THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

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

RCPC's April Town Hall: The Future of College Avenue Retail

Town Hall and Annual Elections:

Thursday, April 21, 7 to 9 p.m. at CAPC*



/D. Kinkead

What do you want College Avenue to look like in 10 years?

Rockridge today is one of the most successful of Oakland's many business districts, the result of a vision, planning and hard work by the community over many years.

That work brought the Avenue from its days of shuttered retail buildings and vacant lots left in the wake of BART and Highway 24 construction to today's bustling success. Still, today is only a waypoint on a continuum of change. Growth and time can undo a lot of work. A "store closing" sign can be a reminder of darker times but is not always a sign of a trend.

RCPC invites you to join your friends and neighbors for an evening exploring the concerns of College Avenue merchants, Rockridge residents, and visiting shoppers. A panel of five speakers will address the problems, concerns, and current successes of the Avenue, then take a look at what the future could hold. **Note: The meeting will be held at the *College Avenue Presbyterian Church (CAPC), 5951 College Avenue at Harwood.** The discussion begins promptly at 7:30 p.m. and finishes at 9.

RCPC Board Election

This meeting is also RCPC's **official annual meeting** when board candidates seeking election or reelection introduce themselves to the community and speak briefly of their interest in joining the board.

Plan to arrive at 7 p.m. for board candidate presentations and initial balloting. Ballots may be cast before the Town Hall convenes (7-7:30) and during the meeting (7:30-9 p.m.)

See full election details and voting eligibility at left, below.

RCPC Board Election Procedures

At the RCPC Town Hall meeting Thursday, April 21, Rockridge residents may vote for RCPC board candidates. At least 25 residents must cast a ballot at the meeting to establish a quorum. If the quorum is met, **residents unable to attend the Town Hall may vote Saturday, April 23,** in the lobby of the Rockridge library, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Voter Eligibility: Persons age 18 and over who live within RCPC boundaries are eligible to vote. Verification will be by driver's license or DMV ID card showing an address within RCPC boundaries as depicted on the RCPC website: rockridge.org.

City to Hold Open House for Three Rockridge Projects

by Victoria Eisen, project consultant

The planned design of two Caldecott Settlement Agreement projects will be presented by Oakland staff and consultants at an open house meeting set for Monday, April 18, 7-8:30 p.m. at the College Avenue Presbyterian Church, 5951 College Avenue at Harwood. Motivate, operator of Bay Area Bike Share, will also be at the meeting to discuss upcoming plans for new bike share stations throughout the Rockridge district, as part of a

Projects: Open House, page 3

RCPC Election 2016: Statements of RCPC Board Candidates

Mary-Catherine (M C) Haug

Kales Avenue Candidate



When I moved from Berkeley to Rockridge in 1976, it was still recovering from the Big Build Through the Middle. My end of College was quite a sleepy place. Forty years and three children later, I feel very lucky to still be here.

In my Rockridge life I have been employed professionally as a city planner and elementary school teacher. I retired from my position as a special education teacher with the Oakland USD several years ago.

I have been continually involved in Kales Avenue block activities and also currently serve on the California Revels Board.

I appreciate the work that RCPC has done to try to keep our district livable and enjoyable. I would like to support that effort with the perspective of a long-time resident and Rockridge devotee.

Rekha Rao

Kales Avenue Candidate



My name is Rekha Rao, and I'm really interested in being on the board of the RCPC. I've lived in Rockridge for over two years. I'm an attorney by training, but I work in renewable energy policy now. I have a passion for local politics and I believe that organizations such as the RCPC have the power to create positive change in neighborhoods. I love living in Rockridge and want to contribute to making the area a better place to live.

Laura Schlichtmann

Clifton Street Incumbent



I have been a member of RCPC's board since 2012. My service includes participating on the Land Use Committee, a couple years as board Secretary, working on most of RCPC's community events (including Out & About and the Hallowe'en parade), and training and assigning docents for the 2015 Rockridge Kitchen Tour. I help with distribution of The Rockridge News, and volunteered with the Scenic Streets roadside planting and weed patrol projects in the Claremont/Clifton/Hudson area.

I am a retired lawyer, have a Master's degree in urban planning, worked in state government for 10 years, and have experience in dispute resolution. I am grateful for the contributions of board members of earlier years and hope to help continue that strong tradition over the next two years.

Although I will be away at the time of the April board election, I would appreciate the opportunity to continue on the board for one more term. Thank you.

Leonora Sea

Miles Avenue Incumbent



I was appointed to fill a vacancy on the RCPC Board last July, and have enjoyed the experience so much that I'm now running for a full term as a board member. Since joining the board, I've done publicity for the 2015 Rockridge Kitchen Tour, helped

RCPC Election, page 14

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Library program details/hours: Calendar, page 15

The Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded March 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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Articles submitted for publication may be e-mailed or mailed to the above addresses. Submissions are limited to 600 words, must include the author's name, phone number, e-mail address, and city or neighborhood of residence, and are subject to editing. Views expressed in articles accepted for publication do not necessarily reflect those of The Rockridge News, its editor, or the board of directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council. To reprint a Rockridge News article, please contact the editor.

Newsletter Advertising/Deadline
Publication date of the May issue is:
☛ **May 7, 2016**
☛ **May deadline is April 21.**
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

— Note Changed Meeting Location —

The next Land Use Committee meeting is Wednesday, April 27, 7:30 p.m., at 5626 Ocean View Drive, just up the block from College Avenue.

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee co-chair

■ 5418 College Avenue (Former Site of Rockridge Home)

A sign of the times? (See this month's Town Hall program, page 1, "The Future of Retail on College Avenue.") Rockridge Home is closing its doors, perhaps a victim of the changing retail environment. The owners of the space are now looking for a new tenant. Could there be an expansion of the Namaste Yoga studio from its space next door? Perhaps another hair or nail salon? Perhaps a real estate or professional office?

RCPC's long-standing preference has been to keep College Avenue storefronts in retail use, but what kind of retail use do we need? What kind will be able to hold its own against big box and Internet retail competition? Your thoughts on what you would like to see in the space are solicited. All serious suggestions will be passed on to the building owner. E-mail landuse@rockridge.org, or write to: RCPC Land Use Committee, c/o 5626 Ocean View Drive, Oakland, 94618.

■ Broadway/51st Street/ Pleasant Valley Avenue Construction Update

With three construction projects surrounding this intersection, some trucks may at times stray onto residential streets where they don't belong. Construction trucks are restricted to major streets such as Broadway and 51st Street, and are not supposed to use smaller residential streets such as Coronado, Desmond, and Clifton. If you see a construction truck on one of these smaller streets, note its license plate number, or at least the name of the company on the truck's side, and what it's carrying (for example: cement truck; scaffolding; construction materials) for a report to construction company representatives.

Contact the following people designated to receive and respond to problems:

- **Shops at the Ridge** (Swinerton Construction): Stuart Price, 415/793-8598 (cell). (To see what this site looked like in 1962, see photo and remarks on page 11.)
- **Baxter on Broadway** [AKA B51]: Danielle Reyes, 831/277-8680
- **Merrill Gardens** (Peter Friis): 209/666-7715.

Projects: Open House

from page 1

larger East Bay expansion (to learn more visit www.bayareabikeshare.com/expansion).

The purpose of the meeting is to let neighboring residents and merchants know what to expect from these projects and to answer questions.

Also on the agenda is an update on the status of the Caldecott Settlement Agreement project list overall.

The projects to be discussed at the meeting are:

1. The Upper Broadway Road Diet will make pedestrian crossing, bikeway, lane configuration and related improvements to Broadway between Broadway Terrace and Ocean View Drive. The design that will be presented at the meeting takes into account traffic studies and comments received at two previous community meetings. The project is intended to improve safety in the corridor for all roadway users and will include the following components:

- Resurfacing the roadway
- Reducing the number of traffic lanes from 4 to 3, sometimes referred to as a "road diet" (one lane in each direction, with a two-way center turn lane)
- Adding bicycle lanes on both sides of the street
- Installation of a pedestrian-actuated "HAWK"* signal at Lawton Avenue
- Improved, high-visibility crosswalks at all intersections
- Constructing bulb-outs at Taft Avenue, Kales Avenue and Ada Street
- No changes to existing on-street parking

2. The Rockridge Safe Routes to Transit (SR2T) project is meant to make walking across streets near the BART station safer and to provide bicyclists dedicated space on College Avenue between Broadway and Alcatraz Avenue. This project, too, has been presented at previous community meetings.

3. Motivate representatives will present the Bay Area Bike Share East Bay expansion, which envisions several stations to be installed throughout the Rockridge district, including one at the BART station. A separate meeting focused on proposed locations will be scheduled in fall 2016.

For more information about the Caldecott-funded projects, contact the city's Caldecott projects consultant, Victoria Eisen, at victoria@eisenletunic.com or 510/525-0220. Contact Paolo Cosulich-Schwartz at paolo@motivateco.com about Bay Area Bike Share.

Editor's Note:

■ An article discussing early planning of these projects appeared in The Rockridge News July 2015 issue and is available on the RCPC website at bit.ly/1Pd3THH.

*A HAWK beacon (High-Intensity Activated crossWalK beacon) is a traffic control device used to stop road traffic and allow pedestrians to cross safely. It is officially known as a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB). [From: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HAWK_beacon.]

Claremont Avenue Delivery Route Open

If you live near the route listed below, we would love to welcome you as a new Block Captain to replace Tom Sweetser. (Thanks, Tom.) The job requires about 15-20 minutes each month (excluding August when the newsletter is not published) and a desire to get a little exercise. Call 510/547-3855 or email Susan at smontauk@gmail.com to sign up.

Route 21G	**Odd numbers along the 6000 block of Claremont Avenue**

FROG, DNA Join for Earth Day Play

by Leonora Sea, RCPC boardmember; FROG liaison for RCPC; DNA chair

It's time to get ready for spring and summer at our local open space gem, the Rockridge Temescal Greenbelt and FROG Park. Come out for a community work day on Earth Day, Saturday, April 23, 9 a.m. - noon, (8:45 sign-in), sponsored by FROG and the DMV Neighbors Association (DNA).

We will be doing a number of maintenance tasks around the park. Many jobs are kid-friendly and families are welcome (but we do not provide childcare). The DNA is coordinating clearing the creek bed, raking, weeding, pruning, and collecting trash along the greenbelt between Cavour and Little Frog, to get ready for the creek to flow again. Tasks at Big Frog are to remove trash; rake and turn fibar (the bark-like cushioning material under the play structures); clean sand; sweep; and care for plants in the butterfly garden and along the path. The pond will be cleared of debris and redwood duff in preparation for the creek pump to be turned on.

Each year, we do this to maintain the beauty and safety of the park for our children and community members to enjoy. This is your chance to make a difference in keeping the park and greenbelt clean and fun for everyone. There will be tasks for all ages, and if you'd like to come but won't be able to wield a broom or shovel, we can always use help at the sign-in tables – a wonderful way to meet neighbors. School and other groups are very welcome, and we will confirm hours of service for those who need it.

While the FROG Committee and DNA members are the visible faces of our Earth Day cleanup volunteer event, we couldn't make it happen so readily without the behind-the-scenes hard work of the Oakland Environmental Services and gardening staff. They print posters, host the city's Earth Day website, organize the tool pickup (many of the gardening and maintenance tools are provided by the city), and drop by the park many times during Earth Day to make sure that everything is going smoothly and we have the help we need. When you volunteer on Earth Day, you're giving them a shout-out and thank you, and they truly deserve it.

We are looking forward to a fun and successful Earth Day.

Beginning at 8:45 a.m., sign in with the DMV Neighbors Association at Redondo and Cavour for the greenbelt creek and with FROG at Hardy Park for the park cleanup. Tools will be provided, or bring your own, if you prefer. (Please mark them well as yours.) **Snacks and morning coffee will be available** courtesy of our neighborhood merchants.



Scenic Streets Needs Volunteers to Remove Weeds

The weeds along the Highway 24 on- and off-ramps and Claremont Avenue street trees are tall and obscuring the beautiful flowers and plants. Help us keep these areas looking neat and attractive. You can help: Come pull weeds and prune an hour or two, on your own schedule or with others. Contact Lee Patterson 510/923-1084 or Judy Weiss (judy_b_weiss@yahoo.com) for information.

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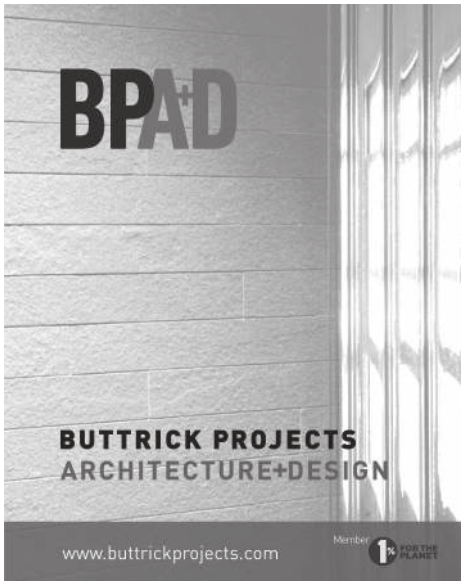


Join Oakland Cyclists — Teachers, Parents, Students, Volunteers — in a Ride to Improve School Funding: May 8. http://rideforareason.dojiggy.com. Contact ride organizer Paul Vetter (pavetter@comcast.net) for further information.

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Next NCPC Meeting: The Greater Rockridge NCPC meets only in even-numbered months on the second Thursday of each meeting month. **Next meeting**; April 14, 7:30 p.m. **Location:** the Seneca Center multipurpose room, 6925 Chabot Road, across from Golden Gate Avenue. Email the NCPC at chair@rockridgencpc.com if you have items to add to the NCPC agenda. Go to http://bit.ly/1LgW9JC for the current agenda.

NCPC April Meeting: Calling 911; OPD Guest Speakers

What happens when you call 911? Do cell phones work for 911 calls? What does 911 need to know when you call?

Learn the answers to these questions and more. Join NCPC members and guest speakers from the OPD Communications Unit: Police Services Manager Regina Harris and Communications Dispatcher Eugenia Oliver. They will describe the workings of the Communications Unit, sometimes called Dispatch, and how they handle calls. They will also answer audience questions.

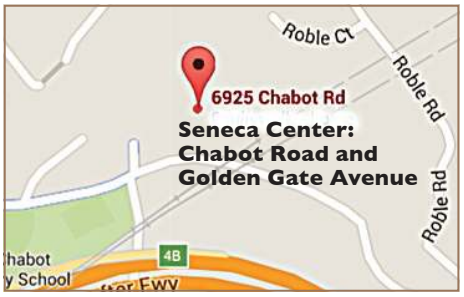
Also on this meeting's agenda are the usual priorities and police reports and attendant discussions.

The NCPC Treasurer: NCPC Treasurer Molly Singer spends her last meeting with us in April. We're still looking for a volunteer to take on the Treasurer's role; email chair@rockridgencpc.com if you are interested, or know someone who may be.

— **Karen Ivy,** Secretary, Greater Rockridge NCPC (secretary@rockridgencpc.com)

Finding the Seneca Center

See the map below for location details. The stub road closest to the site marker is the Seneca Center's driveway, which it shares with an EBMUD yard. Bear right as you drive up to get to the Seneca Center's parking area, which holds about 40 vehicles. **Please note:** If you have mobility issues, come early enough to park in the lot. The building is fully accessible only if you park in the lot; overflow parking on Chabot Road means climbing a long, steep stairway.



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Working for a safe Rockridge. Left to right: Sgt.Tim Martin, Sgt. Sean Hall, Community Resource Officer (CRO) Anthony Hutzol and Officer Paul Phillips all showed up for a "Coffee with the Cops" session held March 23 at the Rockridge Library. Look for Hall and Phillips as they patrol through Rockridge on OPD bike patrols. They will be joined in May by a walking beat officer who will patrol College Avenue full time. Similar assignments will be made in other Oakland business districts as well. "Coffee with a Cop" meetings were initiated by the Rockridge District Association and OPD. /DON KINKEAD

Eyes on Rockridge

Tennis Anyone? A Pair of 90-Somethings Prove Tennis Is a Life-Long Game

by Judith Doner Berne

I am a lifelong tennis player whose idols once were Chrissy and Martina and, more recently, are now Venus and Serena.

But since moving to Rockridge from the suburbs of Detroit nearly five years ago, my new tennis heroines are Marian and Mary Lou, who, well into their 90s, are still playing doubles.

I met them briefly when I was a newbie at Chabot Canyon Racquet Club (CCRC), the tennis facility on Chabot Road, a block and a half past Chabot Elementary in Rockridge.

Now, when I play, I often see them mid-morning on an adjacent court, absorbed in their games and not seeming to care whether it is cloudy or sunny or 47 or 77 degrees outside.

"Tennis is invigorating," Marian Walton tells me as I sit at her kitchen table after following the 93-year-old up the 30 steps to the Mediterranean-style house on Harbord Drive where she has lived for 53 years. Unlike me, this mother of two, grandmother of four and great-grandmother of three didn't use the handrail. She does all her own housework and takes meticulous care of her three-tiered garden, up several more sets of steps, that rises to a view of the Bay. "I think the steps keep me healthy," she says.



Marian Walton (left) and Mary Lou Chapman, still playing tennis well into their 90s, are the pride of Rockridge's Chabot Canyon Racquet Club.

"I've always been active," Marian explains. "I grew up as a dancer and an acrobat." A tennis player since high school, she remembers her tennis coach taking them to see the legendary Don Budge play. "He wore white flannels," she recalls.

Retired from her secretarial posts, Marian joined CCRC in 1994, shortly after the death of her husband Bob, a World War II bomber pilot. "I think I was down there (at the club) pretty fast. It's mainly tennis and that's what I wanted," she says of Chabot, which has six courts and a small clubhouse with a kitchen and locker rooms.

Initially, "there were six ladies – none but me still play." Only one is still living, she added. "I love Chabot. I've met the nicest people. That's my salvation."

"She does love to play," says Brad Bradshaw, 81, a Rockridge resident who is in two of her three weekly games. "One thing that Marian is really good at is low short shots, especially if you're lollygagging around in the back of the court."

Marian identifies her backhand as her best shot and says, "I run but nobody else does." "She can and does," Brad agrees. "She's pretty spry." Then he confides that "sometimes she makes the mistake of gardening" the day before their game, which may leave her at less than full strength. "I have warned her about the dangers of gardening," he jokes.

Marian also plays with Mary Lou Chapman, whom I interviewed in the living

Tennis, Anyone?, page 7

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Tennis, Anyone?

from page 6

room of her Berkeley Hills home where flowers and candy, given by friends and family to celebrate her 97th birthday, were still in evidence. She too lives 30 stairs up from the street.

Mary Lou doesn't discount that climbing the steps regularly could contribute to her longevity, but also jokingly cites her love for chocolate. "My mother," she adds, "just missed being 100."

Although she was recovering from when a rusted fence post fell and gashed her leg several days earlier, she energetically rounded up photos and a short history of the Rockridge club that she wrote in 2010.

I learned that CCRC opened in 1976 (see box, below) but probably wouldn't exist as a member-owned facility today if players hadn't fought against both greed and natural disaster. First, the then owners wanted it to be a for-profit enterprise and later to raze it to build condominiums. Then came the 1991 Oakland Hills Firestorm.

"The infamous Oakland Hills Fire razed the club buildings, toppled one light tower and melted the nettings, a sorry sight," Mary Lou wrote. "However there were players on some of the less damaged courts the next day."

Her own tennis history began when she was a 12-year-old in upstate New York. Her town was so tiny, she says, that "I had to bicycle to the next town to play. When I was in school, I played every sport there was – from baseball to skiing." Now, besides tennis, she plays golf (as well as bridge) and regularly drives the steep hills that lead to her house.

Mary Lou's stint as a World War II Red Cross Donut Dolly has been documented in the book "Extraordinary Lives," published by American Express, and through her talks at local schools.

As a Donut Dolly, her job was to bring a touch of home to servicemen at their bases and airfields in England and then on the Continent by driving up in huge vehicles known as "Clubmobiles" and serving hot doughnuts and coffee. Think our modern day food trucks.

She recalls being taught to drive a Clubmobile at a facility near the Wimbledon Tennis Stadium. She asked: "Can we go past the Wimbledon Tennis Club?" There she saw that a bomb had made a giant hole in the grandstands. "Years later, I attended Wimbledon and they had fixed the hole."

Indeed, she and her late husband, Max, a physician whom she met when she returned from the war to work for the Red Cross in California, traveled widely. She has been to all four tennis majors, ranking Wimbledon as her favorite.

Mary Lou readily admits that she doesn't get to the ball the way she once did. "I have a good backhand if I have time to unwind it." Rockridge resident Norma Wynn, who plays regularly with Marian and has been on the court with Mary Lou, agrees. "She has a great swing. That's how she survives."

"Mary Lou still has the enthusiasm and love of the game of tennis that she had when I first started playing with her about forty years ago," says club member Gail Unno. "Even though her mobility is not the same, she can still hit winners from anywhere in the court with her deft spins and down the line groundstrokes, and she gets such a kick out of hitting those winning shots."

"It's a true inspiration to see players enjoying the game at that level at their age," CCRC manager and director of tennis Steve Squire says of Marian and Mary Lou. " I joke with my students saying, 'Well, that's something you need to work on, but just so you know, you have another 30 or 40 years to master that shot.'"

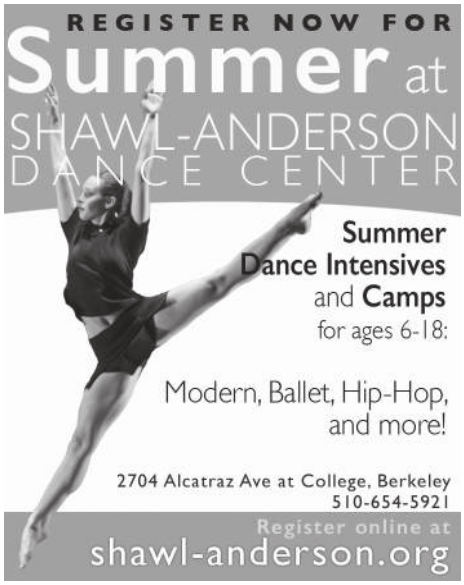
And as Mary Lou quips: "You get to be old enough, you get to be a legend."

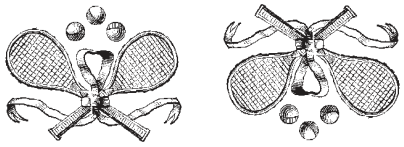
Email judyberne@att.net to comment on this column or to suggest ideas for future stories about your Rockridge neighbors and neighborhood.

The Chabot Canyon Racquet Club

- **What:** A member-owned tennis club featuring six tennis courts and a clubhouse.
- **Where:** 7040 Chabot Road in Rockridge.
- **When:** First opened as a for-profit enterprise in 1976, became a non-profit in 1989.
- **Why:** "You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation." (This quote is often attributed to Plato, but many argue against his authorship. Nonetheless, it appears as a *raison d'etre* in a history of the tennis club written by Mary Lou Chapman.)
- **How:** The club is owned by its current 96 equity members and further financed by 130 non equity members. There is a waiting list – currently at 15 – to join at the non equity level. In addition, College Preparatory High School has held 10 equity memberships since 1990 and uses the courts for its matches. Thirty-two club members are on inactive status due to travel or illness.
- **For more information:** Call Club Manager and Director of Tennis Steve Squire at 510/652-6060 (six-love, six love!), or go to www.chabotcanyon.org.







Lower Rockridge Parents Group Hosts 15th Annual Yard & Bake Sale

Community Event Helps Support Two Schools at Once

by Chris Moraes, LRPG

The Lower Rockridge Parents Group (LRPG) holds its 15th Annual Community Yard & Bake Sale Saturday, April 30, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., on the Peralta School playground (enter on Alcatraz Avenue between Telegraph Avenue and Dana Street). Your participation nets a double bonus: Sale proceeds benefit Peralta Elementary and Claremont Middle Schools.

LRPG was founded in 2001 by three neighborhood moms who had two specific goals in mind: To build community support for Peralta, their neighborhood elementary public school; and to increase the general level of community within the Lower Rockridge neighborhood.

This LRPG event has become a yearly rite of spring – the Annual Community Yard & Bake Sale Benefit. The event is now a long-time great opportunity for friends and neighbors to do some spring cleaning, shop for great stuff, meet new friends, catch up with old friends, and/or have a coffee and brownie in one of Peralta's many gardens.

This Yard Sale is one of the East Bay's largest and, over the years, has raised over $58,500 to help support Peralta and Claremont schools. Proceeds help support music, art, science and physical education. Collaboration among the schools' communities, neighbors and businesses has helped buoy Peralta and Claremont during difficult financial times.

Donations will be accepted through Saturday, April 23. Items not sold are donated to local charities such as Clausen House, Elizabeth House, Bananas, hospital thrift shops and The Salvation Army.

We accept children's toys and games, children's books, adult books, household items,sporting goods, bikes, trikes, scooters, strollers, baby items, furniture and more.

For more information about the sale, how and where to make donations, or to volunteer, contact LRPGYardSale@gmail.com.

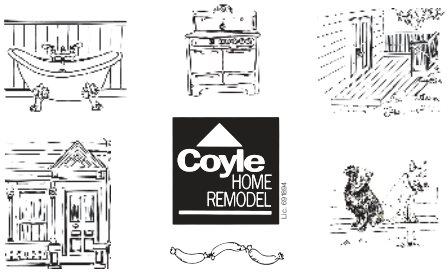
Treasures for sale at a LRPG Yard & Bake Sale event. /Courtesy of event organizers



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A New Way to Look at the Newberys

by Sarah Washburn, Friends of the Rockridge Library board member

Lights! Camera! Action! The 90-Second Newbery Film Festival, where kids craft short films to showcase their creative take on Newbery Medal books, came to the Rockridge Library for the third year in a row. This fun and funky film festival travels around the U.S. making stops at public libraries, theaters, and community-based organizations.

This February, the Friends of the Rockridge Library helped bring the festival to Rockridge and made sure there was enough popcorn to go around. Sixteen of the best youth-made films of the year were screened to a packed room of 100 teens, kids, and adults in the library's community room. Three cheers to Erica Siskind (Rockridge Children's librarian), Nina Lindsay (Children's Services Coordinator, Oakland Main Library), and the teen library volunteers who made popcorn for a full hour to feed the hungry masses. Their super powers made the event a rousing success.

This year, two of the films were the brainchild of a 12-year old director who enjoyed two impressive distinctions: First, he was the first Oaklander to submit a film to the festival; second, he co-hosted the event. He joined James Kennedy, the creator, author, and host who is passionate about stoking creativity in young people and sharing their creations in fun, free events. Learn more about the event and see a selection of the films at www.jameskennedy.com.

Library events aren't just for kids. The Rockridge Library hosts loads of fun and enriching programs for adults, children, and teens every week. An events calendar for all branches of the Oakland Public Library is posted on www.OaklandLibrary.org. The Rockridge News includes a monthly listing of Rockridge Branch library events in the Community Calendar on page 15.

To learn how you can help the Friends of the Rockridge Library support our neighborhood branch, visit www.RockridgeFriends.org.

Ed. Note: the Rockridge Library will be closed for interior renovations this spring. The announcement, dates, and details will soon be posted to www.OaklandLibrary.org.



Creative play in the library's upstairs community room during the Newbury Film Festival. /Festival Organizers

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Library Manager: "Dedicated Staff, Supportive Community"

by Don Kinkead

A 15-year veteran of the Oakland Public Library system, Paul Schiesser has worked "all over the city," including Oakland Main and the Elmhurst, Eastmont and Montclair branches. He can add the Rockridge Branch to that list of postings since his appointment as Branch Manager last July.

Contacted by The Rockridge News for his thoughts on working at the Rockridge Branch Library, Schiesser said he found staff to be "dedicated, very dedicated. They go out of their way to provide service and to be accessible to library patrons." Schiesser himself seems to personify that ethic as well. At a recent visit, he was seen helping a wheelchair-using patron work through the sign-on process for one of the public computers in the library's check-out desk area. Finishing there, he turned to talk patiently with a staffer who had approached him with a procedural question.

Schiesser also finds strong community enthusiasm for the library, from the day-to-day patron population and from the Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL), the support group formed after the branch's construction that is dedicated to "funding materials and programs for the Rockridge branch not covered by the city of Oakland's budget." FORL's goal is to provide funding for programs, circulated materials, and

Library Manager, page 14



"I'm glad I'm here," says Rockridge Branch Library Manager Paul Schiesser who came to the position last July. Although the final dates are still being resolved, Schiesser is pleased that an array of maintenance projects to be paid for by Measure L funding will soon be underway. /D. Kinkead



/D. Kinkead

Letter to the Editor

Street Trees in Peril

Editor:

I know that this winter we have been blessed with long overdue rain to help us past a four year drought. But there are three trees at the BART station on College that have not been so fortunate. For the past two months, I have been trying to get the city to take a look at the fact that three mature trees have asphalt that had been laid right up against their trunks. During a rain, they do not get any benefit. All similar trees on College have a dirt border around them…. not these!

For so many reasons, these beautiful trees deserve better. At this writing [March 16], the city has finally responded to me and said they would send someone out to take a look. I hope

Street Trees in Peril, page 13



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Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
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3/8/2016	3	2	5856 Ocean View Dr.	$1,095,000	$1,095,000	12	$1,330,000
3/14/2016	4	3	5401 Belgrave Pl.	$1,150,000	$1,150,000	14	$1,409,500
3/23/2016	3	2.5	6501 Chabot Rd.	$1,295,000	$1,295,000	13	$1,800,000
3/25/2016	3	2	470 61st St.	$899,000	$899,000	16	$925,000
3/26/2016	3	1.5	5671 Ocean View Dr.	$1,100,000	$1,100,000	14	$1,421,000

Homes sold in March closed 19% over the asking price on average.

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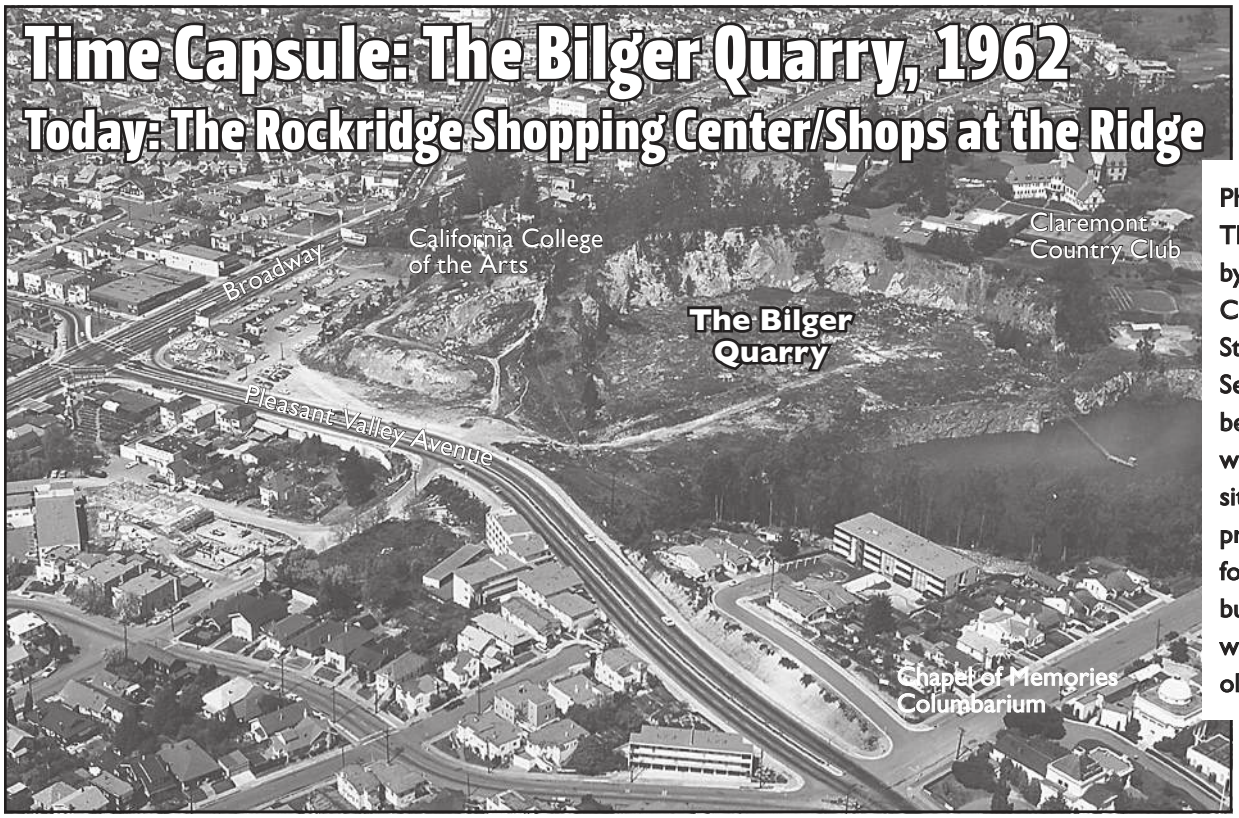


Photo provided to The Rockridge News by Susan Strahan of College Avenue's Strahan Insurance Services. She had been given it, along with a copy of a site analysis of the property's suitabilty for development, by a business acquaintance who was cleaning out old files.

Bilger Quarry. The Oakland Paving Company mined a body of traprock (mapped as Franciscan quartz diorite, a near-basalt), crushed it, and shipped it out via a rail spur that crossed Broadway at 42nd Street and curved toward the former depot at 41st and Shafter streets (you can see the trace in Google Maps).

— From the blog "Oakland Geology, focused on, near and under Oakland, California," written by Andrew Aiden, geology@andrew-alden.com. Used by permission of the blogger.

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Rockridge Masons Host 7th Annual Pancake Breakfast to Benefit Claremont Middle School Programs and Activities



Members of the Oakland-Durant-Rockridge Masonic Lodge dishing up food at the Seventh Annual Claremont Middle School Pancake Breakfast on February 27. Photos/Kenton Lee

by Morris Dye

On a Saturday in late February, the Rockridge Masonic Lodge on College Avenue hosted its Seventh Annual Pancake Breakfast in support of educational programs and enrichment activities at Claremont Middle School. This year's breakfast raised nearly $5,600 for the Claremont PTA, including a generous $500 donation from the merchants of the Rockridge District Association (RDA). The RDA co-sponsors the event annually in collaboration with the Claremont Dads Club.

As in years past, the Masons graciously opened their historic College Avenue lodge to the community and dished up hearty portions of pancakes, eggs, bacon and sausage. This family-friendly event serves as an important community-builder for our neighborhood, as people from the school, residential and business communities come together every year for a convivial morning meal in support of local youth.

The gathering also featured a raffle drawing with some impressive prizes in the mix. Local real estate broker Ron Kriss of Lawton Associates donated an iPad Mini for the raffle, and District 1 City Councilman Dan Kalb gave a pair of box seat tickets to an Oakland A's game.

These top prizes generated considerable interest as Claremont students circulated among the crowd selling raffle tickets and the school jazz band played multiple sets throughout the morning under the direction of Claremont's dedicated music teacher, Mr. Ted Allen.

Proceeds from the raffle and breakfast ticket sales gave a welcome boost to the Claremont PTA's 2015-16 annual fund, which supports a broad range of educational initiatives at our neighborhood public middle school. Programs and activities supported by the PTA include a high-quality digital design lab, outdoor education field trips, after-school sports, and one of the best library programs of any middle school in Oakland.

This event would not have been possible without the efforts of so many who volunteered their time and energy to make it happen. Special thanks go to Ed Stevenson and all of the Oakland-Durant-Rockridge Masonic Lodge members who hosted the event and cooked the meal, and to Chris Jackson and the RDA for the ongoing support they provide to Claremont Middle School.

Claremont Middle School is opposite the Rockridge BART station on College Avenue between Miles Avenue and Birch Court. The school has been educating Oakland youth at this location since 1913, and currently serves more than 400 students in grades 6, 7 and 8. More information about Claremont Middle School is available at www.claremontms.org



The Claremont Middle School Jazz Band played multiple sets during the breakfast under the direction of Claremont Middle School music teacher Ted Allen.

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Emerson Elementary Auction, April 16

Emerson Elementary hosts its 4th Annual Auction on April 16, 6-9 p.m., at the Birdland Jazz Club, 4318 Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

Come support one of your neighborhood schools and enjoy a fun evening: bid; eat; drink; dance! Also, the Oakland Tech Jazz Band will perform live.

Items to bid on include tickets to Disneyland, autographed Warriors gear, A's tickets, restaurant gift certificates, locally made jewelry and goods, wine tasting and baking classes and more.

We are still seeking donations. If you have something (a product or service) that you can donate, please contact Emily George (emilyrgeorge@gmail.com).

Tickets for the Auction are $20 at the door; $15 presale, at www.charityauctionorganizer.com/emerson/auction.

Emerson extends a huge shout-out to our Auction sponsor, Ron Kriss of Lawton Associates, for his continued support: ***Thanks, Ron!***



AND... **Save The Date**: **Peralta In Bloom: Saturday, May 14, Noon to 4 p.m.** An annual spring festival for the entire local community. Live music, great food, arts and crafts projects, games and prizes, and the exciting emcee'd cakewalk featuring beautiful cakes donated and designed by parents. Peralta Elementary schoolyard, 460 63rd Street. More info: 654-7365.

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Street Trees in Peril (Letter)

from page 10

by the time you read this, they will have opened up the ground around these trees and the next time it rains, they will get the water they need and deserve.

— Camille Reed

Editor's Note: Ms. Reed demonstrates perfectly the power of persistence. She first wrote to The Rockridge News of her concerns for the trees late in December, 2015. She had contacted the city but heard nothing. Taking the suggestion of the editor, she made a direct call to the City Arborist's office, but was told the trees were on BART's property and were therefore BART's responsibility. When she contacted BART, she was told the trees were the responsibiltiy of the city. An Oakland City Arborist ultimately visited the trees, reporting later that they were, indeed, offficial city trees, and that the wells, while tight, did not keep water from the tree roots.

However, the arborist, who had worked with BART when BART constructed a planter box around the base of one of the trees during construction of the BART Plaza, noted that bark placed then at the base of the tree had shifted and was now too close to the tree, adding: "The planter box and the material are the responsibility of BART, not the city."

Ms. Reed has forwarded that information to BART's arborist.

Library Manager

from page 10

improvements to facilities, among other things, according to the group's website.

A recent FORL-funded program coincides with staffing additions planned to provide fuller service to adults. "General library priorities have emphasized early literacy," Schiesser explained, "but are starting to expand to include Lifelong Learning programs and support." To that end, and with FORL financial support, the Rockridge Branch has added an Adult Librarian position, filled by Emily Weak.

The goal is to provide one adult program per month, expanding over time as suggestions for programs are incorporated. Initially, these educational offerings will include author talks and book themes. The March program, for example, was a Lit Club offering inviting people to check out and read a copy of the novel "Sideways," then meet at the Barrel Club on College Avenue for a discussion of the book and complimentary wine tasting.

"The early literacy and children's programs are not going to change," Schiesser stressed, pointing out that the branch continues to offer after-school programming for Claremont Middle School students as well as the various other teen and family-oriented offerings already available.

Another item on the Branch Manager's to-do list is to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the branch's construction, likely to be held in September. First, though, three months of interior repairs and remodeling financed by Measure L funds – painting, new carpeting, and electrical repairs – are waiting to be taken care of when the work can be scheduled, work that will close the library building to the public. To Schiesser's dismay, "There is no timeline yet."

Asked to sum up his feelings about working in the Rockridge Branch, he says: "I'm glad I'm here."

Ed. Note: Since this interview, library staff has announced that the Rockridge Branch will be closed for renovations for three months starting in mid-April. Get updates at www.oaklandlibrary.org.

Hoping? Find it in Rockridge!

RCPC Election

from page 2

with the Halloween Parade, attended and spoken at Design Review and Oakland City Council meetings on land use issues, especially the Nautilus project; secondary units; and parking. I'm currently the board member responsible for the Community Grants program, and the RCPC liaison to the FROG committee.

I'm the fourth generation owner of my family house in Rockridge. I love the neighborhood that I remember from when I was growing up, and the neighborhood here and now. My goal as a member of the RCPC Board is to help Rockridge continue to be the lively and welcoming place it's always been for both long-term and new residents.

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Mindfulness in Rockridge

8-week class in mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR). Learn tools to increase focus, effectiveness, and well-being. www.stressreductionatwork.com. 415/767-5252. Near Rockridge BART.

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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 reps of OPD. **Meets on the 2nd Thurs, in even-numbered months, 7:30pm: Next mtg. Apr 14. Note new meeting location**: Seneca Center, 6925 Chabot Road (multi-purpose room). Confirm info at: www.rockridgencpc.com or chair@rockridgencpc.com.

District 1 Councilman Dan Kalb

Drop-in Community Office Hours at the Temescal Farmers Market, 5300 Claremont Ave. (off Telegraph) at DMV parking lot on the 3rd Sunday each month,10:30am-12:30pm. For times and locations of other Office Hours and more from Dan Kalb: www.dankalb.net/contactdan.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

The Rockridge Branch Library closes for renovations in mid-April. During the time we are closed, all our staff will be working at other branches, and we hope to see you there. See below for events in early April. Stop by and check out AS MUCH AS YOU CAN CARRY (up to 40 items per card), as we will extend due-dates for items checked out in April, to make it easier for patrons(you) and our staff. Call 597-5017 after the 1st week in April for up-dated information about closed dates and events at other branches.

For all ages: Computer Tutors. Get help with basic computer skills, email, and e-book & audio book downloads. You can bring your own electronic devices. Drop-ins welcomed every Saturday, 2 - 4pm.

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 EVENT:

- **CALLING ALL 'TWEENS**: Tues, April 12, 6:30 - 7:45pm. A monthly, tween-directed writing, reading, crafts, and community volunteer group. Each month we will plan the next 3 months of tween-choice activities. **Agenda**: Pen Pals, Rubber Stamps, and Creative Writing. **Art supplies, snacks, and camaraderie provided free to all participants ages 9 to 12 years**.
- April 30th is **Diversity in Action Day** – We may be closed for this international celebration, but please check the library's website (www.oaklandlibrary.org) for events at nearby branches. Some will occur the week before or after Saturday, Apr 30. More info on children's programs: Erica Siskind, 597-5017

FOR TEENS

- **Teen 'Scape:** Play video & board games; make crafts; do homework. **Snacks provided.** Tues, Thurs, and Fridays: 3:30 -5 pm and Wednesdays: 1:30 - 5 pm.

FOR ADULTS

- **eBook Help: Tuesdays by appointment,** 6 - 7:30pm. Get help downloading eBooks to your Kindle, Nook, smartphone, or laptop. Make an appointment online at www.oaklandlibrary.org or in person at any library location.
- **Lawyers in the Library:** Tues, 4/5, 6pm-8pm. **Free legal information and referral.** A lottery system determines who may see the lawyer. Sign-up opens at 5pm; must be present for lottery drawing at 5:45. Call day of program to confirm: 597-5017.
- **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 Sat. each month (4/16), 1 to 5pm; wheelchair-accessible. Sponsored by the Calif. Writers Club, Berkeley branch. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com. Call to confirm.

LIBRARY HOURS

Tues, 12:30 to 8pm. Wed, Thurs & Sat: 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri, 12 to 5:30pm.
Closed: Sun and Mon; call 597-5017 for info on closed days after mid-April.

Friends of the Oakland Public Library Spring Book Sale

Thursday, 4/7– **Members' Preview** – 50% off
For all other book lovers:
Friday, 4/8 – 30% off
Saturday, 4/9 – 40% off
Sunday, 4/10 – 50% off
Special sale hours: 10:30am - 5:30pm.
The Bookmark Bookstore (open every day), 721 Washington St., 444.0473.
Info: bookmark_bookstore@yahoo.com; FOPL Membership & Board: info@fopl.org.

Diesel Book/Poetry and Events

FREE and open to the public.

- Tues, 4/5, 7pm. Publication Party for **Rachael Herron:** *The Ones Who Matter Most*.
- Wed, 4/6, 6:30pm. **Escape from Reality – Freud's Bar** (monthly talks given by local Bay Area psychoanalysts aimed at students ages 16-25, while enjoying drinks and snacks). **Michael B. Donner, Ph.D.**, presents *Wrecked by Success.*
- Sun, 4/10, 3pm. **Nancy Finley:** *How Two Baseball Outsiders Turned the Oakland A's Into a Dynasty and Changed the Game Forever.*
- Sun, 4/17, 3pm. **Alana Apfel:** *Birth Work as Care Work: Stories from Activist Birth Communities*. Joined in conversation by Bay Area doula, **Jewel Buchanan-Boone**, and local birth activist, **Ariel Gore**.
- Tues, 4/19, 7pm. New York Times economics columnist, **Robert H. Frank:** *Success and Luck: Good Fortune and the Myth of Meritocracy*.
- Fri, 4/22, 7pm. Celebrate the power of the small press with **Scott Esposito, Janice Lee,** and **Kit Schluter:** readings from their new and forthcoming works.
- Sun, 4/24 ,3pm. **Esmé Weijun Wang** and **Ranbir Singh Sidhu** discuss and compare their two debut novels: *The Border of Paradise* and *Deep Singh Blue*.

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

28th Annual Children's Support League (CSL) Heart of the Home Tour

Five beautiful homes, including three in upper Rockridge, will be on the self-guided tour. Fri and Sat, April 29 & 30,10am – 4pm. VIP ticket holders go to an exclusive kick-off party Thurs evening at a Piedmont estate and also visit a sixth home on Fri morning. Buy **raffle tickets** for a chance at over 100 prizes, including a Grand Prize weekend at a Sonoma cottage with dinner, spa, wine tasting, and more.

The Piedmont Community Center provides gourmet lunch trucks and shopping at the CSL Pop-Up Boutique. **All proceeds benefit at-risk children in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.** Get more info and tickets at www.childrenssupportleague.org.

North Oakland Senior Center

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

- **FREE AARP Income tax prep help**. Call or walk in for appointments. Thursdays, through April 14.
- **AARP Original Safe Driver Class** for first – timers. 4/5 and 4/7, 9:30am -1:30pm. $20 (AARP members $15). **Receive DMV certificate for safe driver insurance discounts.**
- **Trips on our new City of Oakland shuttle bus:**
  - **SENIOR DAYS AT THE OAKLAND A's**: Playing the LA Angels, Wed, 4/13; $2.
  - **BASEBALL ART AT THE BEDFORD GALLERY & LUNCH AT MEL'S DINER:** Wed, 4/27; $5 "lunch on your own."
  - **OLDER AMERICANS' MONTH EVENT AT CITY HALL PLAZA:** Free shuttle from NOSC. May 4; call for time.
- Vendors for **Annual Flea Market** (on June 4); **sign-up with details available starting April 27.**

Annual $12 membership entitles seniors 55 + to discounts on activities and trips. Mon. – Fri., 9am to 4:30pm. 5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. Subscribe to "The North Oakland Senior Times" for full schedule of classes/events, lunch menus, and volunteer opportunities. Info: 597- 5085.

Square Dance in North Oakland

Music by **The Squirrelly String Band.** Calling by **Jordan Ruyle.** 1st 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.





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SPRING MARKET UPDATE

I have new homes scheduled for April and May, but it still seems like there are more buyers than sellers. Call me for more info if you want to sell.
- Ron



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