residents value most about our corner of Oakland and what they see as priorities for the future can help the neighborhood meet the challenges of change.

RCPC has been convening conversations and collecting data from residents over the past couple of years about how

Vision Survey, page 3

Capturing Lost Revenue with Your Kitchen Remodel

Brendan Havenar-Daughton, RCPC board



For many of us, kitchens represent a major hub of activity in our homes. Not only do kitchens offer the potential for endless nourishment, they also have a way of becoming the epicenter of social interaction. Kitchens draw us in with their aromas, edible resources and technological utility. It's no surprise that kitchens are the single most energy-intensive room in our homes, often representing as

Energy Savings, page 2

Your Neighborhood Is On the Line: Answer the Call

"Find a need and fill it" was the slogan an Oakland cement company once painted on the sides of its mixer trucks.

The trucks are gone but the echo of the slogan infuses the spirit sustaining Rockridge today.

Over the years, residents have found local needs and rallied others to join in and fill them. It was volunteers who rallied neighbors and the city government to build on the Rockridge that already existed. It was volunteers who conceived of and created Frog Park, the Rockridge Branch Library, and other of today's local amenities.

There are needs today that need filling, and there is help available for the filling. One way to join the tradition of service

Answer the Call, page 2

19 February 2015 RCPC Town Hall

Adult beverages and soft drinks will be available

Cole Hardware 6:30-7:45 p.m.

RCPC Town Hall, Thursday, February 19
***Special Location:* Cole Hardware, 5533 College Avenue**
***Special Time:* 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.**
***Agenda:* Volunteerism, the RCPC, the community.**

Community volunteers are both the warp and the weft of the Rockridge fabric as community needs are found and filled. What unravelling skeins have you seen? RCPC can help you work on them. Or, you may find working with the RCPC board more to your liking. Either way,

Town Hall, page 12

Answer the Call

from page 1

is to serve on the board of the Rockridge Community Planning Council.

Service on the board allows people to be part of ensuring that a range of views informs local transportation and land use decisions, and that the city understands the priorities and concerns of the community generally. It's also an opportunity to actively support Frog Park, Scenic Streets and other local volunteer efforts, and support the work of The Rockridge News.

The board has two open, two-year term seats, plus two additional seats being vacated that will be filled by appointment within the next few months.

No specific experience is required, but an accounting or bookkeeping background in particular, and knowledge of and experience with land use planning or property development, non-profit management, event planning, and local government operations are a plus.

If you are at least 18 years of age, live within the RCPC boundaries (http://www.rockridge.org/boundaries), and want to serve your community, submit your interest in candidacy for election to the board now. Write info@rockridge.org for more details. The deadline for submitting a statement of interest is February 26, 2015.

Energy Savings

from page 1

much as 15 percent of our home energy use.

This is good news for those of us considering a kitchen remodel, whether large project or smaller renovation. Updating your kitchen offers the opportunity to eliminate unnecessary energy use and reduce your utility costs without compromising the functionality of your appliances and workspace. Many newer kitchen appliances use two-thirds less energy than products purchased within the last decade. Higher up-front costs on ENERGY STAR appliances are generally offset by the lower cost of operation during the first few years of use.

Incorporating energy efficiency strategies into your kitchen remodel helps the planet, and reduces the overall cost of operating your kitchen for years to come. Be sure to think about energy use when considering the purchase of new appliances and light bulbs. Consider that new ENERGY STAR refrigerators use less than a 60 watt light bulb (run continuously) and 60 watts of traditional incandescent light can be produced by an LED light bulb for a mere 6 watts!

The moral of the story: leverage energy efficient technologies to help alleviate the overall cost of your kitchen remodel. Even if the savings seem incremental on first glance, remember that energy costs are not fixed and that these expenses add up quickly over time.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about how to maximize the efficiency of your kitchen project, join your neighbors at RCPC's biennial Rockridge Kitchen Tour in September. Early Bird tickets are on sale now at www.RockridgeKitchenTour.org.

Here are some more fun facts and energy tips you can share with your friends and family:

- A 6" pot on an 8" burner wastes over 40 percent of the burner's heat. Using the right size pot can save about $36 annually (electric range), or $18 (gas).
- Blue flames mean good combustion; yellow flames mean service may be needed to ensure gas is burning efficiently.
- Hot water leaking at a rate of 1 drip per second can waste up to 1,661 gallons of water over the course of a year, costing up to $35 in electricity or in natural gas.
- ENERGY STAR qualified lighting provides bright, warm light while using 75 percent less energy, lasting up to 10 times longer than standard lighting.
- Eighty percent of the energy used by dishwashers is used to heat the wash water. Choose the model that is energy-efficient and has low water consumption.*

Remember: buy your Rockridge Kitchen Tour Tickets Early: www.RockridgeKitchenTour.org

*Sources: www.Energy.gov; http://www.resnet.us/; www.Cree.com

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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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Publication date of the next issue is:
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☛ **March deadline is February 19, 2015**
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RCPC Land Use Committee

The February Land Use Committee meeting is Wednesday, February 25, 7:30 p.m. The meeting agenda will be posted on rockridge.org by the preceding Sunday. The meeting will likely be held in an upstairs meeting room of the Rockridge Branch library, 5366 College Avenue, but check at rockridge.org to confirm. (Front door will be unlocked; pull doors apart to enter.) Meetings are open to the public.

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee co-chair

■ College Avenue Safeway Project

Although the College Avenue Safeway has opened, there are a number of items that do not yet comply with either the use permit conditions or the settlement agreement with community groups. The groups are submitting a list of uncompleted items to Safeway and Terramar (the new owner of the retail building), as is the city. The groups plan to meet with Safeway in February to resolve those items not yet completed. Please e-mail information about issues you have with the project to landuse@rockridge.org.

■ Rockridge Shopping Center and Merrill Gardens Senior Housing Project – Broadway and Pleasant Valley/51st Street

Demolition of the buildings at the Merrill Gardens site should have started by the time you read this, and demolition of the CVS building at the Rockridge Shopping Center should also begin soon. Get updates on the projects at:

- Safeway (Rockridge Center) http://www.theshopsattheridge.com/
- Merrill Gardens: http://www.srmdevelopment.com/rockridge

■ College Avenue Retail Zoning Working Group

At its January meeting, the Land Use Committee unanimously approved recommending to the RCPC board that RCPC proceed to establish a working group that will discuss and make recommendations to the city about CN-1 zoning revisions. That zoning applies to College Avenue and other neighborhood commercial areas such as Montclair Village, Piedmont Avenue and the Laurel District. The central item is expected to be how to deal with discontinued or abandoned conditional uses. Currently, conditional use

Land Use, page 7

Vision Survey

from page 1

they describe aspects of the neighborhood, their vision for the future, and their communication practices. Most recently, RCPC circulated the Rockridge Vision Survey, to which 360 people responded. (The survey closed in November 2014). Although the survey did not use a random sample of the community, it collected information from a wide range of people demographically providing reasonably consistent results, which may suggest a degree of representativeness.

The survey asked resident's views of Rockridge, and also how they would characterize "the perfect neighborhood." The intent was to learn how Rockridge compared to this idealized standard, and included the classification of more than 2,000 terms and phrases provided by survey respondents.

Respondents' descriptions of Rockridge settled into four broad areas, which were, in order of frequency: 1) Community Spirit; 2) Mobility/Accessibility/Transit; 3) Commercial/Retail Options and Characteristics; and 4) Housing and Neighborhood Aesthetic.

The broad topics people identified as most important in an ideal setting ("the perfect neighborhood") turned out to be largely the same, based on the number of mentions of particular words and phrases, as in their description of the Rockridge neighborhood – although with some notable variations.

Priority 1: Community Spirit

By far, the most frequently named traits of an ideal setting included "a sense of community," "neighbors who interact and look out for each other" and are "engaged," "inclusive," "friendly," and "open and welcoming." There were also multiple variations of "village-like." Comparing this response to the terms most frequently used to describe Rockridge itself, the specific terms and proportional frequency were similar. Clearly, respondents placed a high value on neighborliness and community activism and a majority also viewed Rockridge as embodying these same characteristics.

The next priority in an ideal setting was "safe for all" and "low crime." Safety in Rockridge was mentioned but it came up less frequently, suggesting that people would like to feel safer than they do.

The next priority in this area for the idealist view included terms such as "open/public space," "trees/ green space for people with

Vision Survey, page 9

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College Avenue: The Past Morphs to the Future

College Avenue Commerce : Decades of Service

Merchants' Years of Service: Part 6

Following is the sixth in our series on businesses in business on College Avenue at least 25 years. We are nearing the end of our series and don't want to miss anyone. If you have been "on the Avenue" and haven't seen your name yet, drop us an email at editor@rockridge.org. We want readers of The Rockridge News to know about you and to stop in to see what you offer.

by Kevin Faughnan, RCPC boardmember

Transports was started by Kei Kodani in 1982 in a small space above Barclay's Pub. Kei began the business selling camping and hiking equipment, and it seemed to complement the adjacent store that focused on running shoes. However, when that store went out of business, the salesmen providing that inventory convinced Kei, himself a runner, to carry their lines. Shortly thereafter, Kei moved a few doors up the street and next to the then-location of the Sierra Club bookstore where he remained for 20 years. When the Sierra Club closed the store in 2003, Kei took the opportunity to expand into the space, now his current quarters at 6014 College Avenue. Richie Boulet, one of the current owners, said that the business now caters to runners and swimmers, both entry level and serious athletes, including local high schools. Richie says that 90 percent of their clients are beginners who need help in picking out the right equipment, something the store specializes in. **Transports** also helps sponsor many races, including the East Bay Triple Crown. Stop in and get fitted.

Jan David Winitz opened the doors of **Claremont Rug Company,** 6087 Claremont Avenue, in 1980. His grandmother was an active collector, as were some of her friends. They would gather at her New York home and trade stories, rugs and knowledge while the young Winitz absorbed everything he could. There is no limit when you pair a good teacher with a curious and interested mind. After moving west and attending UC Berkeley, he began the business with his wife Christine, also a collector. Over the years the business grew steadily as Silicon Valley provided a great source of able collectors who could see the beauty of these "art level" rugs but needed expert guidance in the selection process. These rugs, made before 1900 with natural dyes by expert tribal weavers, were usually commissioned by an important family or for a special event. An average price in the five-figure range might sound incredible to some, but what is the value of something you will enjoy every day you look at it for the rest of your life? That's what **Claremont Rug** can provide.

Barney's, 5819 College Avenue, opened at that location in 1988. After five years on

Merchants, page 12

Art on the Avenue:

Bosko's Framing Gallery

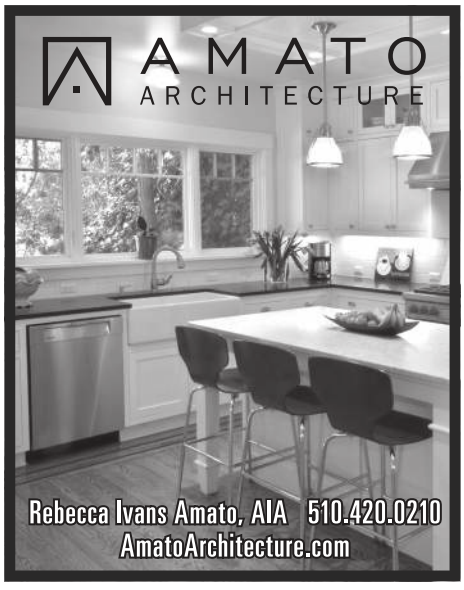
by Carl Schmitz

Bosko's Framing Gallery is starting its 70th year in business at the southeast corner of College and Armanino Court. Currently in the display windows at Bosko's are a colorful variety of *objets d'art*: paintings by Lynne Bostick, Jason Schoner, and Rip Matteson, watercolors by Wendy Yoshimura, giclée prints by Lois Wachner-Solomon, and vintage pottery.

Peter Bosko, a CCAC (California College of Arts and Crafts, now California College of the Arts, or CCA) graduate and WWII veteran, opened Bosko's in 1945. At a time when many other vets in the Bay Area were using the GI Bill to attend art school, Bosko used his benefits for a business loan. In the late '40s and throughout the '50s, Bosko's held a number of special exhibitions that featured paintings by instructors from the Art League of California as well as shows of watercolors by artists like Jade Fon and George Post. Louis Siegriest and Maurice Logan, *plein air* painters who were part of the Rockridge-based Society of Six, also showed at Bosko's.

In addition to being an adept framer, Peter Bosko was an award-winning painter and printmaker. Many of his works can still be seen inside the shop, hung high on the walls. Bosko was active in the East Bay Artists Association and participated in their

Bosko's Framing Gallery, page 13





Chabot Elementary School Spring Auction

Community Donations Help Bridge the Funding Gap

by Natalie Mehta, Chabot Parent

Gone are the days of the school PTA when bake sales funded "bells and whistles" for our schools. As OUSD budgets continue their downward trend, more community resources are needed to bridge the public funding shortfall.

At Chabot Elementary, the PTA funds enrichment programs including Art, Library, Media, Music, Science, and Spanish. The PTA funds school psychologists to address emotional issues, intervention specialists focused on closing the achievement gap, and yard duty supervisors who lead games and activities that promote a positive school environment. The Chabot PTA raises more than $400,000 annually to fund these vital programs and services. The benefits of this support are clear; Chabot is an award-winning public school where students have access to programs and resources to ensure their academic and social success.

Our largest spring fundraiser, the annual Spring Auction, is being planned, and we need your help! Do you have a special talent or trade? Could you donate a weekend getaway or a handcrafted item? Would you like to be an event sponsor and raise your visibility in our community? Donations big and small make the Spring Auction special. Contact auction@chabotelementary.org for more information or http://events.readysetauction.com/chabotelementarypta/bobcats to arrange a donation..



Oakland Tech 2015 Auction Celebrates Centennial Year

Oakland Tech is Oakland's top-scoring public high school, and this year is extra special because it's our centennial year.

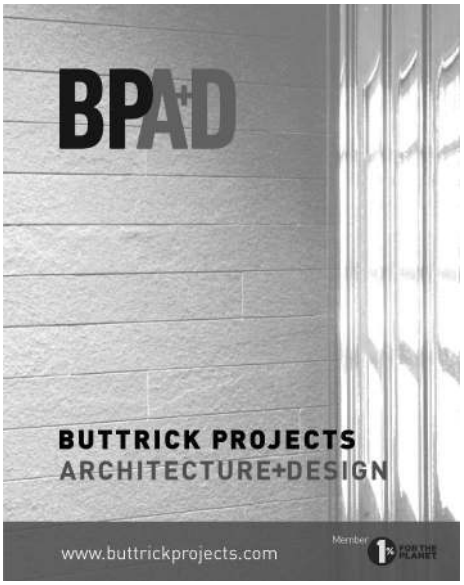
Tech's annual auction, our largest fundraiser, will be held March 14 at Uptown Body and Fender. Proceeds from the auction are used for textbooks, laptops and sports uniforms, and to support groups and career development programs. With the help of our local community, Tech continues to offer its students highly regarded science academies in engineering, biotech, computers and health, as well as a rigorous Paideia humanities program, a dynamic drama program, a fashion and design academy and a broad range of sports, arts and other engaging activities. Tech graduates go on to universities all over the country, including schools such as Harvard, Yale, MIT, Penn, Columbia, Stanford and UC Berkeley.

The Oakland Tech PTSA is committed to building our students' achievements, and you can help. Please donate to our auction by responding to the donation request letter we've mailed out, or by going to the auction website, http://oaklandtech.schoolauction.net/auction2015, and submitting a donation online. Then, get ready to bid on other exciting items. Bidding begins February 26, and ends March 6. See more details on the web site.

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Eyes on Rockridge

Cole Hardware, Completed Safeway Add New Life to College Avenue

by Judith Doner Berne

The January openings of Cole Hardware, just south of BART, and the new version of Safeway at Claremont and College definitely cut the post-holiday gloom.

It was hard to miss the smiles on the faces of Cole Hardware shoppers who thronged to the store on its opening days. After all, Rockridge "voted" that a hardware store was the foremost missing ingredient in the mixture of retail and restaurants that is College Avenue. And it already seems that this family-owned enterprise has been there forever, although its formal "Grand Opening" is Saturday, February 21.

"I love this store," enthused Rockridge resident Manny Blackman, who was a Cole Hardware customer when he lived in San Francisco. "I'm excited to see it here."

Even before Cole opened, I wrote down a comment I heard on the street: "We are finally getting a store on College that everyone can use."

Everyone can use the new Safeway, as well, but some more grudgingly than others. Inside, it is beautiful and bright and certainly a vast improvement in depth of product and environment over the old Sixties-era store and its featureless parking lot.

Critics predicted traffic mayhem, but I haven't seen that. However, the building does loom over College Avenue, blocking sun and view. Plus, I don't quite get how its in-store Starbucks and expected tenant, Philz Coffee, are assets to a neighborhood that already has a slew of independent coffee houses, two directly across the street.

Peet's Coffee, down the block, handled it subtly and creatively with a sign welcoming back Safeway employees and offering them 20 percent off on purchases. And two women I spoke to sipping Cole Coffee (no relation to the hardware store) across the street said the coffee is so good they would never go anywhere else. They also mentioned it was easier to park and "you can still see the sky."

Of those I randomly interviewed at Safeway, most were positive although none happened to be Rockridge residents. Anne Janks, from another area of Oakland, told me enthusiastically, "It looks like a Whole Foods." "I think it's glorious," Virginia Stough of Piedmont said. "I like it – how neat everything looks. It's really pretty to look at," echoed Becky Lee, from Berkeley.

An elderly Berkeley couple, who didn't want to give their names but apparently lived nearby, weren't as happy. "We always shopped at the old Safeway. But this is too big and really disrupts the neighborhood," the woman said, as a live rock band entertained at the store opening. "They should have had a string quartet playing Vivaldi," she added. "They're obviously not after the Berkeley crowd."

I liked it. Moving here several years ago from the suburbs of Detroit where our supermarkets were sparkling and well-stocked (even if the produce and poultry couldn't begin to stand up to California's homegrown quality), I never understood why both Rockridge-area Safeways were so dilapidated. And it certainly provides a window into what the Rockridge Shopping Center Safeway, about to break ground at 51st and Broadway – nearer my house – will look like. Same architect, I am told.

It's obvious that after the rancor with the immediate neighborhood over size and construction, Safeway officials are out to create community. They started by donating $2,500 each to Friends of the Rockridge Greenbelt (FROG), which maintains Frog Park, and to Peralta Elementary School. Peralta students, under artist-in-residence Ellen Oppenheimer, worked with Safeway to create a series of 45 tiles depicting vegetables and fruits. Those tiles are now firmly embedded in the new store's façade. Sweet.

"We're required to be local," Steve Bernet, vice president of real estate, told me as he ticked off some of the retailers that will lease commercial space. They include Cream, a Berkeley-based ice cream sandwich shop; the previously-mentioned Philz Coffee, out of San Francisco; and Great Clips barber shop and United Services Credit Union, formerly at the Rockridge Shopping Center.

It was nice to see that the managers of both the new stores are women barely into their 30s. When Daryl Winnick was introduced at the Safeway grand opening, staff members gave her an ovation. As Winnick told me

Added Life, page 7

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Added Life

from page 6

later, "I came from the bottom." She started as a bagger at age 16 and worked her way up over 13 years. She was previously manager of



Peet's Coffee, at College and Alcatraz, welcomes Safeway employees back to the neighborhood with a special offer. ("What, me worry?")

Berkeley's Shattuck Avenue Safeway, before it was renovated, and then of its Albany sister store.

I met Cole Hardware's Rockridge manager Tessa Riley as she was bagging fresh popcorn near the store entryway. Riley also started small, five years ago, as a cashier. She most recently was assistant manager at the Cole Street store in San Francisco.

People I talked to worried about competition with smaller College Avenue stores. When I asked Riley how Cole is handling merchandise that the boutique Rockridge home-oriented stores also stock, she said: "There's a couple of lines we aren't carrying out of respect for the stores that have been here."

"I'm hoping that Yasai's hangs in there," said Julie Tanenbaum, a Berkeley resident, as she toured Safeway for the first time. "I love Yasai's and Ver Brugge," said Monica Scott, an Oakland resident, while hovering over Safeway's organic bulk food counter.

As I walked into Yasai's Produce Market and Ver Brugge Meat-Fish Poultry, directly across the street from Safeway, both shops were as busy as you might expect for a weekday afternoon. The Trader Joe's lot was perhaps a little less crowded than usual.

"I'm very pleased to see the Safeway project coming to a finish," said Rockridge District Association (RDA) operations manager Chris Jackson. "It's nice to see the foot traffic back, which is good for all. The feedback I have received has been positive thus far. They still have a few things to work out but it's *open* with more to come. Folks are saying we have the best Safeway around.

"And Cole Hardware is a great fit for Rockridge and our neighborhood," added Jackson, a strong supporter of getting them to consider opening their first store in the East Bay. "It's so good to see the vibrancy they bring to the Avenue."

Judy Berne welcomes your comments and suggestions for future columns. Contact her at judyberne@att.net.



Peralta School artist in residence Ellen Oppenheimer and Peralta students display a facsimile check for a donation Safeway made to the school. The students created ceramic tiles that were mounted on the storefront walls and depict a variety of vegetables. Safeway also presented a similar check to Frog Park representatives. That donation will be more fully reported in the March issue.

Land Use

from page 3

permits (for business uses that are only conditionally consistent with CN-1's general street level retail preference) persist even if the use has been abandoned. Other topics, including reviewing existing square footage thresholds for requiring a use permit for retail use and dealing with older large spaces built before the use permit requirement size thresholds were established, may also be considered. RCPC will contact other stakeholders in CN-1 zoned areas across Oakland to establish the working group. We would expect there will also be community meetings in the CN-1 areas to gather input.



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Rockridge Cornucopia

Barry A. Kaufman

Hardware Store Cooking Basics

Finally we have a hardware store on College! For more than 30 years, when friends would comment how lucky we were to live near so many great restaurants and shops, my response was always the same: "But we don't have a neighborhood hardware store."

When people think about a hardware store, the first thing that often comes to mind is tools and building materials. Tools and materials indeed, but for me, a well-equipped contemporary hardware store is the go-to resource for all things related to cooking. I'm not disparaging upmarket stores like Sur La Table or Williams-Sonoma, but for the home chef, give me a well-stocked hardware store anytime.

Cole Hardware has a complete selection of kitchen and cooking resources. And what is available is of high quality and includes contemporary designs.

At one time, the small family-owned hardware store was the center of community life. Not only could you get the usual tools and building supplies, but they often also offered a variety of handyman services. As a direct-line descendant from the frontier general store, hardware stores always carried basic cooking and kitchen housewares for home cooks. Many traditional hardware stores also sold work clothes for each of the building trades. Today's hardware store also caters to the more suburban backyard-entertaining crowd with a good selection of Weber and other grilling products and BBQ gadgets.

As I strolled though Cole, my eye caught some wonderful cooking and kitchen household items. The first thing I noticed was that the store carries a full line of Zeal products from Great Britain. Zeal has been in the gourmet kitchen business for nearly 40 years and sells only to professional kitchen retailers. They have been offering silicone since it started to become more mainstream around 15 years ago. I have a collection of Zeal multi-colored paring knives that are lovely to offer guests with fresh fruit and cheese.

Another long-standing cooking item found in Cole is an assortment of Lodge cast iron pots and pans. Founded in 1896 by Joseph Lodge, Lodge is the only American manufacturer of cast iron cookware. Keeping up with the times, the company now makes pre-seasoned cast iron cookware. If properly maintained, a Lodge cast iron pan will last for generations. You are not buying just a fry pan; you're buying an heirloom. You can buy All-Clad or Le Creuset at an upscale houseware store, but nothing beats a Lodge cast iron pan.

At Cole you will also find a full line of Ball canning jars. Ball is another American company over 100 years old. You may have noticed that several Oakland Uptown hipster restaurants and bars use Ball jars for water glasses and specialized cocktails. There is a reason some products never grow old. Whether for canning, pickling, or simple water glasses, nothing beats a Ball jar.

My big surprise on my walk through Cole's was a full display of OXO Good Grips gadgets. Whether it's a simple garlic press, vegetable peeler, or fancy mandoline, OXO Good Grips make over 500 quality kitchen products for the home chef. In my experience they never wear out or break. Need a spatula? OXO offers several different varieties. Next time you make a run to Cole's, check out the great housewares department. You won't be disappointed.

Cast Iron Curried Carrots (4-servings)

Ingredients

- 3 tbs coconut oil (Trader Joe's)
- 2 pounds carrots, peeled, halved lengthwise, sliced on a bias (1-inch pieces)
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp curry powder
- ¼ cup roughly chopped cilantro

Preparation

Heat a medium size cast iron skillet over medium-high heat and add coconut oil. When hot, add carrots in a single layer. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and sauté the carrots, turning every 3-4 minutes until they show dark caramelized brown spots, about 8-10 minutes. Add the curry powder and mix to combine. Scatter cilantro over the top and serve.

Barry Kaufman is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. Barry is available for cooking classes and tours of East Bay ethnic markets. Contact: kaufman42@comcast.net

Have a ♥ Time on Valentine's Day

Cole Hardware invites you to a Valentine's Day mixer for singles, couples, even handy-men/women looking for clients. It will be a fun evening where nuts can meet bolts, have a glass of Cole's wine, a taste of chocolate, get sweetheart deals, and meet other locals whether for friends, community, or who knows what else may bloom!

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Vision Survey

from page 3

(and without) kids/ parks," "places to sit, eat, play outside," and "gathering spaces." Any parallel description was conspicuously absent from the descriptions of Rockridge, except for a few mentions of Frog Park.

The final "ideal" priority garnering significantly more mentions than the remainder of terms used in this category was "integrated diversity – in age, wealth, race and culture, housing availability." The Rockridge description had many mentions of demographic "diversity," although these were offset by several references to being "homogenous" and "less diverse than it used to be."

Other popular traits describing an ideal neighborhood included "good schools," "affordability" (including housing specifically), "family-friendly," "home prices and job availability allowing people to work and live in same area," "opportunities for the community to gather," "public displays of art and music," "courteous treatment of neighbors," and "connected to the broader community of Oakland." In addition to "strong community," "safety," and "diversity," the Rockridge description highlighted (but with fewer mentions) "family-friendly" and "good" and "improving" public schools. There were no references to "affordability" of housing or anything else, with numerous mentions instead of Rockridge being "expensive" and "unaffordable."

Priority 2: Mobility/ Accessibility/Transit

When describing both the ideal neighborhood and Rockridge specifically, the majority of these traits included things like "transit-friendly," "pedestrian and bike friendly," "accessible," and "convenient." Rockridge's "convenient" location relative to surrounding destinations was much appreciated. A handful of respondents wanted more parking options when a car is needed, yet envisioned a community designed to reduce the need for cars.

Priority 3: Commercial/Retail Options and Characteristics

As an ideal, respondents wanted their neighborhood to provide "essential services" as well as "interesting specialty shops," "diverse shopping and eating options," and "great food and coffee." They also want shops to be "scaled to pedestrians," and predominantly "independently owned."

What they have in Rockridge is pretty close. Descriptions included "unique/small independently owned shops," "full service," "great restaurants," "foodie destination," "culinary delights," "bookstores and cafes," and "a coffee extravaganza." Rockridge's College Avenue was also described as "bustling," "thriving," "lively," and "vibrant." Here, too, the main trait missing from the Rockridge description was affordability.

Priority 4: Housing/ Neighborhood Aesthetic

The final standout cluster of traits in both the ideal neighborhood and in Rockridge described housing stock and residential streets and services. Here, Rockridge fully matched the ideal neighborhood in "attractive homes" and "tree-lined streets" as well as being "charming," "peaceful," "pleasant" and "having character."

The ideal neighborhood descriptions also included a number of public services not mentioned in the Rockridge description, such as "well-paved streets," "reliable garbage pick-up," "smooth and wide sidewalks," "good tree maintenance" and "well-lit streets."

However, several respondents expressed a preference for medium- to low-density development with height and design restrictions to preserve historic architecture and character, while a few others wanted "environmentally responsible," "good density," that is "less suburban."

Many other observations were noted by respondents only once or twice each and in a wide range of other topical areas. Nonetheless, the above provides a reasonably complete overview of the full array of responses.

Who Took the Survey? Highlights

The survey results may not be surprising, and might even be predictable. Still, they are useful. The next time RCPC or any other group of residents wants to convey to the city of Oakland, to a new developer, or to a potential grantmaker what Rockridge residents care about, they can share that Rockridge has initiated a robust conversation in which over 400 people participated to date, and what the data shows. It's not a bad starting position in conversations that could lead to decisions affecting the future of this place we call home. Moreover, this input can guide us in applying one of the strongest values expressed in the survey: doing and accomplishing things together as an engaged and generous community.

Years living in Rockridge	
10+	56%
2 – 10	29%
0 – 2	10%
Own/Rent	
Homeowner	81%
Renter	19%
Kids living at home, Retired	
Kids <18 at home	38.5%
Kids not at home	37.5%
Retired	23%

Thanks to all who entered the Survey Raffle. The eight winners have been notified, and will receive gift certificates for the following Rockridge businesses: Diesel Books, Pegasus Books, Rockridge Home, Maison D'Etre, Nathan & Co, SMitten Ice Cream, Bittersweet Cafe, and Wood Tavern.



Friends of the Rockridge Library
Supporting the Rockridge Branch of the Oakland Public Library

Friends of the Rockridge Library Seeks Board Members

The Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL) is looking for candidates to fill open seats on our board. Our all-volunteer board collaborates with library management and staff to fund programs and resources not covered under the library budget.

We're a creative and active bunch, eager to hear your ideas on how you might lend your time and skills to support the library we all love. We have several seats to fill. For one, we seek technical skills such as mail merge proficiency and web site troubleshooting and maintenance. The board meets 5-6 times a year on Tuesday nights.

Contact Carol Bieri at cbieri@pacbell.net to express your interest.

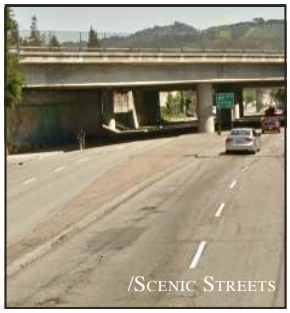
King Fish Relocated

Early in January, the venerable Kingfish pub – in this location since 1922 – was moved to a vacant lot on Telegraph Avenue next to the Temescal Branch Library. The now-vacant Claremont Avenue space will be filled with a town house development.



/Greg Pasquali

Opportunity in Claremont Avenue's Median?



/Scenic Streets

The view entering Rockridge is much nicer these days for motorists exiting Hwy 24 at Claremont Avenue: New shrubs line the ramp; new trees line nearby sidewalks; the DaVita Dialysis facility on the corner of Clifton has been transformed.

But travel up Claremont Avenue, as most guests approaching the historic Claremont Hotel do, and you'll find the area near the highway underpass needs sprucing up. Scenic Streets thinks the huge median in the middle of the street would be a smart place to start.

Nearly the length of two football fields, its 8,000 square feet are covered by asphalt. The southern half is the widest section (up to 20 feet) and is exposed to sun and rainfall, making it an ideal place for shrubs and trees. Its gateway location would be enhanced by a welcoming sign, as well.

Our small team of volunteers continues to explore the feasibility for this project, and no initial proposal has been made to the city. Our biggest hurdle will be funding and Scenic Streets needs to be able to visualize covering the ballpark costs. The trees and shrubs would be inexpensive, but removing asphalt and amending the road fill dirt beneath more costly.

Scenic Streets is soliciting local business leaders to fund the project in 2015, but individual donors will be needed as well. Visit http://www.scenicstreets.org/Donate.html to make a pledge to get the ball rolling.

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Farewell to the Big Euc

by Leonora Sea,
DMV Neighbors Association

The familiar sign-off to announcements of DMV Neighbors Association-sponsored cleanup days along Temescal Creek – "Meet at the big eucalyptus at the corner of Cavour and Redondo" – will change soon. As I write, the city is in process of removing the venerable giant. While it's sad for many reasons, the tree is diseased, damaged, and dangerous. Over the past couple of years, huge limbs have fallen on the lawn and adjacent trees, and the nearby sidewalk has just about been destroyed by the tree's roots.

So how did the tree get there in the first place? And how did it get so big? Eucalypts are Australian natives, and were originally introduced into California in the 1850s as garden ornamentals. By the 1870s several varieties were being imported and sold, both for decorative plantings and as lumber trees. Most of the eucalypts in the East Bay hills were planted early in the 20th century, in some areas to replace logged-off redwoods and in others to take advantage of open space.

This particular tree may have been purposefully planted for lumber or firewood. Or it may have arrived via a seed pod washed downstream from the eucalyptus groves in Claremont Canyon. Eucalyptus pods float, and one could have reached a disturbed spot by the original Temescal Creek during winter high water, dried out, released its tiny seeds, and birthed our big tree. Or it could be a sprout from a vanished older euc.

Eucalyptus trees are prodigious water consumers; some varieties, if well-watered, can grow 20 to 40 feet in a year. In the 80 or so years since the Cavour eucalyptus sprouted, it's had ample water and time to grow into a giant. The fast growth hasn't necessarily been good for the health of the tree. The people who planted the first trees soon discovered that California-grown eucalyptus wood cracks and splits, and is suitable only for firewood. The splits, especially where the limbs meet the tree, collect moisture and create decay. Eventually the limbs break away and fall.

Last year, city staff noticed growths called conk at the base of the tree, indicators of rot and decay. The tree was test-drilled, and city arborist Mitch Thomson found evidence of rot, meaning the tree must be removed. Davey Tree was hired to cut back limbs within 10 feet of power lines (Oakland staff may not work that close to the lines), and city tree services crews will finish taking down the tree. Oakland Public Works is herbicide-free, so will use a stump grinder to prevent the roots from re-sprouting. Work is expected to be completed in early February.

Much as the tree is a beloved neighborhood landmark, it has reached end of life. We'll miss it (although not its messy bark and leaves that volunteers have dealt with on past cleanup days) and look forward to what this corner of the Greenbelt might look like in the future.

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Merchants

from page 4

Piedmont Avenue, Albert Sarshar responded to Rockridge customers who said they wished he would move closer to them, and so he did. He now has seven locations in the East Bay with over 100 employees, but it is still a family-owned and family-run business. Luckily, Albert's family is large. And if you guessed that Albert is Persian, you'd be right. He came to the U.S. at 16 and went directly into the food business, working his way up. He was always in love with food – and especially GREAT hamburgers – so he followed his heart. **Barney's** has received over 130 awards or citations for Best Hamburgers in the East Bay. In addition to daily fresh produce and meat – nothing frozen – the generous portions (intentionally aimed at families) make it possible to take the kids to dinner and not have to run twice to the ATM. Expanded seating inside and an outdoors, under-the-stars patio option gives diners plenty of room.

Rockridge Optometry first opened its doors to the community in 1946. The initial business was a few doors up from its current location at 5321 College, where it has been since 1971. Dr. Morton Sarver was then joined by BOTH of his sons – Don and Larry Sarver, also optometrists and also UC graduates. More recently, Drs. Scott Yokoi and Cindy Sakai have expanded this optometrist "family." Sue Dolan, office manager and an employee since 1973, told me that it is absolutely not true that they make Stanford alumni go to the end of the line, because they know those graduates need help – and need it quickly. But it does help to wear a Cal shirt to your appointment! I asked Sue why glasses were so expensive when we have had all these technological advances. She explained that lenses now are digitally manufactured so the entire lens is much more functional than the older progressive lenses. Also, coatings for lens coloration are much improved. As for repeat clients, Sue told me of a couple married 72 years who have been coming in for glasses more than 50 years. That couple still enjoys looking at each other**,** with a little help from **Rockridge Optometry**.

Pegasus Books, 5560 College Avenue, has been on the corner of Ocean View and College since 1970. Amy Thomas is the owner and another example of rising through the ranks from employee to owner. As an English major and with her Cal degree in hand, she marched into her favorite bookstore in Berkeley in 1969 and asked for a job. She got it – and now she owns it. The College Avenue branch opened a year later, and recently expanded to occupy the entire corner building, with room for a small yet distinctive magazine section. It's not a good idea to look up when you are walking along College Avenue, but stop for a minute to enjoy the unusual parapet wall on top of the building: molded and painted concrete shields that complement **Pegasus**, the winged horse of Zeus protecting the entrance. Asked about the impact of Amazon.com, Amy says on-line shopping is great for many items, but hurts small, local businesses. She pointed out that if a customer spends $100 locally, $68 of those dollars stay in the community. Spent online, only $43 stays local. That's a pretty big deal: shop locally and support your community. And if you still need a 2015 calendar, look no further; Pegasus is known for its calendar sales offerings.

Town Hall

from page 1

this Town Hall presents an overview of productive projects planned by RCPC in 2015. For example, short-term programs such as the Kitchen Tour, Out and About, or the Halloween Parade call for a day or two of volunteer support. These are fun events to help with and you're done at the end of the day. Please consider these opportunities as chances to volunteer.

Working with the RCPC board is another way to pull the threads together. The board has term limits, and board members rotate out periodically. Four new openings will need to be filled via election or appointment. Serving on the board does take a little time each month, but when you engage with your community, you can make things happen and be pleased about accomplishments. (See more on this, page 1: "Your Neighborhood Is On the Line.")

Note the beginning and ending times of the Town Hall meeting. Cole Hardware closes at 8 p.m., so we will end by 7:45 sharp. See you there.

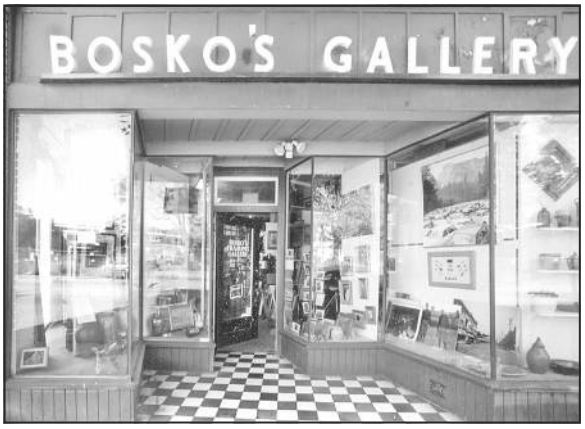
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Bosko's Framing Gallery

from page 4



exhibitions during the '50s when the group had a gallery at the Claremont Hotel.

In 2000, the business passed to Peter Bosko's son John and daughter Lynne. While framing work keeps them busy, Lynne also makes ceramics, and John is a "photo-archeologist," collecting original vintage negatives (available online at http://tinyurl.com/flickr-jbpics). Prints from his collection have been shown across the street at Spasso Coffee House and in Hayward at PhotoCentral's gallery. Among the historical prints available at Bosko's are portraits of Xavier Martinez, longtime CCAC instructor, and Patsy English, an early colleague of Ansel Adams.

Bosko's Framing Gallery at 6038 College Avenue is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 .p.m.

Carl Schmitz is Art Research Librarian at the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation. He has had art by June Felter and Mikhail Karasik framed on College Avenue at a store that was the El Capitan antique shop in the early '40s, and can be reached at cschmitz@diebenkorn.org.

New Path for Rockridge Food Tour

The Rockridge Heritage and Walking Food Tour, run by Lauren Herpich, has a new heart-of-Rockridge focus.

When the tours began in June of last year, they started in Berkeley by the Claremont Hotel and included a stop at Amphora Nueva, an artisan olive oil shop on Domingo.

It was quite a hike to the next stop – the cheese counter at Market Hall – and then on to Rockridge icons such as Zachary's Chicago Pizza, Dreyer's Ice Cream and Ver Brugge Foods.

Now, the tour convenes at the Rockridge Branch Library, closer to BART and to its newly added first stop, A16. Herpich told me that A16 representatives contacted her, seeking to be included on the tour. She, in turn, was looking to add a higher-end dining experience, more representative of the range of Rockridge restaurants.

It still lacks an Asian element – there are 11 Asian restaurants along College – but Herpich says: "The tour is ever-evolving."

The majority of people on the twice-a-week tours come from outside the area, the tour founder reports, predominantly Walnut Creek, Pleasanton, San Francisco and the Peninsula. On the docket is a tour for culinary arts students from Cosumnes Oaks High School in Elk Grove.

Guests receive discount coupons from the merchants visited, Herpich explained, and evidence shows a number return to Rockridge to use them.

The three-hour tours are at 11 a.m. Sundays and 2 p.m. Thursdays and cost $49 per person. For more information, go to RockridgeFoodTour.com or call 510/604-6546. — *Judith Doner Berne*

Judith Doner Berne profiled the food and heritage tour in The Rockridge News July 2014 issue.

In and Around Rockridge, There's Only One #1 Find Out Why!

Homes SOLD in 2014 by Ron Kriss



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5625Broadway.com
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List Price $795,000
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5463Broadway.com
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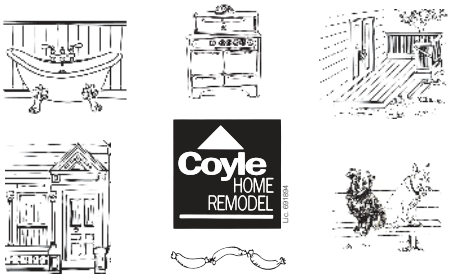
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Compiled by Jo Ellis

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