THE Rockridge News
www.rockridge.org
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Rockridge Crimes Raise Fears, Feed Frustrations

Action Steps: Police, City, Private Patrols on RCPC June Town Hall Panel

18 June 2015 RCPC Town Hall Meeting

- **Special RCPC/NCPC Crime/Public Safety Town Hall Meeting**
- **Thursday, June 18, 7:30pm-9pm Rockridge Library, 5366 College Avenue: (Come at 7 for pizza.)**

Join us for pizza | RSVP: info@rockridge.org | Come at 7 for pizza and friends

Are you concerned about crime in Rockridge? Are you worried about the recent surge in residential burglaries in parts of Rockridge? About assaults? About wheels stolen from parked cars? Plan to attend the special June 18 RCPC/NCPC Town Hall meeting and learn what you can do.

RCPC and NCPC are hosting a discussion with Oakland officials and Rockridge community leaders about crime, response and personal safety. Speaking at the meeting will be:

- **Greg Minor**, assistant to the City Administrator
- **OPD Lt. Randy Brandwood**, Special Resource Commander
- **Officer Anthony Hutzol,** Community Resource Officer (CRO)
- **A Rockridge NCPC representative** and a **Safer Rockridge patrol steering committee member** will be on hand to provide information and respond to audience questions on reducing Rockridge crime.

Learn which steps RCPC/NCPC, page 12

NCPC: A Part of Your Crime-Fighting Team

by Karen Ivy, secretary, Rockridge NCPC

Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils (NCPCs) are part of the community policing program in Oakland. In the words of the authorizing resolution by the City Council, community policing is to "create a working partnership between the community and the police... to analyze neighborhood problems, set priorities, develop strategies, and work together to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods."

NCPCs provide forums for all Oakland individuals and neighborhood groups (including block clubs, neighborhood watch programs, community-based organizations, merchant associations, citizen associations, and houses Your NCPC, page 12

Kitchen Tour Snippets — a Peek Inside the Event



by Kevin Faughnan, RCPC board member

Eight kitchens, each with its own special qualities, are on the Rockridge Kitchen Tour Sunday, September 20, seven of them within an easy walk from our registration site at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church, designed by Julia Morgan in 1917. The eighth requires a short drive to reach, but you will find the visit well worth it.

Do we have anything special in the kitchens selected for the Tour? How about a countertop made of paper? You'll see one, but we'll leave it to you to figure out which home has it. You'll have to look closely; this "paper" looks like natural stone. Made by Richlite in Tacoma, Washington, these "very green" tops are created with recycled paper formed under heat and pressure, and come in a variety of colors. The variety of edge banding styles is especially striking. (Stop in at EcoHome Improvement, 2619 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley, to see for yourself. Be sure to mention that you want to see them at the Kitchen Expo, as they have intriguing products.)

The Tour's grand finale is the eighth and last kitchen of the day, and different from anything done in past tour events. This final home will open later in the day; there will be time to see the other kitchens before you take the short drive to this one. Watch for more details in the July issue of The Rockridge News and at rockridgekitchentour.org/. Carpooling is recommended.

Plan to buy your tickets early. It will save you money and is helpful to us as we plan the following two pre-tour warm-up events that will enhance your tour and your resource planning list:

- **The Kitchen Expo**, scheduled for Thursday evening, September 17 – the Thursday preceding the tour – is FREE to ticket holders. It is an opportunity to meet the creative talent behind the kitchens you will see on the Kitchen Tour, page 3

In May, The Rockridge News noted a possible resurgence of the mysterious telephone pole gnomes, and asked readers to report sightings. Two reports follow.

Those Gnomes Are Everywhere, Still

by Karen Carlson

'What's det?" said two-year-old Jeremiah, squatting low by a telephone pole, as we were taking our usual walk around the block to see my neighbor's chickens. Bending my creaky knees way down, I saw, painted on a little plaque, I wasn't sure what – An elf? A dwarf? Maybe a gnome? Yes – how exciting!



This first one we spotted was wearing a very tall red hat and had a huge white mustache, a bright blue shirt, a rakish red plaid kilt, and clunky brown shoes. We ran with great excitement to the next pole, and the next, and soon had discovered a slew of these little guys, each individually painted onto a 6-inch block of wood and screwed to the very bottom of many of our utility poles. Gnome spotting has become our favorite pastime, and sighting one never fails to delight us both.

Since then, I've been spotting them all over Oakland, but to my casual eye, they're randomly placed. They're on many of my closest streets, but not all. Who painted these charming creatures? Until recently, I knew nothing about them, but an on-line query revealed I was but one among a flock of inquirers.

By Googling "Oakland Gnomes," I found lots of media attention has been paid to our guys starting in 2012. From the San Francisco Chronicle, the LA Times and NPR, here is sampling of what I learned:

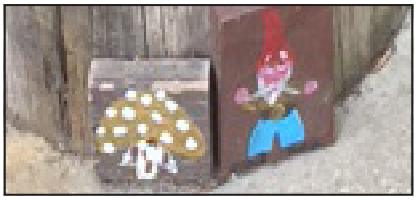
- They were first noticed near Lake Merritt in 2012, usually at the bottom of poles, but one was even found on a coffee shop windowsill.
- They all have red hats, white beards, and brown boots.
- Their middle garb changes. In most places, they wear pants, but near Jack London Square, they might don shorts. On anything resembling a hill, they often appear in kilts (in two choices of plaid.)
- The artist has chosen to remain anonymous despite being interviewed by NPR, the Chronicle, and others. He says the gnomes are his gift to the Oakland community; his way to lift our spirits.
- The artist confesses that he screws them to the base of the poles late at night. If a passerby happens to come near, he has a dog bag handy to pick up the real/imaginary droppings of his terrier accomplice.
- There may be as many as 2,300 in our fair city.
- PG&E put out word they would remove them, fearing they would set a precedent for "defacing" utility poles. Happily, a public outcry ensued, and the gnomes were granted an exemption.

Will there be more? Keep your eyes open and send sightings and photos to editor@rockridge.org.

Found It!

I spotted this gnome while parked across from Pasta Pomodoro on College. It made me smile. Thanks for the "heads up."

—Michelle (via iPhone)



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Library program details/hours: 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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Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in **The Rockridge News**? • Do you have questions about newsletter distribution? • Want to volunteer to be a **Rockridge News** block captain? • Would you like to write a letter to the Editor?

Contact us at one of the following:
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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 June Land Use Committee meeting is Wednesday, June 24, 7:30 p.m., at the Rockridge Branch library, 5366 College Avenue, upstairs meeting room. Confirm at rockridge.org. (Front door will be unlocked; auto-open will be off; pull doors apart to enter.) The agenda will be posted on rockridge.org by the preceding Sunday. Meetings are open to the public.

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee co-chair

- **College Avenue Safeway Project – College and Claremont Avenues**

As those who go by the new store will notice, the electronic sign that is supposed to show how many spaces are available in the parking deck is still not working properly. Safeway has been told of the problem, which violates both the settlement agreement with the community groups and the City's conditions of approval for the project. We are still waiting to hear when and how it will be fixed. If you notice other problems with the store's operations, you should raise them with the store manager, but also drop us a line at landuse@rockridge.org.

- **Rockridge Shopping Center – Broadway (East Side) North of Pleasant Valley Road**

Demolition of the CVS building (and probably of the retail building to its west) appears likely to happen in June. The construction of the new Safeway will likely start some time this summer. We hope there will be fewer snafus with this project than there were with the College Avenue Safeway project.

- **College Avenue Retail Zoning Working Group**

The first meeting of the CN-1 study group occurred in conjunction with the May Land Use Committee meeting. Representatives of merchant and community groups from Dimond, Montclair Village, Lakeshore, and Glenview, in addition to RCPC, attended. We have also kept merchant and resident groups for Piedmont Avenue in the loop. Together, these areas make up the parts of Oakland that share CN-1 zoning, which also applies to College Avenue.

The groups shared discussion about what's working with the CN-1 zoning, and what could be improved. There was general agreement that there needs to be a way for use permits to be extinguished when the use is abandoned or replaced. There was also discussion of several unusual situations that may warrant special treatments (e.g., large, old spaces that would be hard to fill if any use would require a use permit). The group plans to meet again at the end of July for further discussion and to pull together recommendations for amendments to CN-1 zoning. Check the rockridge.org website for details of time and place.

Editor's Note: Oakland planning documents describe the CN-1 zone as: "CN-1: Neighborhood Commercial Zone. The intent of the CN-1 zone is to maintain and enhance vibrant commercial districts with a wide range of retail establishments serving both short and long term needs in attractive settings oriented to pedestrian comparison shopping." The zone, previously designated C-31, was originally designed by RCPC and resident neighborhood planners that called on the city to down-zone Rockridge in the 1970s. The area had been zoned to permit high-rise development.

Kitchen Tour

from page 1

tour on Sunday, and to learn how these design professionals approach kitchen renovations. Planned to be held at the Rockridge Branch Library, a larger venue for the Expo may be needed. Watch for information.

- The **Berkeley Mills Seminar** Saturday, September 19, will introduce you to this kitchen design and construction company that can integrate its history of fine furniture and cabinet making into the kitchen design you may have in mind. **This event has limited seating.** Be sure to sign up now.

Can you help? We need docents for September 20, the day of the tour, either to support the homes on the tour or to assist with registration. Email Laura Schlichtmann, Kitchen Tour Docent Chair (docents@rockridge.org) to discuss the possibilities. Docents are given a pre-tour of the kitchens and a pass to the full tour.

Tickets

Ticket prices increase by $5 from $35 to $40 as of midnight, June 15; now is a good time pick up a bargain.

For the easiest way to purchase tickets, visit www.RockridgeKitchenTour.org and locate the Tickets tab. Follow the instructions from there.

If you prefer, you can purchase tickets by filling out a paper form at **Cuttin'Up on College,** 5811 College Avenue, or **Rockridge Home,** 5418 College Avenue.

www.RockridgeKitchenTour.org

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Art on the Avenue: Gallery Systems

As the Bay Area continues to rise in the tech world, College Avenue finds itself home to at least one of its own world-class software firms. With a main office in New York city, Gallery Systems has satellite offices in the UK, Germany, Spain, and an office with a four person staff (along with two dogs) in Rockridge that opened in 1999.

Located in a second floor office in a building at the corner of College and Alcatraz, the California-based outpost of Gallery Systems (GS) is part of a company that provides collection management and web publishing software to more than 800 clients in over 30 countries.

The database software that GS develops is specifically tailored for cultural institutions seeking to gather and manage information about their collections. While collection management software is used in many fields in addition to the visual arts, the GS tool allows museum registrars to track the locations of artwork in their storage facilities. This helps curators browse large sets of artwork images and more conveniently select art for exhibition.

Clients of Gallery Systems' products and services include important national and international art museums such as the Getty and LACMA, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Museum of Modern Art; and the Tate in London.

While their Rockridge office provides sales and support services for their products, it is also home base for EmbARK, their collection management system used by local and regional arts institutions including Mills College Art Museum, SF Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco Arts Commission, San Jose Museum of Art, Stanford's Cantor Center, and the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento.

Sales director Paul Thyssen sees Rockridge as a good fit for Gallery Systems and its staff: "Working in Rockridge is convenient for our commuters with direct access to BART and nearby freeways. The Gallery Systems Oakland team enjoys all of the neighborhood's wonderful amenities-grocery stores, top dining spots, and pubs for lunch or after work. Some of our favorite businesses are Wood Tavern's Southie, Zachary's Pizza, La Farine French Bakery, Safeway, and Peet's Coffee."

Carl Schmitz is Art Research Librarian at the Richard Diebenkorn Foundation. He first used EmbARK 10 years ago as an intern for the CSU WorldImages project, and can be reached at cschmitz@diebenkorn.org.

"I saw it at the RCPC Kitchen Tour"

www.RockridgeKitchenTour.org

ZONING COUNTER

5945 Broadway

Proposal: Make a revision to the approved design review and variance application to add 156 square feet to the proposed upper floor addition.

Applicant / Phone Number: Esther Tse/ 510/828-8185

Owner: Steve Gilman

Planning Permits Required: Regular Design Review to add 156 square feet to the proposed 990 square foot upper floor addition; and Minor Variance to reduce the front yard setback to 6 feet where 14 feet is required along Keith Avenue.

Case Planner: Michael Bradley, 510/238-6935 or mbradley@oaklandnet.com

626 51st Street

Proposal: To construct a new 3-unit residential building, totaling 4,051 sq. ft., on a vacant substandard lot.

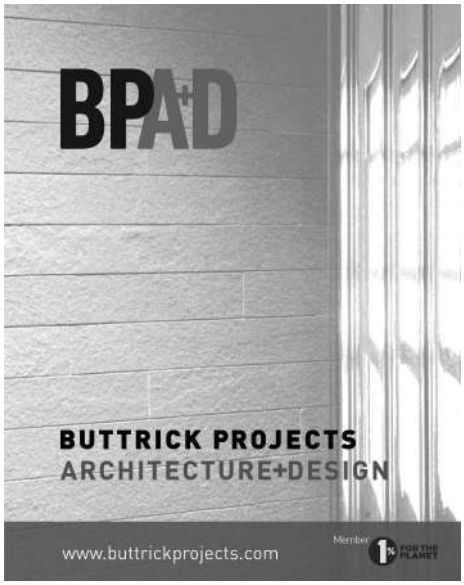
Applicant-Owner/ Phone Number: Matthew Baran / 415/710-0486

Organization: Baran Studio

Owner: Pyraivatlo Robabeh

Planning Permits Required: Regular Design Review for construction of a 3-unit residential building; and Minor Variances for (a), less than 10 feet of separation between the proposed driveway and the adjacent neighbor's driveway and (b), for portions of the building to have a 3-foot side yard, where 4 feet is required.

Case Planner: Ann Clevenger, at 510/238-6980 or aclevenger@oaklandnet.com





Join DMV Neighbors in June Greenbelt Cleanup

by Leonora Sea, DMV site coordinator

April's Earth Day at FROG Park and along the Rockridge Temescal Greenbelt was the usual blend of excitement, enthusiasm, hard work, and ultimate reward. Many volunteers spent three productive hours getting our neighborhood open space ready for summer and the flowing creek. (The creek turn-on had to wait until some water quality questions were resolved but, happily, the creek is now running.) Thanks to all who donated snacks and drinks, staffed tables, worked tirelessly, and made the day successful and fun.

Each year, Earth Day's good work helps to define the priorities for the DMV Neighbors Association's June Greenbelt Cleanup. This year, the focus will be on the section along Redondo between Cavour and Clarke. Most in need of attention: the leftover detritus from felling the giant eucalyptus; weeds in the creek bed; the two stressed willow trees by the lawn; ivy on tree trunks and encroaching on the creek; the usual small amount of trash.

Join your neighbors and friends Saturday, June 20, 9 to 11 a.m., for the 2015 Cleanup. Volunteers will be provided with tools and gloves (or bring your own, well marked as yours), snacks, and coffee. The creek will be flowing: wear shoes that can get wet if you plan to work in the creek bed. Families are welcome, and there are plenty of kid-appropriate tasks. Meet near the eucalyptus stump at the corner of Cavour and Redondo to sign in.

To RSVP, or for more info, contact leonorasea@yahoo.com.





A camera shy volunteer and his mother pause for a photo during the Frog Park Earth Day cleanup. The DMV Greenbelt Cleanup offers many kid-appropriate opportunities to get involved. /Ronnie Spitzer

Site Coordinator Leonora Sea displays the range of tools available to Cleanup participants. /Michael Perlmutter

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Rockridge Market: This is the peak inventory season. In Rockridge that can mean going from very few to a handful of homes active on the market. Values are at an all time high while rates remain at or below 4% for qualified buyers. Feel free to contact me for an analysis of your home.



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Eyes on Rockridge

Neighborhood 'pop-up' outdoor movies help create community

by Judith Doner Berne

'Sumer is icumen in" which, in at least two Rockridge neighborhoods, means the resumption of outdoor movie nights.

Residents of the 5300 block of Shafter and the Colby Park area host several films each summer as a way to create a sense of community.

"Thea's a real community builder," says Sue Emmons, who has lived in her Shafter home for nearly 40 years. She means Thea Gray who, with her spouse Jeanine Mattson, moved across the street from Emmons only three years ago.

Gray transported the idea of a neighborhood open-air movie from "my very foggy neighborhood in San Francisco." This will be the "Shafter Summer Cinema's" second year. "The movies we've done are family-friendly," she says, on a block where younger families are moving in, but are still a minority.

Last year, "The Princess Bride," "Big" and "Up" were shown on a screen hung in the middle of the street or on the lengthy shared driveway between Emmons and her neighbor, Patricia Muscatelli. However, they projected "The Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl" on a sheet turned mainsail, one of three sails and a Jolly Roger (which Gray sewed) wafting from their house to make it resemble a pirate ship.

The evenings usually draw 20 or so neighbors, Gray told me. Two films planned for this summer, no dates yet, are "The Lego Movie" and "Maleficent."

"I may have started it, but with the exception of Jeanine and me, all the neighbors pitching in for movie night are old-timers – in terms of how long they've lived here – as are many of the diehard folks who show up at the screenings," Gray says.



Thea Gray and Jeanine Mattson turned their house into a pirate ship for Halloween, then unfurled the mainsail as a screen when the neighborhood viewed "Pirates of the Caribbean." /Courtesy of Shafter Summer Cinema

That includes Tony Kay, whom Gray calls "The Mayor of Shafter – the 5300 block at least," who provides the screen, and Maureen Alano and husband George Zolinsky who bring the popcorn popper. Gray's brother-in-law lent the digital projector the first couple of times. Now she borrows it from work, where she is a medical editor.

A friend from their old San Francisco neighborhood sometimes comes to help with setup, popcorn making, trivia games (they give out candy bars for answering trivia questions correctly), and assorted tech help, Gray says.

"Movie night should be seen in the context of the bigger picture on our block," says "Mayor" Kay. "We have made an effort over the years (28 for him) to create an old-style neighborhood. This means getting to know as many neighbors as possible so that we can enjoy that two-minute conversation with each other as we walk down the block.

"Thea and Jeanine provided some new energy when they moved in," Kay noted. "Many of the activities are planned by a core group of long-time residents, so it's great (and rare) when people move in and immediately get involved. Thea and Jeanine are exceptional because they not only volunteer for existing tasks, but also launch new things – like the movie nights."

"It doesn't take much," says Gray. "Any neighborhood can do it. You borrow a projector and you borrow a screen and you have a community event."

The more established "Colby Park Cinema" draws a larger, younger audience as befits an area near Peralta Elementary.

Begun by two sets of parents, Ben Riddell and Star Lightner, and their neighbors, Keith Beattie and Shelli Strand, this summer's screenings mark the fourth year of what Lightner likes to call "pop-up movies."

"Our two families live directly across

Pop-Up Movies, page 7

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Pop-Up Movies

from page 6

from Colby Park and wanted to utilize this great community resource for everyone's benefit," Lightner told me. A nearby neighborhood used to hold an annual outdoor movie fundraiser for Peralta, but took some flak for blocking off the street.

When the couples took it over, they dropped the fundraising aspect in favor of a free neighborhood gathering. "I feel like Colby Park is kind of a hidden gem, and somewhat underutilized," Lightner says. (That's why she also started the Colby Park Easter Egg Hunt, which just celebrated its 11th year.)

It happens randomly, she explains, "when the four of us have a free Friday or Saturday night." A few days ahead, they email the Lower Rockridge Parents Group (LRPG). "We do at least three over the summer. We try to find adult-friendly kids films. It can be challenging since the kids range from about two to 12, but it's always a good time."

Past films have included "How to Train Your Dragon," "Frozen," "Cars," "Tangled," "Despicable Me," "The Spy Next Door" and "Princess Bride."

"It's a great neighborhood occasional event," Lightner confirmed, although she also invites friends whose children attend Chabot Elementary. "We usually get from 50 to 75 people."

Picture a large movie screen hanging from one of the bigger trees, a projector and tarps spread on the ground for kids to sit and lie on. "Adults bring camp chairs and snacks and, more recently, we started doing a potluck dinner beforehand, for anyone interested in joining," Lightner says. "It's a big kids' fest: They have their popcorn; we have our garage bar."

Her children, Ethan, 12, and Alyssa, 7, enjoy it in different ways. Ethan, now in middle school, is apt to be running around, while Alyssa is still enraptured by the films.

"The kids are all snuggled up in their sleeping bags with their pillows and their blankets," my daughter Debbie Berne, a Peralta parent, described to me. Sometimes the adults watch too, she says, but they also can be seen socializing on the edges of the pocket park.

"It's pretty much what your daughter describes," Keith Beattie says. "I drag out the equipment (some borrowed from neighbors) and set up everything well before sundown: tables; chairs; projector; screen; computer or DVD player; and speakers.

"It's a lot of work to drag all that gear out, then back, including my usually sleeping child at the end of night," Beattie acknowledges. "But I love doing it. It creates a truly wonderful feeling of community around the park."

How does your neighborhood create community? Who is/are the sparkplug(s) on your block? To answer these questions (with an eye to future stories) and/or to comment on this column, email judyberne@att.net.

Report: Claremont Middle School Fundraising

On a Roll: Ride for a Reason Pedals to Sacramento; Still Accepting Donations

More than 200 cyclists rode to the State Capitol on Saturday, May 16, to raise money for Oakland schools, and to rally for increased funding for public education statewide.

The good news is we surpassed our goal of raising $100,000 from rider pledges and other donations. If you want to add your financial support for the rider(s) of your choice, or to make a general donation to this year's ride, pledges will be accepted until June 12. Go to www.rideforareason.dojiggy.com and click "Sponsor a Rider."

The money raised for this year's ride will be divided among six Oakland schools: Claremont; Edna Brewer; Emerson Elementary; Oakland International; Oakland Tech; and Westlake.

Kudos for Play-A-Thon

Mr. Tolliver and CMS Student Musicians Raise More Than $5,000 for Claremont Programs

The CMS Play-A-Thon — 100 songs in one afternoon — held Friday, May 15, was a huge success, raising more than $5,000 from online donations, student-collected donations, and on-site donations during the event. It was great to see all the student musicians performing for our community on the BART plaza. Mr. Tolliver did a wonderful job leading the kids, and they played beautiful music. We also want to thank the incoming Claremont students who did a good job soliciting donations from BART patrons and passersby. We are so grateful for the continuing support of our school community and of our music department.

This report contains material from the "Knightline," Claremont Middle School's publication for students, families, staff and community. Keep up to date on CMS activities via the school's web site: www.claremontms.org/

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One Hundred Twenty-Five Rockridge Homes Turn 100 Years Old in 2015

by Ron Kriss

In 1915, Rockridge was a bustling and growing part of Oakland. According to city of Oakland historic preservation files and Alameda County property records, 1,311 homes had been built in Rockridge by 1915. Trolleys, stores, and night life were in full swing. At that same time, the pace of building and development was exploding. One hundred twenty-five homes were built in Rockridge in 1915, an almost 10 percent increase in the number of homes by the end of the year.

The Craftsman Bungalow was a popular housing style. Everything needed to build your new home could be bought from the Sears Catalog for $1,945. (Today's homeowner is likely to pay that just for a new water heater, delivered and installed.) Amenities in the houses of 1915 were a big improvement over the past: a bathroom inside; running water; electricity; gas heat; hardwood floors; a prominent fireplace in the living room; and a kitchen likely equipped with a gas stove, farmhouse sink, a pantry, and lots of tiling – a dream home for the times.

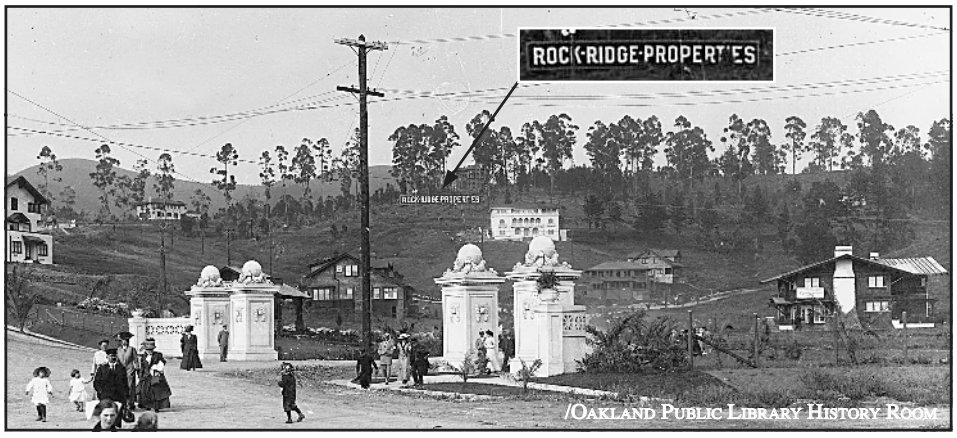
Claremont Junior High School, now known as Claremont Middle School, had opened in 1913. The students of 1915 loved to walk along College Avenue. Everyone could also easily hop on the trolley for a trip downtown. On Saturdays, friends and families could venture onto the Key System ferry and head over to San Francisco, but folks would never stay long, drawn home by the fun and good weather in Rockridge.

More and more families began to move into the neighborhood, and College Avenue was bustling with confection shops and grocers. The Photo Play movie theater was a big draw. Friday and Saturday nights were busy with people spilling into the streets after watching a film, and maybe even after getting a drink at a bar.

Despite the growth, many homes had room for truck gardens on their large lots; many streets had no homes at all.

You may have seen photos of the time, and what a different time they show. But is it really that different? Rockridge 2015 still reflects the growth and prosperity of Rockridge 1915.

Rockridge Growing, Circa 1915



According to an Oakland Wiki entry, "These gates were built in 1910 at the entrance to the Rock-Ridge tracts (Broadway and Lawton) by Walter Reed. His brother, Fred Reed, was the subdivision manager for the company responsible for opening up Rockridge.

"Rockridge began being developed in the early 1900s when the Horatio Livermore family began selling off the land they owned. The first chunk went to the current Claremont Country Club. A banker named Philip E. Bowles bought land between Acacia and the Country Club, and the rest went to 'Rock-Ridge Properties.'

"The property was opened up in 1906 by the Laymance Real Estate Company and divided into three subdivisions: Rockridge Place, Rockridge Park and Rockridge Terrace (some of this is now Claremont Pines). The higher the land, the higher the prices." — https://localwiki.org/oakland/Rockridge

Help and Direction from Rehab Right

Planning a rehab project? Get off to a good start. Check out "Rehab Right," a city publication available at: http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/agenda/oak039424.pdf.

Celebrating 100 Years

Ron Kriss of Lawton Associates Real Estate Brokerage is holding a birthday party in honor of homes in Rockridge that turn 100 years old in 2015. If your home was built in 1915, you will receive an invitation in the mail for a party with cake and ice cream to be held around the 4th of July.

Owners of each 100-year-old home will receive a commemorative solid pewter plaque that can be attached to the front of the home in recognition of this anniversary.

Is your home on the list? Go to LawtonAssoc.com and click on the "party" button.

Your home didn't make the century mark, but you're curious? Research its age at: http://www.oaklandheritage.org/researching-your-house.html.

Rockridge News Seeks Memories, Photos of More Recent Early Days

Did you or relatives of yours live in Rockridge at the time of the construction of Highway 24 and BART? Would you like to share your experiences?

The Rockridge News wants to hear your story from during that time, and see any photographs you may have showing the neighborhood of the day. Your story could be part of a series of articles reporting on what it was like then for Rockridge residents.

If you or your family or friends have stories and photos to share, contact editor@rockridge.org. Help us gather the point of view of residents who lived here in the '60s and '70s when hundreds of houses were removed or destroyed to build the freeway and BART.

Election Over, Some RCPC Board Seats Still Available

May's RCPC board election confirmed continuing terms for two current members and added new member Noah Rosen to the roster.

Meanwhile, several retiring and termed-out members left the board. We offer heartfelt thanks for their service and best wishes to:

Andy Charman; Virginia Hamilton; Bill Kaufman; Michael Kan; Lisa McNally; and Samantha Weaver.

At its April meeting, the board appointed Ronnie Spitzer to a vacant seat, leaving four vacant seats. Join your friends and neighbors in service to the Rockridge community. If you are at least 18 years of age, live within the RCPC boundaries (see www.rockridge.org/boundaries, to confirm), and are ready to help, email chair@rockridge.org for more details.

Frog Park Earth Day Recap & Thanks

by FROG boardmembers

Thanks to volunteer efforts by the community, the Frog Park Greenbelt received its annual Earth Day cleanup and maintenance on April 18.

From the Hardy Street Park and swings area to the Little Frog Park structures at Redondo Avenue and Clarke Street, dozens of workers pitched in to weed, trim, and groom our neighborhood park, grounds, creek and play facilities.

Participating groups included the DMV Neighbors Association, Masons from the Oakland Durant Rockridge Masonic Lodge, Brownies Troop 33429, Job's Daughters and many local individuals, keeping our park in great condition. The Oakland Parks and Recreation Department looked after the grounds, pruning trees and providing bins for green waste disposal.

All the work and effort was rewarded by local merchants, including Bake Sale Betty and Zachary's Pizza, who provided snacks for the volunteer workers.







Among the volunteers for the Frog Park Earth Day cleanup were Mayor Libby Schaff, Councilmember Dan Kalb, Public Works Director Brooke Levin and public works staff. Snacks and drinks were donated by Zachary's Pizza, Bakesale Betty, and real estate consultants Janine & Paul Hunt. Photographer Ken Rice captured the event.



Volunteer Everett Dolton works at Frog Park during the April cleanup. It is his fourth year doing this. His family reports he is eight-and-a-half years old and is adamant each year that he be involved in the activities. /Ellen Dolton

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Letters to the Editor

The Rockridge News welcomes posted mailings and e-mails to the editor. Your name, address, phone number, e-mail address and city/neighborhood must be included in either 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 appearing in The Rockridge News are the writer's own, and may not necessarily be shared by the editor, or by RCPC.

Crime in Our Neighborhood is Epidemic: Nothing Less

Editor:

What follows is text that I originally posted on the Nextdoor Rockridge website. It was written in frustration and anger at the time, and I thought to edit it somewhat as a letter to The Rockridge News, but I'm just leaving it as is, since I hear daily of more and more crime on my tiny street:

An informal count of the break-ins and attempted break-ins in the last few months along the two blocks of Locksley between Hudson and Cavour comes up with 10 occurrences. We have been broken into twice, so we are the winners so far. Each car on our little block is tested each night by opportunists. Yet, no one in the city government seems to show much interest in our little lower Rockridge crime wave. We called Dan Kalb's office after our last break-in but heard nothing back. The Rockridge News doesn't seem to report crime anymore. And, of course, the police have no money, and, in our experience, little interest. It's no wonder that the crime wave is increasing. Even criminals who don't keep up with current events will have heard that our formerly charming neighborhood is defenseless.

It's gotten so bad that we fully expect and certainly fear that any time we leave our house, we will return at the end of the day to find it ransacked. Crime here is epidemic, nothing less.

— Tim Caton

Editor's Note:

Subsequent to the receipt of Mr. Caton's letter to the editor, Councilmember Dan Kalb and OPD Area 2 commander Captain Darren Allison convened a meeting of Locksley Avenue residents to discuss their concerns about "the lower Rockridge crime wave." More than 50 Locksley area neighbors and others attended.

Beginning with an overview of current Oakland crime rates, Captain Allison said different areas of the city have different concentrations of types of crimes. However, burglaries are increasing "across the board" in Oakland, and burglaries are the number one problem in Rockridge. He said there have been 212 burglaries in Beat 12Y alone, which includes Rockridge, since January 2015.

Foremost among the obstacles to an effective response to crime in Oakland, the Captain said, is that "we are completely understaffed." At a present count of about 722 officers, calls are assigned on a basis of the violence and immediate threat to life of a victim. A high priority call can pull all the officers from a given beat to the greater threat, leaving other calls for later follow-up.

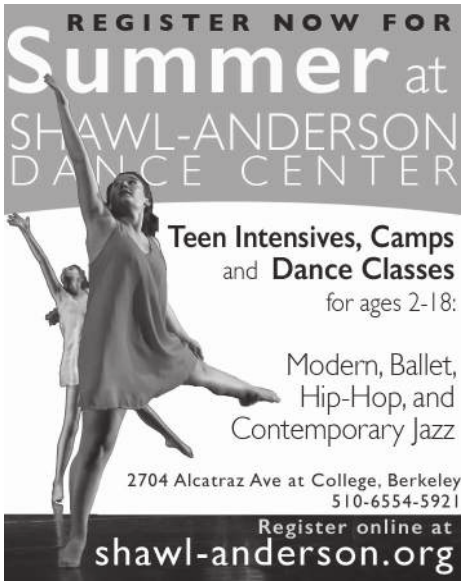
Still, he said, the city is not ignoring the need. The Department is in a "continual recruitment mode" and is running five academies in two-year budget cycles to beef up the force and to replace retiring officers or those who move to other cities.

Given current staffing, Captain Allison said all Oakland citizens need to "harden the target" by improving home security with alarms and secure locks, and paying attention to surroundings when they are out and about, especially in evening hours.

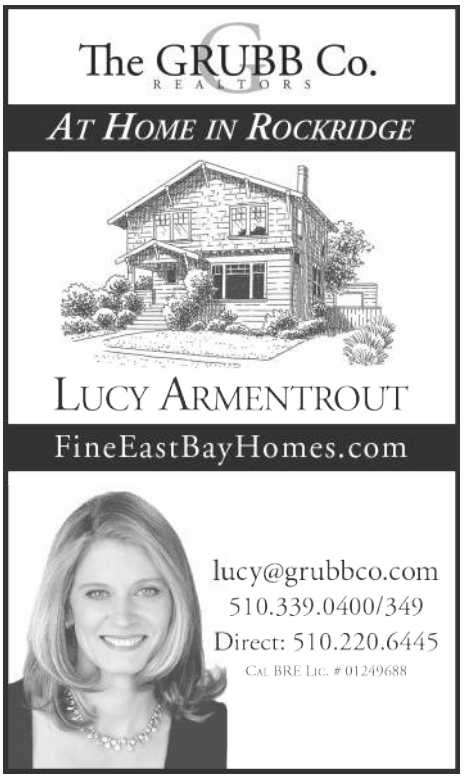
Crime on Town Hall Agenda

To continue and broaden the discussion of crime, RCPC presents a panel of city and police representatives, as well as private patrol sponsors, at the Thursday, June 18, Town Hall. Find more details in the article starting on page 1. Plan to attend to learn more about resources available now for crime prevention and avoidance.

Letters, page 11







Letters

from page 10

Chabot Repaving Leaves Smoother Pavement and a Safety Hazard

Editor:

Last winter's repaving of Chabot Road greatly improved the surface, but it has also created a serious safety hazard.

There is no sidewalk on the north side of Chabot Road between Roanoke and Golden Gate; pedestrians have to use the tarmac strip along the south side. Because the road is narrow and the demand for parking space (school, sports field, tennis court, Seneca Institute, EBMUD) sometimes heavy, cars often used to park partly on the sidewalk strip, which was raised above the road surface. Unfortunately, the repaving made the road surface flush with the sidewalk beside the city tennis courts, and cars now park entirely on it, blocking the path and forcing pedestrians into street traffic. This includes children from Chabot Elementary, parents, staff, and residents.

Given the especially chaotic nature of traffic at the start and end of school when drivers are distracted by their small passengers, the chance of an accident is great.

The risk of a tragedy is considerable, and I think an answer needs to be found before one occurs. I don't want to be over-persistent, but if this is a matter of concern to others, I urge them to follow it up.

— Ron Sipherd

Editor's Note:

Mr. Sipherd reports that, since sending his letter, "Jody London of the school board and Brooke Levin at Public Works were quite responsive. Councilmember Kalb's office said city staff told them: 'Based on the review of the Google street views of the pre-existing and current conditions, the ... stretch ... is very much flush between the pavement and shoulder area. Both conditions (pre and post) remain similar as the paving project has not changed the pavement elevation. Also, under both conditions, vehicles are parked similarly [in] that some were closer to the fence line than others.'

"Mr. Kalb's office advises that: 'This inquiry has been referred to Transportation Services. They can help evaluate and recommend for possible solution.'

"From my daily use of that sidewalk, and not Google street views, I can see the staff report is incorrect. The stretch of asphalt sidewalk beside the municipal tennis courts was not flush with the street before the repaving, but is now. The incidence of cars completely blocking the sidewalk, bad before, is now much worse.

"It is unclear when the Transportation Services Division will act on the issue."

Grants for Murals in Rockridge

City Councilmember Dan Kalb invites proposals to combat graffiti and beautify neighborhoods through the creation and installation of new murals and "green walls" in District 1.

Positive and vibrant artwork reflecting the unique character of a given neighborhood and the diversity of Oakland is encouraged.

Eligibility and Program Scope

Grant proposals are invited from community-based organizations, neighborhood groups and business associations, in partnership with property owners and individual artists, that have identified needs and opportunities for murals and living walls.

Any selected wall proposed for this project must be publicly visible and located in a well-trafficked area. New projects on privately owned walls are preferred. Please note that murals on City-owned walls have specific restrictions and require a coordinated approval process through the appropriate City department as well as the City's Public Art Program.

Find full details at: www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/citycouncil/documents/agenda/oak053092.pdf

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Your NCPC

from page 1

of worship), to participate in making their communities, better, safer, and stronger. They are organized and run by local citizen volunteers and currently receive no funding from the city.

NCPCs are supported – but not controlled by – the Oakland police department (OPD), that works with the NCPC to develop strategies and allocate resources to address problems. The police also report back to the NCPC about progress on specific issues and priorities set by the NCPC.

OPD assigns Community Resource Officers (CRO) to each of the 35 community policing beats, some of which are divided into sub-beats. The Greater Rockridge NCPC shares its resource officer for Beat 12Y with Beat 12X (Temescal) and its CRO for Beat 13X with Beats 13Y and 13Z (upper Rockridge and Montclair). The Community Resource Officers were formerly known as Problem Solving Officers. Each NCPC also has a Neighborhood Services Coordinator (NSC) assigned, who is a liaison with the police and other city departments.

The CROs and the NSC attend NCPC meetings as other assignments allow. NCPCs identify one priority per beat, and the CRO and citizens discuss recent crime activity and "hot spots" at the meetings. NCPCs often use email to communicate with the CROs and the NSCs and work with OPD to attack neighborhood problems like outbreaks of burglaries, or problem houses.

One of the most important messages the Greater Rockridge NCPC tries to convey is: *If you don't report a crime, any type of crime, it's as if it never happened. Reporting helps OPD plan how to allocate its resources to reduce Rockridge crime.*

The Greater Rockridge NCPC meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month, upstairs in the Rockridge Branch Library meeting rooms. Check the website (rockridgencpc.com) to confirm the meeting. The next meeting is on June 11. The speaker at this meeting will be Christopher Sean Watson, director of the Sexually Exploited Minors (SEM) Program for Bay Area Women Against Rape (BAWAR). He will discuss what their programs have to offer the Oakland community.

RCPC/NCPC

from page 1

make for a safer home and better lifestyle.

Help shape the conversation. See you at 7 p.m. for pizza with friends/neighbors. Special Town Hall program starts at 7:30 p.m. Please RSVP for your slices of Jules Thin Crust pizza to chair@rockridge.org.

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Jobs average about 15-30 minutes, once a month, except in August when the newsletter is not published. If you see a route you like, contact us at: smontauk@gmail.com or 510/547-3855.

Let us hear from you soon.

Thank you.

Route 09H	Up Keith from McMillan to 5925 Broadway.
Route 01B,D	Chabot Road beginning across from public tennis courts at 6885 extending to just past Marie Way.
Marshal	Four drops in Lower Rockridge. This job requires a car. You pick up the boxes on the weekend of publication at the bundling venue on 62nd Street and deliver each box to an address in Lower Rockridge.

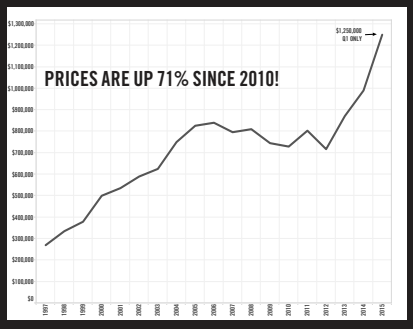
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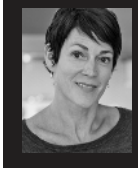


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Studies Become Reality in Tech Bridge Building Contest

Submitted by John Bliss

Oakland Tech notched its 20th Annual Model Bridge engineering contest in a roomful of students, volunteers and unlikely construction materials.

The contest is a culmination of a semester's study by students in Tech's well-known Engineering Academy. The academy, a "school within a school," is an extremely rigorous program that attracts and educates the "best and brightest" high school students in Oakland.

Each year, the contest gets more exciting than the last. This year saw another emotion-packed event as students put their book learning to a reality-based real-world challenge: building a bridge out of specific materials, then testing the bridge's stability against that of others constructed by classmates.

Each bridge builder or builder team works with the same materials: one ounce of balsa wood and Elmer's glue, and a small spool of thread to design and build a suspension bridge to a specified set of standards and specifications. Finished bridges are subjected to survival stress tests as increasing weight is added to the structure.



The winning model bridge is being loaded up to its impressive capacity of 60.0 pounds. /Engineering Academy

The look on students' faces as their model bridges were loaded with more and more weight reflected anxiety, dejection or elation as each bridge was tested.

Volunteer engineers and sponsors help with the contest, setting up displays, hanging weights and clearing the display area of the debris of failed attempts.

The winning model bridge was loaded to an impressive capacity of 60.0 pounds.

Oakland Technical High School thanks these volunteer sponsors and engineers and their supportive companies and agencies:

Sponsors

- City of Oakland – Public Works Agency
- American Society of Civil Engineers – Younger Members Forum
- Oakland Unified School District – Oakland Technical High School – Engineering Academy

Volunteers

- Peter Chun, Transportation Engineer, City of Oakland
- Derrick Lind, Liftech
- Grant Iwamoto, HNTB
- Vladimir Calugaru, InfraTerra, Inc.
- Derek Schubert

We couldn't have done it without the outstanding work by these dedicated volunteer engineers. Encouraging young Californians to enter the engineering field is more important than ever.

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5/12/15	3	1	5370 Miles Avenue	$975,000	$975,000	10	$1,550,000
5/14/15	4	3	5665 Keith Avenue	$1,195,000	$1,195,000	7	$1,550,000
5/26/15	4	1	5261 James Avenue	$699,000	$699,000	10	$1,250,000
5/27/15	3	1	5815 Presley Way	$1,195,000	$1,195,000	10	$1,750,000

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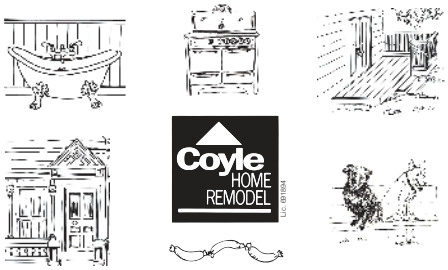
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E-mail Rockridge News Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), or mail to: Rockridge News Community Calendar, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month.

Compiled by Jo Ellis

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

Discuss crime and public safety with OPD, 2nd Thurs. each month (June 11), 7:30pm. **June speaker: Christopher Watson**, director of the Sexually Exploited Minors (SEM) Program. Rockridge Library, College and Manila. Info: www.rockridgencpc.com or chair@rockridgencpc.com. **NOTE: Special RCPC/NCPC joint Town Hall mtg. on crime/public safety, Thurs., June 18, 7 – 9pm at Rockridge Library**. Pizza at 7, program starts 7:30. **See details: story, p.1**.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

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.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- **Summer Reading Program 2015**: Read to the Rhythm: begins Sat., June 13, and ends on Sat., Aug., 8. Kids from birth to age 14 get prizes for reading. Read a little every day, or have someone read aloud to you. Get your Reading Log and Stickers at the library, or sign up online.

Events on Tuesdays at 7pm:

- June 16: **Magic Dan**: a mesmerizing, fast-paced magic show.
- June 23: **Drummm!**: wonderful, loud, participatory drumming.
- June 30: **Charged Particles**: a jazz trio demonstrates rhythm, melody, harmony, & improv.
- July 7, **Kamishibai: Japanese Paper Theater** - English stories told on a Japanese mini-theater on the back of a bicycle.

Events on Thursdays, 4pm:

Crafternoons: Join us for hands-on arts, crafts, science, or music. June 18 to Aug. 6.

Events on Saturdays:

- **Annual Paper Airplane Contest**: Use a tried-&-true design, or create your own to win a prize. June 20, 4pm.
- **Little Explorers Farm Animal Petting Zoo**: Meet, pet, brush, & feed the warm and gentle farm animals in our back parking lot. July 11, 10:30am.

***Volunteers Needed to Help with Summer Programs:

Kids ages 11 to 16. Spend a few hours each week at the library, signing up reading program participants, giving out prizes, helping with library tasks like sorting and shelving books & movies. Call Erica or stop by to sign up for an orientation & schedule some hours over the summer.***

FOR TEENS

- **Teen Advisory Board (ages 14-18)**: Advise the library how to better serve teens. Get community service credit for school. **Snacks provided**. 1st Sat. each month, 1 to 2pm.
- **Teen 'Scape**: Join other teens every Wednesday 2 - 4:30 pm for playing video & board games, making crafts, and enjoying light snacks. **The program will end on 6/10 and will restart on 8/26**.
- **Screen Printing**: Design and print your own t-shirt or poster with the talented artists from the Rock Paper Scissors Collective; 6/10 at 1:30pm.
- **Teen Summer Passport program**: Explore community hot spots, receive passport stamps for visiting museums, skate parks or write book reviews. Participants will have chances to win great prizes. **The program starts on 6/13 and ends on 8/8**.

FOR ADULTS

- *How a Victorian Dog Taught Me New Tricks: Crowd-funding My Way to (Re)Publishing a Family Treasure*. Local publisher **Betsy Cordes**, will discuss independent publishing and her success in crowd-funding her dream project: reintroducing a Victorian-era children's tale as an heirloom-quality picture book, illustrated by award-winning artist **Adam McCauley**. Thurs., June 25, 7pm.
- **Writers Support/Critique Group: All writers welcome**. Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. (double-spaced, MS margins) of any prose for on-site reading/discussion (also welcome to come empty-handed). Third Saturday each month (5/16), 1 to 5pm. Sponsored by the Calif. 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). **Note**: Volunteer lawyer leaves before 7pm if no more people present. Call to confirm.

GALLERY ART EXHIBIT

June: **Ted Crawford**: "Personages of Note" oil paintings.
July: **Darryl Tighe**: abstract watercolors.

LIBRARY HOURS

Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed, Thurs & Sat: 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri, 12 to 5:30pm.
Closed: Sun. and Mon. and Sat., July 4.



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Diesel Book/Poetry Readings/ Events

FREE and open to the public.

- Fri, 6/12, 9pm (doors open 8:30). **Music Performance** with bluegrass banjo and guitar impresario **Avram Siegel** and legendary fiddle player **Blaine Sprouse**. **Note**: $10 cover charge for this event; all proceeds go to the musicians.
- Sun., 6/14, 3pm. **Poetry Flash** with **Chana Bloch**, **Andrea Hollander**, and **Danusha Laméris**.
- Thurs, 6/18, 6:30pm. **Chris Leslie-Hynan**: *Ride Around Shining*.
- Sat., 6/20, 7:30pm. **Literary Karaoke Night**. Bring something from home or grab a book off one of our shelves, read one or two pages, and perhaps just as important... listen to everybody else do the same. All we ask is that it not be something you wrote. (There just might be a bottle of something strong and distilled, should you need some liquid courage or your voice a smoky rasp.)
- Tues, 6/23, 6:30pm. **Alex Dolan**: *The Euthanist*.
- Tues, 6/30, 6:30pm. **Liz Prato**: *Baby's on Fire: Stories*. Author **Ellen Sussman** joins the discussion.
- Thurs, 7/9, 6:30pm. **Linda Lambert**: *A Rapture of Ravens: Awakening in Taos*.

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

Rockridge Artist Open Studio

Liz Maxwell, participating in ProArts Open Studios, welcomes visitors to her studio to view her paintings prints and drawings: Sat. and Sun., June 6-7 and June 13-14, 11am to 6pm. 5808 Chabot Road (not wheelchair accessible). Simple refreshments. More info: 654-5741 or lizmaxwell@prodigy.net. Information about other local artists and ProArts East Bay Open Studios 2015 at www.proartsgallery.org.

Wisteria Ways House Concert

Gary Muszynski and Friends (Moses Seder and David Worm). *Into the Mystery*: an afternoon of global acoustic music. Sounds and instruments from Africa, Brazil, and Peru blend with jazz improvisation for a unique musical hybrid. Saturday, June 20, 3pm; doors open 2:15pm (outside venue; wheelchair accessible). Bring a hat, sunscreen and a picnic. More info at www.oneworldmusic.com/store/cd-hang.htm. $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.

Free Yoga Classes

On-going classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays: 9am and 6:30pm. All levels welcome. Bring your own mat. Call or come in to sign up. All classes are **free and open to the public** (but donations welcome). Body Options, 3212 College Ave. More info: Cory DeGregorio, 595-8101 or corydegregorio@icloud.com.

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 Marxist Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave. Info: squirrellystringband.com/.

Temescal Farmers' Market

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



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