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- **Bike to Work Day**
- **Bay Area Bike Share Expanding to Oakland**

Details: Page 4

RCPC Has a Busy April: Town Hall + Elections

Future of College Avenue Retail Examined by April Town Hall Panel

Challenges: Internet Sales; Vacancies; Business Concentrations



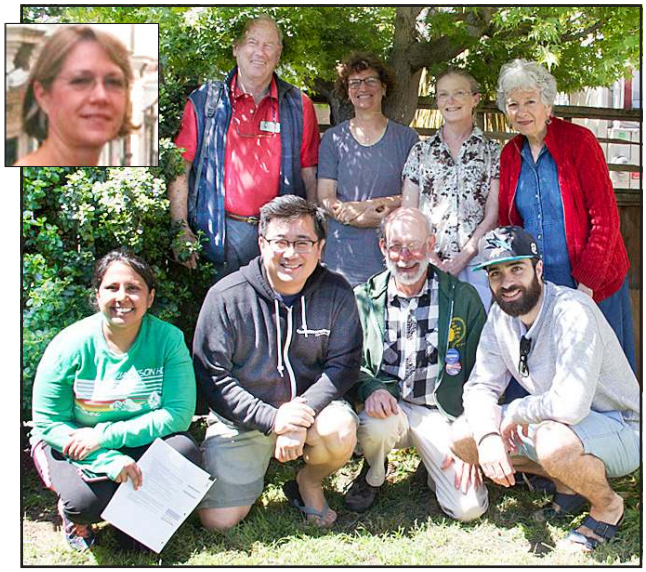
Panel members John Chalik, left, Stuart Flashman, Susan Bernosky, Kiera Williams, John Knight, and moderator Kevin Faughnan.

by Kevin Faughnan, RCPC

April's RCPC Town Hall topic – the Future of Retail on College Avenue – was held with community and panel members assembled in the sanctuary of the College Avenue Presbyterian Church. Next year is the 100th anniversary of this Julia Morgan treasure. Although the enduring landmark church is showing its

Into the Future, page 12

April Elections Build Board Membership; Room for More



Pictured at left are current members of the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) board of directors. Back row from left are Kevin Faughnan, Ronnie Spitzer, Leonora Sea, and M C Haug. Front row, from left, are Rekha Rao, Mike Lin, Stuart Flashman and Noah Rosen. Inset photo is of Laura Schlichtmann, traveling at the time the group was photographed.

New board members Haug and Rao were elected to the board by community members voting during the April Town Hall meeting, while incumbents Schlichtmann and Sea were reelected. Lin, Spitzer, Rosen and Faughnan were not up for election.

As stipulated in the board's by-laws, members met the first week-end following the election to count ballots and elect officers. Chair Stuart Flashman, Vice Chair Kevin Faughnan, and Treasurer Ronnie Spitzer were reelected to their positions. Rekha Rao was elected secretary.

The recent resignations of boardmembers Brendan Havener-Daughton and Greg Pasquali leave the board with four vacancies it can fill by appointment. Find out more about working with the RCPC board of directors. E-mail chair@rockridge.org with a statement of your interest and experience; you will be contacted.

Coming: June Town Hall; Note it now, for June 9 (Pg 5)

Annual Joint Meeting: NCPC-RCPC

On Thursday, June 9, RCPC and NCPC will hold their annual joint meeting. The topic this year is Public and Private Safety, presented by special guests to be confirmed later, and a seismic safety website demonstration. Details are evolving. Visit the NCPC (Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council) website at http://rockridgencpc.com/ and RCPC's (The Rockridge Community Planning Council) website at rockridge.org for evolving detail. The program will also be announced in the June issue of The Rockridge News, but the meeting date is close to the newsletter's distribution schedule.

Change is Good: Lately, There's Plenty to Go Around in Rockridge

Rockridge Changes:
- **CCA: Moving to SF**
- **Barclay's Pub: Closing, to be replaced by a restaurant.**
- **BofA Branch at Shops at the Ridge: Closing.**
- **The Hut: Closing, to be replaced by a restaurant.**

CCA to Shift Operations to San Francisco

by Judith Doner Berne

The rumors you've been hearing are true: California College of the Arts (CCA), with campuses in Oakland and San Francisco, has plans to vacate its Oakland campus at the south end of College Avenue over the next five years.

The historic Rockridge campus, which was fully established in 1926 by arts and crafts movement leader Frederick Meyer, is home to first-year students who take classes and live on campus and to undergraduates majoring in subjects such as animation, glass, jewelry/metal arts, photography, printmaking, sculpture and textiles.



"The Treadwell Mansion, Entrance to the Estate. March 1928." Founders of California College of the Arts (CCA), first established as the California College of Arts and Crafts, CCAC, bought the four-acre James Treadwell estate at Broadway and College Avenue in Oakland in 1922. Students, faculty, alumni, and the founding Meyer family all pitched in to transform the dilapidated buildings and grounds into a college campus. Meyer, a skilled horticulturist, did the landscaping, and some of his work is still in evidence today. **(Adapted from information on the school's website.)**

Indeed, CCA's website describes it as "Four beautifully landscaped acres in the charming Rockridge district…located just two miles south of the University of California at Berkeley."

Beyond that, two of its buildings have "historic" designations: Macky House, which houses the President's Office and administration; and the Carriage House, used for drawing and painting classes. Both were built around 1875. In addition, the landscaping, designed by Meyer, includes landmark trees.

The two-campus school plans to consolidate on a single San Francisco campus spanning the neighborhoods of Dogpatch, Potrero Hill and the Mission, CCA President Stephen Beal said in a press release.

There they will house all programs and "are devising housing strategies for students and faculty. Our goal is to have approximately 1,000 beds on or near the San Francisco campus by 2025," Beal wrote. Two housing units are projected to open before 2020.

"The future of our Oakland campus continues to be a top priority," he said. "We

Ch-ch-ch Changes, 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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Newsletter Advertising/Deadline
Publication date of the June issue is:
- **☛ June 4, 2016**
- **☛ June deadline is May 19.**

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 next Land Use Committee meeting is tentatively set for Thursday, May 26, 7:30 p.m., at 5626 Ocean View Drive, just up from College Avenue. Check the RCPC website at www.rockridge.org for confirmation and agenda.

Land Use Update

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee co-chair

■ **Nautilus Mixed-Use Project; Telegraph Avenue between 51st Street and Claremont Avenue**

This 204 unit project (including 16 very low income units), which is also planned to include a 28,000 sq.ft. grocery store and 6,000 sq.ft. of restaurant/retail space, is tentatively scheduled for a public hearing and potential major use permit approval at the Planning Commission's Wednesday, May 18 meeting, which starts at 6 p.m. (The specific project will likely not be heard until 7 p.m. or later, but speaker cards are usually called in the order submitted.)

As an urban infill project, city staff and consultants prepared a streamlined environmental analysis document. However, as of April 30, that document was not available on the city's website. The major environmental concerns with the project included: parking and traffic impacts; visual, aesthetic and shadowing impacts; and noise impacts. According to the developer, all impacts have been found to be either insignificant or mitigable.

Since its review by the Commission's Design Review Committee, the project has been modified to include a transportation demand management (TDM) program. In addition, sidewalk markings to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety have been added, the parking entry/exit off of Clarke Street has been reduced from three lanes to two, and a sidewalk bulb-out and three-way stop sign have been proposed for the Clarke and Redondo intersection. The city's traffic and parking department opposed the latter proposal as unwarranted. Earlier project plans and other documents are available on the city's website at http://records.oaklandnet.com/request/11849. (These documents do not appear to reflect the latest project changes.)

Councilmember Dan Kalb has scheduled a community meeting where the applicant

▸ Land Use Update, page 15

City Responds to Broadway Road Diet Concerns Raised at April Meeting

by Victoria Eisen, city consultant, Caldecott Projects

On Monday, April 18, Oakland city staff and consultants held an open house to present and receive comments on the Broadway Road Diet, Rockridge Safe Routes to Transit project and upcoming Rockridge Bay Area Bike Share stations. Although the two roadway projects have been presented at multiple community meetings in the past, about 50 people came to the open house, some to voice concerns, others to find out when the projects will be constructed.

Most of the comments received concerned the Broadway Road Diet (Broadway Terrace and Ocean View Drive) slated to resurface the roadway, reconfigure the lanes from four vehicle lanes to three (one lane in each direction plus a center turn lane), add high visibility crosswalks and a "HAWK" (pedestrian-activated traffic signal) at the Lawton/Rockridge Boulevard intersection, and install bicycle lanes.

Public comments ranged from concern that removing two through travel lanes will worsen congestion to excitement that Broadway will no longer divide the neighborhood, allowing residents to cross on foot without fear of being hit by a car. Some residents wondered why bicycle lanes are being added at the expense of motor vehicle lanes when so few people bicycle along the corridor, and asked whether this decision would impede access for fire trucks and ambulances during peak traffic periods.

In response, city staff and their consultants made the following points:

The project was initiated in response to long-standing neighborhood complaints about pedestrian safety crossing Broadway and speeding vehicles in this residential area. Its primary goal is to make these crossings safer, while a secondary benefit is to improve bike safety. In other projects around Oakland, when safe bike facilities are created, more cyclists use them than previously biked on the roadway.

Traffic studies show that during the most congested 15 minutes of weekday afternoons, five intersections along Broadway will have a minor increase in delay as a result of the project, ranging from five to 40 seconds. At other times there will be less or no change in congestion.

With respect to emergency access, staff consulted with the Fire Marshall who also attended the open house and spoke with concerned residents. OFD supports the project because the center two-way turn lane will improve emergency response during congested periods.

The city plans to begin construction of the Broadway Road Diet in the fall of this year.

For more information or project updates, contact the city's Caldecott projects consultant, Victoria Eisen, at victoria@eisenletunic.com or 510/525-0220.

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Call for Board of Director Applicants

RCPC Wants You!

While RCPC's April elections chose four board of director members, two board seats remained unfilled. Now, boardmember Greg Pasquali is resigning to attend to a new family member, (congratulations, Greg!), making a total of three seats is available. Under RCPC bylaws, the current board appoints members to fill vacancies.

RCPC depends on community volunteers to represent Rockridge residents. If you are a Rockridge resident, have an interest in Rockridge's future, and have some available time, you are invited to apply for a board seat. Find more information on time requirements and how to apply at www.rockridge.org, or e-mail chair@rockridge.org. The deadline for applications is May 31, 2016.



Bike to Work Day: Thursday, May 12

Join the fun Thursday, May 12, for the biggest bike day of the year when thousands of people around the Bay Area will ride together for Bike to Work Day, an event to encourage cycling as a non-polluting and healthy commute option.

In Oakland, Bike-to-Work Day is part of the city's strategy to promote cycling as affordable transportation, to improve public health, and to stop global warming. By cycling, you can: Reduce air pollution; stay healthy and fit; save money; and ease street congestion.

Hank and Frank Bicycles host an Energizer Station at the Rockridge BART station, 7-9 a.m., with giveaways, fruit, water, air for tires and basic repairs. Oakland City Hall's "energizer station" is one of the biggest in the Bay Area, co-sponsored by the city and WOBO (Walk Oakland Bike Oakland). Stop by Frank Ogawa Plaza from 7-9 a.m. for a pancake breakfast, all day valet parking, and a free swag-filled goodie bag.

Bike Commute Tips

- Obey all traffic laws including stop signs and traffic lights.
- Ride predictably, conspicuously and safely.
- Check out your route in advance.
- Ensure your bike is tuned, your helmet fits, and wear comfortable clothing.

More information: wobo.org/bike-to-work-day/; BikeEastBay.org/BTWD; www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/PWA/o/EC/s/BicycleandPedestrianProgram/OAK024651.

Bay Area Bike Share Comes to Oakland

Bike sharing is a membership-based system for short-term bicycle rental, like car-sharing. Members can check out a bike from a network of automated stations, ride from station to station, and leave the bike safely locked for someone else to use. Stations connect users to transit, businesses and other destinations, often providing the "last-mile connection."

When completed in 2018, the East Bay will have more than 100 stations installed by Motivate in three phases. Phase one locations, providing 25 percent of the expansion, were recently announced (http://www.bayareabikeshare.com/assets/pdf/Proposed_Oakland.pdf). Bikes should arrive in late 2016. Rockridge Bike Share will likely occur in Phase 2, an additional 15 percent expansion, with a station at BART under consideration. Community planning workshops will likely take place this summer/fall.

View proposed Phase 1 station locations for Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville: bayareabikeshare.com/expansion. Provide feedback online or at various libraries: http://mtc.ca.gov/whats-happening/news/east-bay-bike-share-takes-shape.



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Planning Begins for Claremont MS Fire Damage Recovery

by The Claremont Building Committee

More than 20 community members attended a meeting held April 21 at Claremont Middle School concerning potential plans to improve the campus and to replace the fire-ravaged cafeteria.

Oakland Unified School District community engagement specialist Charles Cole III welcomed those gathered and thanked them for making time to be part of the district's community engagement process.

Claremont building committee member Shelly Fierston spoke about the overarching vision for a new cafeteria to replace the one destroyed in a 2015 fire and a new gymnasium, as well as other improvements. (Since the fire, students have been receiving their meals and eating inside portables set up in the northeast corner of the campus.)

The budget for the project is currently $5.5 million, said Susannah Meek, the project's architect. Meek discussed two possible site plan options. Plan one places the gym in the campus's northeast corner. Plan two puts the gym on the north side but with faculty parking in the northeast corner.

Separately, the school is expected to see a new turf field installed next summer as part of a district-wide project. That project will happen in coordination with the building under discussion, Meek said.

Community attendees, including several Birch Court residents, discussed the potential pros and cons of each plan. Among the concerns raised were the possible impact on Birch Court traffic – residents said the street is often congested – and the safety of the current drop-off point at the Miles Avenue entrance. Two students raised the issue of creating more open space.

The facilities committee meets again in May to analyze, discuss, and incorporate the feedback it received on the proposed designs at the April meeting.

To join the committee, contact Liz Sullivan, director of community engagement for the school district, at liz.sullivan@ousd.org. For project updates and more details, visit Claremont's website: http://www.claremontms.org. Also see: http://www.claremontms.org/archives/5794



Fire destroyed the Claremont Middle School kitchen and cafeteria in mid-February, 2015. Planning and design for its replacement, along with other campus construction projects, are underway. /D. Kinkead

Annual NCPC-RCPC Joint Meeting: June 9

The Next NCPC Meeting is the annual joint meeting with RCPC; Thursday, June 9, 7:30 p.m.

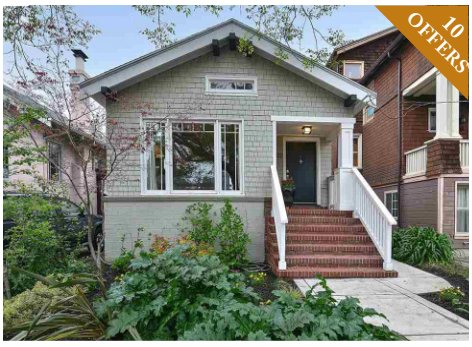
Location: *To be determined. (The library is closed for repairs.)*

Email the NCPC at chair@rockridgencpc.com for the meeting location, and if you have items to add to the meeting's agenda. Go to http://bit.ly/1LgW9JC for the current agenda. Find minutes for the April meeting, and others, at http://tinyurl.com/nvgrtme

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From the April Meeting Minutes: "Calling 911" – Estella Ventura, Communications Dispatcher

Ms. Ventura is dispatcher #72 with OPD. She reminded the audience that when you call 911 from a cellphone, the call goes to the CHP dispatch center in Vallejo. If that happens, callers may get questioned twice, both before and after forwarding.

Questions dispatchers ask are required and necessary; they help paint a picture for respond in officers. You will be asked what happened, where, when, what did the suspects and their vehicles look like – all of which helps Dispatch to determine the correct response.

■ A violent crime that just happened is always the highest priority, she said. A non-violent incident or a cold report is always a lesser priority. Priority for the police and dispatchers is always Life over Property.

■ Dispatch can get 15 calls on a big car accident, and they have to ask all the questions of every caller, in case someone saw something no one else saw.

Read the full minutes of the April meeting at http://tinyurl.com/nvgrtme.

Eyes on Rockridge

Rockridge Art Dealer Swings for the Fences With Baseball Exhibit

by Judith Doner Berne

When long-time Rockridge resident George Krevsky was growing up in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 1950, Jewish kids were not welcome to play on the city's Little League Baseball teams.

"So Jewish merchants sponsored 'A League of Our Own,'" Krevsky said, as he showed me a 1950 team photograph in which he and his fellow players had JWV (for Jewish War Veterans) written across their "away grays."

"I was the best Jewish first baseman since Hank Greenberg," he told me with a smile. And with another, "We had some ringers – a couple of kids from the Catholic School."

For the young Krevsky, the vacant lot across the street from his house "was a place where I could play ball and feel safe at home.

"Over time," he said, "that 'lot' for me became a Little League field, then a Class 'B' Minor League Park, Shibe Park (later Connie Mack Stadium) in Philadelphia, Beaver Field at Penn State (where he was student manager for two years for the Nittany Lions baseball team), Yankee Stadium (while he was getting his master's in social work), Candlestick Park and finally the Oakland Coliseum."

As an adult – social worker, turned play producer, turned art dealer – it became a Father's Day ritual for him and his now adult daughter, Shani, to head to the ballpark. "The game just touches me in a certain way," Krevsky said.

From 1998 to 2014, he combined his love of baseball with his love of art by assembling annual "Art of Baseball" exhibitions at his George Krevsky Gallery in San Francisco. They always coincided with the opening of each baseball season.

His initial exhibition was inspired by a 1997 Smithsonian show that featured artists and writers on baseball…

It was advanced when it turned out that Berkeley Repertory Theatre artistic director Tony Tacone, then at the Eureka Theatre, was putting on nine one-act plays the next spring, each representing an inning of a baseball game…

It became: "Let's do an exhibit to go with Tony's production."

The baseball shows were an easy sell. "I have been astonished to find how many artists share my enthusiasm and how our exhibition appeals to both the seasoned collector and folks who may never have been in an art gallery before," Krevsky said.

But in 2014, he and seven other art dealers were forced to vacate their galleries so a dot.com company could take over their Geary Street building. "After 25 years, I was sure they would give us some notice," he told me. "They gave us 30 days."

Krevsky moved his business to his Rockridge home, and the baseball exhibition appeared to be the last batter on the losing team, striking out to end the ninth inning.

Luckily, an extra inning loomed, thanks to Carrie Lederer, curator of exhibitions and programs for the Bedford Gallery at the Lesher Center for the Arts (LCA) in Walnut Creek.

"I approached George more than a year and a half ago," Lederer told me. (Full disclosure, Lederer. like myself, is a Detroit native and a Detroit Tigers fan.) "It was an opportunity to work together and to build out the show. I was interested in showing the historic perspective." For example, several pieces of art represent the Negro League and a series of vintage photographs of the early days of women's baseball.

When Steve Lesher of the Lesher Foundation enthusiastically pitched in with funding, it was game on: "Safe at Home, A Short Survey of Baseball Art" is showing now through June 12 at The Bedford Gallery.

Lederer and Krevsky teamed up as co-curators. "We had one rule," Lederer said. "We would put all the artists on the table and pick those who we both agreed on. We played well together."

"Carrie brought a dimension of quality and contemporary art that enhanced what I had been doing and brought it to a museum level," Krevsky told me. "There are almost 200 items in this show, which is vastly larger than my space. Normally I showed 30 to 35 artworks in an exhibition."

The 88 artists range from household names such as Andy Warhol and LeRoy Neiman to locally-based sports photographer Brad Mangin and sculptor Lauren DiCioccio. Approximately 25 percent of the pieces have been lent by their owners and are not for sale.

Safe at Home, page 7

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Homes sold in April closed 25% over the asking price on average.

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Safe at Home

from page 6

"What's been wonderful," said Lederer, who lives in Oakland, is to see that the exhibit has attracted an intergenerational audience and that people are arriving in their tribal colors. Baseball is a language we understand. It's part of our country's history."

Unlike many art openings, no one wore black. The gallery was crowded with people of all ages, baseball hats were standard garb, and peanuts, Cracker Jacks and, of course, hot dogs and beer were standard refreshments.

Although he misses his San Francisco gallery, Krevsky said, a benefit of his move is being able to spend more time and become more active in Rockridge and in Oakland.

"In 1983, I came kicking and screaming to Rockridge" because San Francisco (even then) had become pricey. But when their ranch-style house was destroyed in the 1991 Berkeley-Oakland Hills fire, he and his wife, Doris Krevsky, chose to rebuild because "We had grown to love this community."

Now a backyard building that formerly was Doris' gardening shed has been remodeled as George's office, complete with a baseball mezuzah on the entryway. "We call it the art garage." Doris, who is his CFO, and part-time assistant Lisa Beyers, a Rockridge resident, both work in the house itself.



George and Doris live within a walk of the Chabot Canyon Racquet Club, where George has recently joined Doris on the courts. They are regulars at Wood Tavern, love Oliveto Café, shop regularly at Market Hall, find Maison d'Être a great home store, and patronize the Rockridge Library.

The Krevskys hosted an open house for friends and neighbors to meet Mayor Libby Schaaf when she was running for office and are scheduled to hold a similar gathering for City Councilman Dan Kalb as he seeks re-election.

Asked to pick his favorite works from the Safe At Home exhibit, George said: "I love the Warhol (a silkscreen print) of Pete Rose" and Napa artist Richard Newman's hyperreal baseball glove sculpture.

I hadn't planned to do this column. But the exhibition was so exciting, I couldn't help myself. And I see it as a perfect field for parents and grandparents to enjoy art with children. Now, if only my 11-year-old grandson, a Peralta School fifth grader, had any interest in baseball….

To comment on this column or to suggest ideas for future stories with a Rockridge angle, please email judyberne@att.net.

One of George Krevsky's favorite pieces is this ceramic first baseman's mitt by Napa sculptor Richard Newman, in part because it reminds him of the glove he used as a youngster. It is among the baseball-themed works being shown in an exhibit Krevsky co-curated at the Bedford Gallery in Walnut Creek. PHOTO/DORIS KREVSKY

If you plan to go…..

What: Safe at Home, A Short Survey of Baseball Art.

When: Open noon to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday and 6-8 p.m. some evenings through June 12.

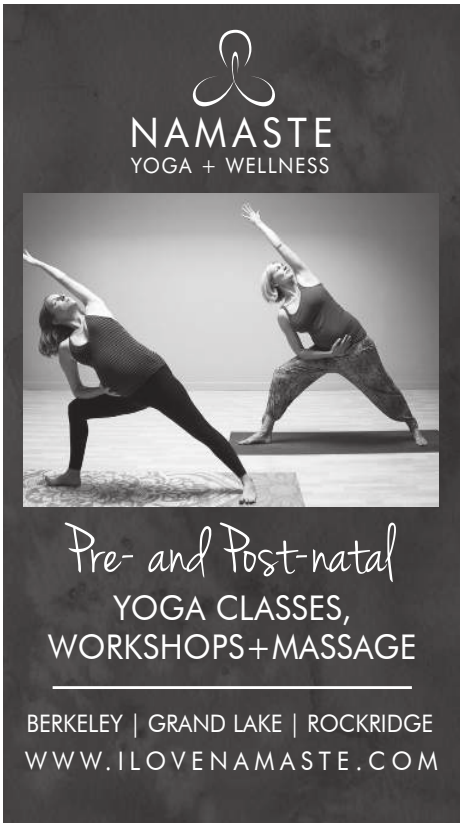
Where: Bedford Gallery at the Lesher Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek.

How much: Free admission for children 12 and under, $3 for teens 13-17, $5 for adults.

Who: Curated by Carrie Lederer and Rockridge resident **George Krevsky**.

Closing reception: 3-5 p.m. Sunday, June 12. Includes staged reading of a one-act play by East Bay playwright Barry Gifford based on a 1941 friendship between author Ernest Hemingway and two Brooklyn Dodgers pitchers; readings by Bay Area personalities including Bernard Malamud's "The Natural," John Updike's "Farewell to Ted Williams," "Moneyball" by Michael Lewis and, of course, "Casey at the Bat."

More info: Contact bedfordgallery.org or 925/295-1416.



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The Freeway: Benefits and Denial

Editor:

I am concerned by the RCPC's continued bizarre and seemingly unnecessary narrative about the disruptive nature of both the Grove Shafter Freeway and the BART line.

The historical and economic perspective that they were, or have been, bad for the neighborhood is false and groundless. Instead, it is largely the access to, and agency with, the freeway and BART that have made Claremont, Elmwood, and Rockridge the economic and lifestyle successes that they are today.

I fail to see the value in perpetuating such good vs. evil narratives that only create demons against which people can rally to feel good about their own tribe. It is sometimes self-satisfying to set up a David vs. Goliath myth. Yet, in the case of the freeway and BART, can't we move on?

In the cover article in the April 2016 issue of The Rockridge News, it is stated "... the Avenue (College) 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." Again, this is such odd and false mythology. College Avenue retail, whether morning coffee or evening Bruschetta, exists largely because of BART commuters and easy access to the freeway. To think that Olivetto, Market Hall, the new Safeway, A16, Hank and Frank, or the many therapy offices would survive on the business from the immediate walkable residential catchment basin, is sheer fantasy. Moreover, residential real estate values in Rockridge — from Shafter, to Miles to Broadway, to Grandview, to Acacia, to Mystic — are greatly increased by easy access to the freeway.

Without the freeway and BART, Rockridge would not be what it is today. There might be slightly less road noise and tire rubber without the freeway, but economically things would be far less well off, and we'd likely not see the flowering of Temescal, the home prices of Roble Road, or the amount of high-end shops on College Avenue.

Please consider setting the story straight, and stop demonizing these glorious transportation networks.

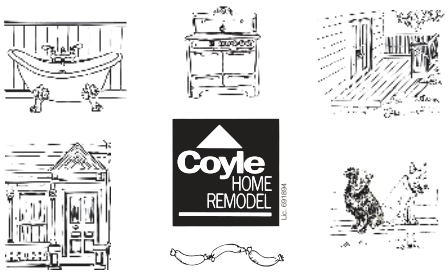
— Peter Montgomery

RCPC Chair Stuart Flashman Responds:

Dear Mr. Montgomery:

I don't think RCPC intends to demonize the freeway or BART. It would serve no purpose in any case: They are there now, for better and for worse. The Rockridge of the 1960s was, from what I'm told, a typical local-serving retail area. It probably wasn't thriving, but neither was it dying. The disruption from the demolition and construction associated with BART and Hwy 24 cut off College Avenue from through traffic for several years. The result was a predictable local economic downturn. People who were here at the time tell me that many local businesses failed and there were

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Letters

from page 8

indeed shuttered and boarded up storefronts. (I've seen the photos.) It's possible Rockridge would have recovered without any RCPC. It's possible that if BART, the city government, and regional groups like the Bay Area Council had been able to carry through on their plans, Rockridge would now be a thriving community of 4-6 story condominium, apartment, and office buildings, perhaps looking a bit like Brooklyn. It's also possible that people wouldn't have liked it all that much, given that with narrow streets and considerably taller buildings it would feel like walking through an area of canyons. Maybe it would have done well, or maybe it would have done poorly. The point is, that didn't happen, and we have the community we have, which seems to please people who live here and those who want to visit.

Rockridge has gone from being a local commercial district to an area serving a larger East Bay community. That has had its good and bad sides. It has led to the growth of specialty stores, and then their demise as the Internet trade crowds them out. People no longer want to travel miles to go shopping when they can do it from their computer or cell phone. Change happens: some will be good and some bad. One should neither demonize nor glorify what has happened: We just need to make the best of things and seek to have things change for the better rather than the worse.

— Stuart Flashman, Chair, RCPC

Bike Plan Will Worsen Traffic

Editor:

This is to express my concern about the proposed revisions to Broadway. There must be other solutions that would not make traffic worse than it is. Like it or not, Broadway is a connector to Hwy 24, already a parking lot in the afternoons. I have often seen both lanes on Broadway full of cars heading to Hwy 24. Maybe other parallel street(s) should be designated for cyclists. The Keith Avenue solution DOES NOT work. In the many times I have driven up Keith Avenue from College, I am yet to see one cyclist there.

Please count my voice of opposition to the proposal and my support of efforts to revise it.

— Danica Truchlikova

Public Caldecott Funds Subsidize Private Commercial Use

Editor:

I attended the public meeting held on April 18 at which city staff presented the final plans for the Rockridge Safe Routes to Transit (SR2T) project showing that the College Avenue sidewalk next to Market Hall will be widened, replacing existing parking spaces. Consultant Victoria Eisen stated that some of this new pedestrian area could be used for seating.

The area in question is already being used by Market Hall for business purposes: Tables and chairs are set out on the sidewalk each day so that people can sit while they consume food and drink that they purchased inside. Will the expanded sidewalk area be utilized the same way?

There is a similar issue at the northwest corner of Miles and College avenues, where SR2T will remove the existing right turn vehicle lane to create a pedestrian mini-mall. There is a coffee shop at that corner too; will more sidewalk tables pop up there as well?

SR2T is funded under the Caldecott Settlement Agreement, which means it is being paid for by the public. I don't think that private businesses should be subsidized with Caldecott Settlement funds. I hope that the newly created sidewalk areas will be designated for public use only when the Council approves this project.

— Jon Gabel

Editor's Note:

The Rockridge News contacted city consultant Victoria Eisen for her response to this question. She emailed: "A business wanting to put sidewalk seating in the bulb-out would need to apply and pay for an encroachment permit. This would also obligate the business-owner to maintain the area. This project does not include public benches because the Rockridge District Association does not support them."

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Earth Day? Earth Day!

by Leonora Sea, chair, DMV Neighbors

I was asked recently why I continue to organize the DMV Neighbors Association's Earth Day creek cleanup (this is my fifth year).

My first answer: because it's fun. Neighbors catch up with one another while raking and weeding; volunteers from outside Rockridge discover a welcoming community and a special park; local merchants loyally participate with donations to keep the crew fed and caffeinated; DMV Neighbors members participate as site captains and wrap-up crew. I also love doing it because I get to write articles like this to share my enthusiasm for the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt. I get to meet up again with all the great people at the city who make Earth Day and Creek-to-Bay Day go smoothly every year. And I get to stroll through the park later, thinking, "Wow, the volunteers did a terrific job again this year!"

My second answer: because it's vitally important. The Frog Park/Greenbelt is one of only a few public open spaces in Rockridge. Without it, many families wouldn't have close-by structures to climb on, a creek to wade and throw pebbles in, and a good

Earthday? Earthday!, page 12







Left: Holy Names University group portrait.

Left below: Southern New Hampshire University alumni taking out Texas privet.

Below: Holy Names University students sweeping up at Little Frog.

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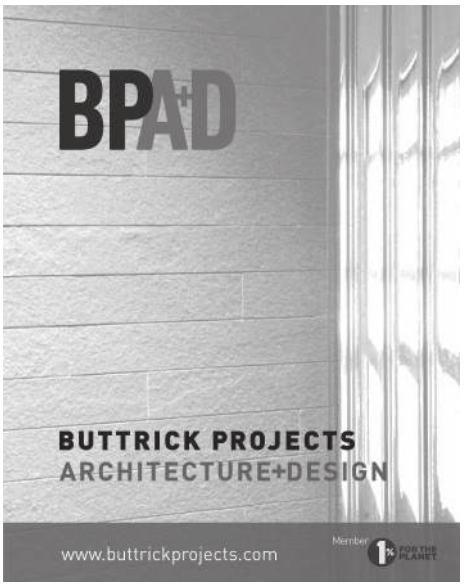
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Frog Park Thanks You for Earth Day

A huge thank you to the approximately 100 people who came out to clean up Little and Big Frog Parks and the Temescal Creek for Earth Day. It was a wonderful turnout: families with young children; Cub Scout Pack 274; Holy Names University students; the Rockridge Little School; and others. It was truly beautiful to see so many people out keeping our neighborhood park safe and clean.

Thanks also to Bakesale Betty for the donation of delicious scones, to the anonymous donors who brought a huge box of pastries and to the DMV Neighbors Association for the coffee.

Visit frogpark.org or Facebook.com/frogpark to see photos.



Members of Cub Scout Pack 274 turned out with rakes and shovels to fill trash bags.

FROG Maintenance Coordinator Retires

A special thanks goes to Howard Ferrier, FROG's volunteer maintenance coordinator, who has done an incredible job for more than 10 years and will be stepping down after the fall maintenance day.

Future Volunteers Needed

With Howard's departure we will need additional volunteers to join the Frog Park committee and help with coordinating maintenance events. We also need help with fundraising, communications and planning efforts – tasks big and small, many of which can be completed from the comfort of your home or for just an hour here or there. Email chair@frogpark.org to learn more about these important and rewarding opportunities in our community.

— Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt (FROG) Volunteers

Ayala Avenue Neighbors Enjoy Earth Day

Ayala Avenue residents turned out in force for an Earth Day cleanup of Ayala Park at Ayala Avenue and 57th Street.

As reported by resident Gabriel Kleinman, "the neighborhood got a great turnout – 15-20 people – and the park is transformed."



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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.



Earth Day? Earth Day!

from page 10

location to get out of the house on "one of those days." But the creek and greenbelt don't take care of themselves, or at least not in ways that make for a safe and attractive space. Earth Day volunteering moves the park a long way towards being spruced up and ready for summer.

This year, I'd like to thank the students from Holy Names University, the alumni group from Southern New Hampshire University, and the many neighbors who came out to work on the creek, greenbelt, and Little Frog. They tackled a wide variety of projects: moving sand into the Little Frog sandbox; pulling ivy off trees and away from the creek; pruning overgrown stretches of the greenbelt along Redondo; cutting back dead and dying tree branches; and picking up a lot of trash.

Thank you also to Bakesale Betty for the luscious ginger scones, to our special neighbor who always drops off pastries, and to the DMV Neighbors Association for coffee from Peet's.

Thanks especially to Park Supervisor Lydia Swann who spent many hours ahead of Earth Day walking the parks and the Greenbelt to determine how her crews could best help, who made sure sand was delivered to Little Frog to replenish the sandbox, and who spoke movingly to the student volunteers about the value of their education and participation in Earth Day.

Had fun like I did on Earth Day? Couldn't make it but want to do something for the park? Join in on the third Saturday in June at the DMV Neighbors Association interim cleanup, and come out for Creek-to-Bay Day in September. Good times await!

Into the Future

from page 1

age and needs helping hands – and dollars – to go forward for another century, it is likely to be a fixture well into the future. Similarly, the five panelists considered how our business community could also change, grow and be successful while retaining essential elements – such as the pedestrian-friendly shopping environment – that draw local residents and area shoppers to favorite locations.

Keira Williams, Business Development Representative for the city, pointed out that the Rockridge business district was the city's most successful district in terms of tax receipts. She cautioned merchants and the community not to lose sight of that success while exploring how to ensure a healthy business climate. As an example, she cited the multiple coffee shops and four banks within a stone's throw of one another on College Avenue that could raise questions about effective planning. In such situations, she thought, market forces could prevail, correcting service providers and shops that don't offer value to residents and customers.

Panel member and RDA (Rockridge District Association) chair Susan Bernosky expressed concern that millenials might not take their eyes off their cell phones long enough to allow those face-to-face interactions with business owners who depend upon that connection to present their services and products. Can ground level retail really be successful with this age group? On the other hand, can anyone doubt the success of Cole Hardware?

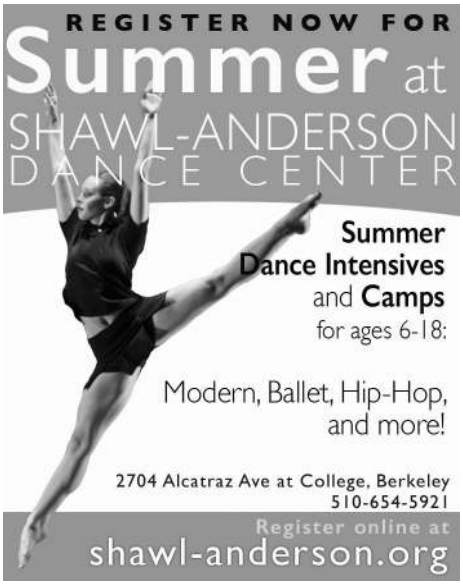
Long time property owner John Chalik with enduring tenants such as VerBrugge, Yasai, and La Farine – all on College Avenue for the past 25 years – cuationed not to take success for granted. Residents must remain engaged and vigilant, he said, or city forces could allow development that might not fit the desired atmosphere. He pointed out the Safeway building as an example of improved design resulting from changes pushed by an active neighborhood. Chalik also pointed out that good property owners work with their tenants during difficult times; the answer is not always higher rents.

The Internet has certainly made John Knight, owner of Rockridge Furniture and Design change his business model. From a manufacturer of antique reproduction furniture, a business started by his father, he has had to evolve into being more of a service provider. People still come into his shop to pick out a sofa or a dining room table, but now also ask his design team for suggestions as to what will best complement the house and their life style.

RCPC chair Stuart Flashman, long involved in the organization's Land Use Committee, wondered if ground floor retail was still the best model to use when considering vacancies on the Avenue. While RDA considers using vacancies to allow "pop-up" stores to gain traction and then relocate when the businesses demonstrate success, other approaches may be needed. We don't want "big box" stores, he said, and neither RCPC nor RDA feel it is proper to be picking winners and losers as far as what businesses should go into these vacancies. What is needed is collective input from all, including residents, about the types of services wanted and needed, and then the collective support of these businesses through patronage.

Rockridge residents have shown their loyalty to nearly 50 businesses on the Avenue in business for 25 years or longer. They know and practice "shop local."

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Go With the Flow?: Normally Sedate Creek Turns Surly

by Leonora Sea, chair, DMV Neighbors

One usually doesn't notice how much creek water the Temescal pumping station moves through the supply pipe, but less than an hour after the creek turn-on at the end of the Earth Day cleanup, enough water had backed up in the creek culvert that it was lifting the 3-ft diameter manhole cover by the path on the Big Frog side of Clifton.

Ronnie Spitzer and I noticed water streaming out 2 to 3 inches deep and pouring into the laundry room of the apartment building near the path. Howard Ferrier and Barney Smits of FROG, and Lee Patterson of Scenic Streets built a brilliant impromptu dam from materials generated in the cleanup, and from improvised sandbags made from plastic trash bags and playground sand. An apartment building resident pointed out a drain system on the greenbelt side of the fence, and Ronnie and I grabbed shovels and turning forks to partially clear it, which helped slow the flooding of their basement.

Park Supervisor Lydia Swann, Ronnie, and I were on our cell phones trying to contact different city and county departments. Lydia reached public works director Brooke Levin, who immediately called in OFD. The firefighters came in their ladder truck with sandbags to divert the water into the Clifton storm drain. OPW's drainage department's evacuator truck and crew cleared the culvert under Clifton. Finally, Keith Dooley, the county staffer who starts up the pump for the summer and knows the correct way to turn it off, did so, and the water subsided.

The area looks great now. If one didn't know what had happened, the area only looked well-watered and raked smooth.

Brooke was impressed by Howard, Barney, and Lee's quick thinking to build the greenwaste bag dam, and by how many neighbors turned out to help. Counting Earth Day volunteers, neighbors, and city and county staff, 25 people participated.

What caused the flood? When city staff opened the manhole, they discovered the blockage was caused by children's toys, either pushed through the grate at the pond, or dropped through the smaller manhole between Hardy and Clifton.

Parents and caregivers need to prevent children from putting toys through the pond grate, and to make sure those toys aren't left behind.

The pump system is many years old, originally designed in 1978. While the equipment may not be quite that ancient, the controls don't even have a digital readout. A request for a new system is in order.


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Ch-ch-ch Changes

from page 2

are actively exploring a range of options, including alternative uses and partnerships with other mission-aligned organizations."

They have joined with Gensler, Summit Public Schools and Silicon Schools to apply for a grant to fund the launch of a new high school dedicated to learning through making on part of the Oakland campus, Beal said. "We are also looking into the possibility of locating affordable artist housing and/or studio space on the campus."

In preparation for the move, they have sold their building next to Blick Art Materials on Broadway, but are continuing to lease it as the Center for Art and Public Life on the first floor and student housing above.

The Center for Art and Public Life "will eventually move, but at this time we don't know when or where," Chris Bliss, the school's senior advisor for communications, said. "Wherever it ends up, it will continue to serve Bay Area communities."

Avenue Apartments at the intersection of Broadway and College was sold in December, she said. "We are leasing back housing there through summer 2018. There are no plans to sell Terrace Apartments," on Broadway Terrace, which houses the faculty lounge and humanities and sciences offices.

A rumor that they have sold the four galleries used to display student art along the south end of College is not true. According to Jaime Austin, CCA director of exhibitions, "We've always leased those spaces." They have extended that lease though May 2018.

The conversation at directly affected businesses such as Blick Art Materials and Greencopy, across Broadway from CCA, was – as you might expect – not happy.

"We're sad that they're leaving," said Behrang Barzin, manager of Greencopy, at 5627 Broadway. "We've been here 31 years. The school is 30-35 percent of our business. People who work here are school alumnae.

"They stuck it out when Oakland wasn't the place to be," Barzin said. "And now it is the place to be. I know the teachers aren't happy."

Still, Barzin, whose father started Greencopy, said he hopes to hold on to the college administration's printing and copying, maybe by creating a satellite store at the new campus

"Blick will probably stay," surmised CCA student Alex Hentson, who was manning the checkout counter at the art materials store across Broadway from CCA. "There are a lot of other schools in the area that use us.

"Half of the (CCA) students are pissed although the school has promised to move every major," he said. Hentson, a print major who lives nearby, will graduate next year – before the move is made.

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Compiled by Jo Ellis

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Land Use Update

from page 2

will present the revised project Monday, May 16 (the earliest available meeting date), beginning 7 p.m. at Faith Presbyterian Church, 430-49th Street, corner of Webster Street. This allows only two days between the community meeting and the Planning Commission hearing, which seems inadequate, especially when the final project plans are not yet available on the city's website.

If you have comments on the project or this schedule, contact project planner Mike Rivera: phone 510/238-6417; e-mail MRivera@oaklandnet.com.

Comments to Councilmember Kalb may be directed to his staff person, Olga Bolotina, at OBolotina@oaklandnet.com or 510/238-7240.



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SPRING MARKET UPDATE
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