The Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

VOL. 32 ■ NO. 5 ■ ISSUE NO. 344 ■ May 6, 2017

CIRCULATION: 5,800 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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Town Hall Meeting Presented Options for Rockridge Housing

Panel of Experts Discussed What Rockridge Could Do About Oakland's Housing Crisis

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC chair

A crowd of more than 50 attendees filled the Rockridge Library's upstairs meeting room to hear about and discuss the future of Rockridge's housing, as the RCPC Land Use Committee presented an interim report on preparing a Rockridge housing policy for the RCPC (Rockridge Community Planning Council) board of directors.

The April 20 Town Hall presentation was part of RCPC's annual meeting where RCPC members (everyone over the age of 18 living within RCPC's boundaries) were able to vote on the election of five members to the board of directors. (Story at right.)

Land Use Committee chair Stuart Flashman began by presenting background information on Rockridge's housing and sketching three possible future scenarios for how Rockridge might respond to Oakland's current housing crunch. A copy of that presentation can be accessed via http://bit.ly/2pZu2sL. Following the presentation, four panelists discussed, from their different perspectives, the possibilities and limitations on how Rockridge might respond to the need for more housing in Oakland. Panel members were:

- **Jeffrey Levin:** Policy Director for East Bay Housing Organizations, a local nonprofit representing a coalition of more than a hundred organizations and local governments involved in advocating for and building affordable housing in the East Bay.
- **Glen Jarvis:** Long-time Rockridge resident and architect and principal of Jarvis Architects, a firm that has built, renovated, or remodeled many Rockridge homes. Jarvis also served on Oakland's General Plan Congress and Planning Commission and on the RCPC board of directors. He was part of the group of Rockridge residents that wrote and helped enact Rockridge's current residential and commercial zoning regulations.

Town Hall, page 3

RCPC 2017 Board Election Results

Rockridge Voters Elect Five Candidates to New Terms on Board; Five Vacancies Remain



Alden Conner | Stuart Flashman | Andrew Masalin | Jesse Ortega | Ronnie Spitzer

With the election of candidates Alden Conner and Andrew Masalin to RCPC's board of directors, the board membership count stands at nine. Under the terms of its bylaws, a full RCPC board consists of 14 members; five vacancies remain. In addition to election, positions may be filled by board appointment. You do not have to wait for the next election to find your place on RCPC's board and in your community. Anyone interested in appointment to a board position should email chair@rockridge.org or write to: RCPC, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, 94611. The board will begin making appointments at its May meeting. Is RCPC board service for you? Email or write to the above sources for more information.

NCPC, RCPC Annual Joint Meeting

Save the date: The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) and the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) hold their annual joint meeting **Thursday, June 29**. Oakland's new police chief, Anne Kirkpatrick, is the featured speaker. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the upstairs meeting room of the Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College Avenue.

Note: there is no NCPC meeting in May.

— Karen Ivy, Secretary, Greater Rockridge NCPC

Inspire Others! Show Us Your Kitchen

Whew! Your kitchen remodel is finally done. The contractor has moved on to another job, and the house is quiet. The kitchen is gorgeous. What could be better now than showing off that splendid new kitchen in the 2017 Rockridge Kitchen Tour?

Rockridge Kitchens



Whether yours incorporates the latest trends in design, or reuses and updates classic features in clever ways, the Rockridge Community Planning Council Kitchen Tour Committee invites you to apply now for your kitchen to be one of those highlighted on the 2017 Kitchen Tour, held this year on Sunday, September 24. The tour celebrates Rockridge's many design aesthetics, inspires tour guests planning a remodel of their own,

Kitchen Tour, page 12

Broadway Projects Approach Completion

by Victoria Eisen, city consultant

Oakland's first cycle track – on Broadway between Keith and Brookside Avenues – is nearly complete. See box below for announcement of the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The facility, a two-way bikeway separated from motor vehicle traffic by a concrete median, was funded through the City's settlement agreement with Caltrans over the fourth bore of the Caldecott Tunnel. This project also includes enhancements to improve crossing Broadway on foot. As of early May, these improvements were mostly in place with the following work still to be done:

Broadway Cycle Track Ribbon-Cutting

Date: Monday, May 8
Time: 11am-12pm
Location: Broadway at Keith Avenue

Please come to a short ceremony to officially open Oakland's first cycle track, a two-way bikeway separated from motor vehicle traffic.

For more info, contact: Victoria Eisen at victoria@eisenletunic.com or 510/525-0220.

Complete construction: All that remains is to make the new bike signal at Keith operational (it is currently bagged); install the accompanying striping across the Broadway/Keith intersection; install the fill and landscaping in the bio-swale (the empty pit just below Brookside designed to filter water runoff); and complete the eastbound bike lane striping on Broadway east of Brookside.

Clean up: Before the contractors are done, they will take away the temporary traffic signs and piles of debris. The porta-potty will stay in place until the bio-swale work is completed.

Improve project: Given that this facility is the first cycle track in Oakland, some of its features may need tweaking before it functions as designed. This will include:

- Adjusting the new traffic signals so they detect waiting vehicles and are visible as designed.
- Replacing the red right-turn arrow on Keith with a traditional red ball and extinguishable "No Right on Red" sign

Projects' Progress, page 12

The Patrols at Three Years and Counting

by Paul Liu and Gordon "Jake" Jacobs

Did you know that lower Rockridge is patrolled by private security professionals in marked vehicles eight hours a day, six days a week, and that upper Rockridge has patrols too?

In September 2013, robbers mass-mugged about 20 people standing in the casual carpool line at Hudson and Claremont. From this incident, which made headlines statewide, arose a local effort to provide a more regular security presence in lower Rockridge, since OPD typically has at most one beat officer, and sometimes none, available to patrol the combined areas of lower Rockridge and Temescal. An initial phase of online crowdfunding by more than 650 interested residents eventually led to the creation of a nonprofit group called Safer Rockridge which pools donations from the community to fund private security patrols.

The intent is to create a visible security presence that deters crime in the neighborhood during peak crime hours. Patrol staff are unarmed and do not racially profile. While the patrols primarily serve as "eyes and ears," they have

Community Patrol, page 13

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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 (except in August) 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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Contact us at one of the following:

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Articles submitted for publication may be emailed to the editor or mailed to the addresses above. Submissions are limited to 600 words, must include the author's name, phone number, email 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, contact the editor.

Newsletter Advertising/Deadline

Publication date of the June issue is:

☛ **June 3, 2017.**
☛ **Submission deadline is May 18, 2017.**

Advertising rates are $26/column inch. Six month pre-pay rate available. For display ads call Jo Ellis at 653-3210 (after noon), or email 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 will be Wednesday, May 24, 7:30 p.m. at the Rockridge Branch Library upstairs meeting room. Please check the rockridge.org website for updates on future meetings and agendas.

Land Use Committee Update

■ **Vita – Yoga, Pilates, Barre Studio, 6034 College Avenue**
(Formerly Ag Photo-Digital Image Lab)

The owner of this proposed new College Avenue business explained to the committee what it proposes to offer to the community. In addition to a variety of exercise and meditation classes, Vita plans to have the front part of the space devoted to the sale of products made by local artists and artisans. The committee felt this would help maintain the continuous retail frontage that keeps College Avenue vital. In addition, Vita is working with other local stores to have cooperative arrangements where doing business with one College Avenue store would entitle patrons to discounts at other College Avenue stores. The committee thought this was a novel and interesting way to promote a cross-fertilization of College Avenue businesses. Because an exercise studio is called a "civic assembly" use, it requires a use permit to occupy the College Avenue street-level floor space. Vita has submitted an application for a use permit to the City.

■ **New Unisex Barber/Hair Salon,** 5391 College Avenue (former site of Loot)

Appearing before the committee was the proponent of a proposed unisex barber shop/hair salon that would occupy space on College Avenue opposite the library. Because personal service businesses, like general retail, do not require a use permit, RCPC does not generally take a position on such proposals. Nevertheless, the proponent wanted to explain his business concept and to see if there was any response. The idea would be to offer moderately priced ($30-35) haircuts, styling, and coloring for men and women. Those present expressed various personal preferences, but the committee made no recommendation regarding the proposal.

■ **Continued Discussion of Rockridge Housing Policy**

Following up on the previous week's Town Hall meeting, the committee discussed moving forward on developing a housing policy proposal for Rockridge. Considering comments heard at the Town Hall, the committee felt that it needed to flesh out the existing three alternative scenarios as well as to develop additional housing options for the community's consideration. The committee agreed to seek more professional evaluation of the options, including their pluses and minuses. The committee also felt it would be worthwhile to develop additional background information, including the current state of housing along College Avenue and how many additional units could be accommodated within the present zoning envelope.

The committee expects to continue working on this question over the coming months, with the goal of having a final draft proposal for public presentation and comment by the fall.

Town Hall

from page 1

■ **Greg Pasquali:** A Rockridge resident and former RCPC board member who has worked as a planner on affordable and on market-rate housing projects in the East Bay and owns a number of Oakland rental properties.

■ **Dan Kalb:** Rockridge resident and Oakland City Council Member representing District One, the council district that includes Rockridge. Kalb has been extensively involved in addressing issues of displacement, gentrification, and tenant protection in Oakland.

Levin's presentation emphasized the difficulties in trying to build more affordable housing in Oakland, especially the amount of time and effort needed to assemble the financing needed to make affordable housing projects feasible. He also commented how the liberal height and density provisions in Oakland's zoning ordinance provide little incentive for private developers to include affordable units in their housing proposals, and, perhaps as a consequence, how little of Oakland's recent residential construction has been affordable.

Jarvis reviewed the history of planning efforts in Rockridge, and emphasized that Rockridge's current zoning has produced one of the most successful and desirable neighborhoods in the East Bay. He noted that the attractiveness of Rockridge has, ironically, made it difficult to maintain affordability in the face of market demand. He also commented, as had Levin, on how Proposition 13 has distorted the housing market by keeping "empty nester" homeowners in homes far more space than they may desire.

Pasquali noted that while Rockridge's current zoning along College Avenue had produced a successful commercial district, its height and density limitations gave property owners and developers little incentive to provide more housing by building beyond the current building envelope. He noted that there are a few large parcels that might become available for redevelopment, but, without an increase in height and density limits, Rockridge could not expect much additional housing to be built, whether market-rate or affordable.

Finally, Dan Kalb commented that the Legislature had become very active and interested in promoting housing development.

Town Hall, page 8



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Volunteers Swarm Frog Park for 'Most Productive' Earth Day Park Cleanup

by Carol Behr, FROG chair

Several important activities took place at this year's Earth Day cleanup, and we have many thank you's to share:

– Frog Park's 'Swings & More+' playground expansion information-board was displayed showing the equipment and final playground layout.

– Fremont Bank presented FROG (Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt) a $4,000 donation check. This generous donation is much needed and will immediately be applied to our park-expansion project and park improvements (www.frogpark.org). We also thank the numerous Fremont Bank volunteers that came to help.

– A mural was painted on the west bathroom wall by local artist Caroline Stern (funded by a Keep Oakland Beautiful grant).

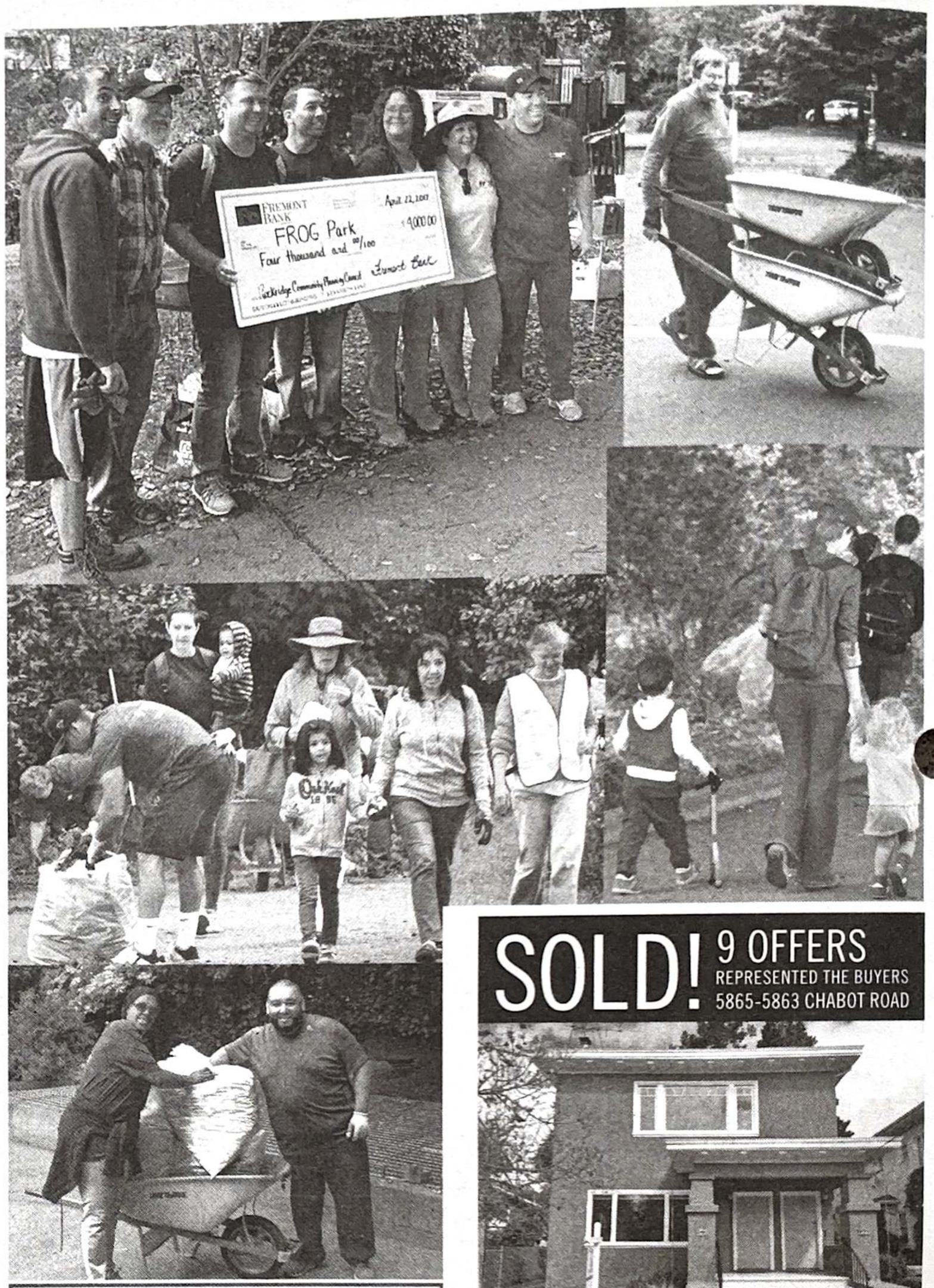
– The park, greenbelt and creek were markedly improved for all to enjoy, thanks to the hard-working community and bank volunteers. There was major foliage overgrowth from the rains to remove, as well as many cleanup tasks to complete. We are amazed at the great job volunteers did. We believe this cleanup is among the most work ever completed in a Frog Park Earth Day event.

Volunteers enjoyed delicious morning fare:

– Thank you Bakesale Betty, for your annually donated baked treats.

– Thank you Fremont Bank, for providing ample treats, coffee and water for the army of community and bank volunteers.

A big, overall Thank You from FROG and DMV Neighbors Association to all who could attend and help on this Earth Day.





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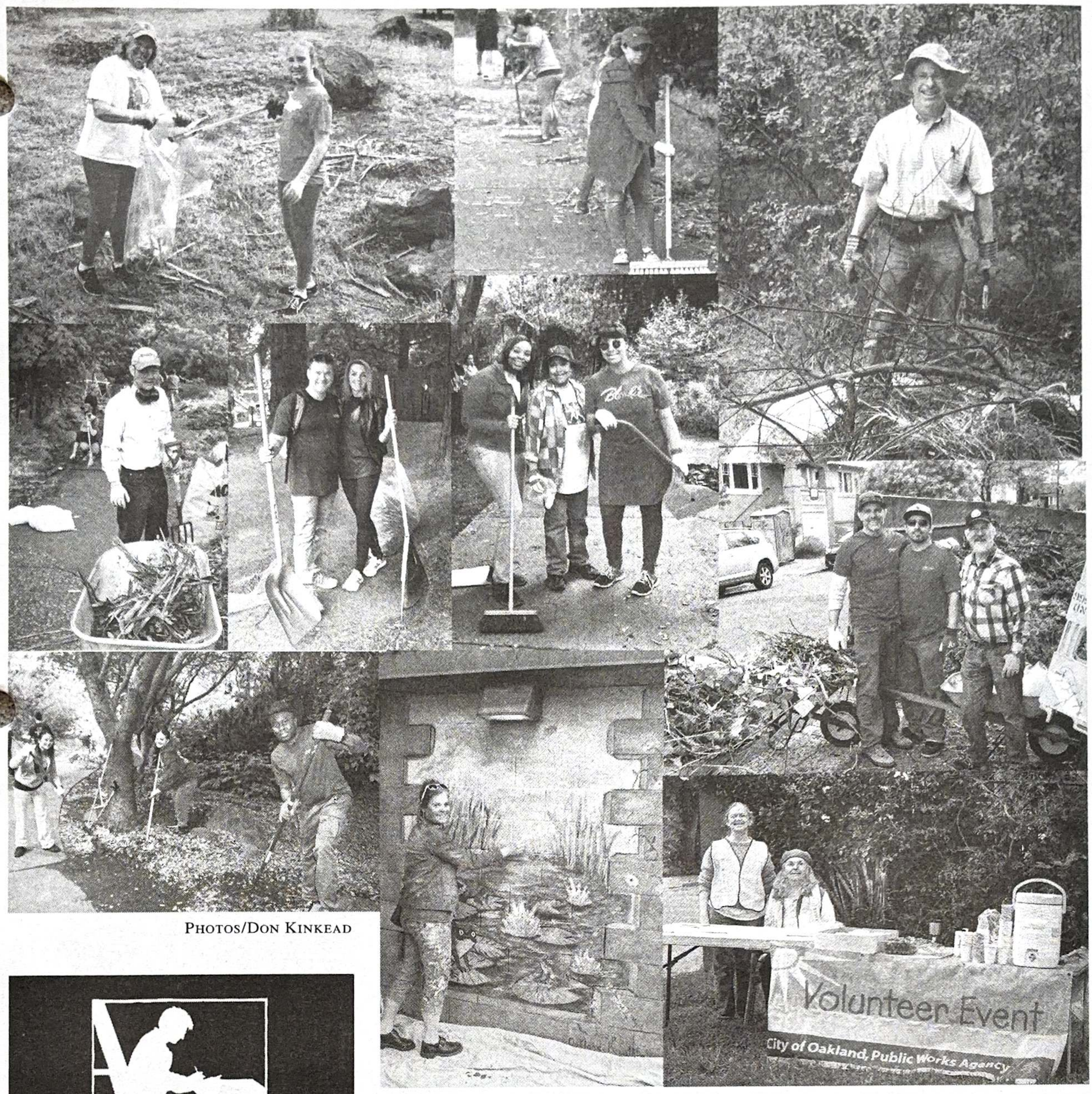
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Eyes on Rockridge

How Oakland Residents Can Play a Part In Choosing New OPD Officers

by Judith Doner Berne

Like many, I was dismayed to hear not only of the December prostitution-related charges against Oakland Police Department (OPD) officers, but that several were recent hires.

According to the East Bay Times, "The arrest of another Oakland police officer — at least the eighth since December — has left critics wondering what has gone wrong with the department's recruitment practices. Of the eight arrested, six were rookies. Three attended Oakland's police academy, and three others graduated from other academies all within the past three years."

So when I saw, via our neighborhood listserv, that Karen Ivy, secretary of the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), was looking for someone to take her place interviewing OPD candidates, I signed on. As it turned out, Ivy herself was able to attend, as was another Rockridge resident, Susan Shawl.

Who even knew that the opportunity existed to be part of the police hiring process? But as it turns out, an Oakland resident is part of each interview panel, along with a police officer and a city employee.

It was scheduled as an 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. affair, including breakfast and lunch. Our on-the-job training that morning began at 9 a.m. and lasted about an hour.

"The biggest challenge for police departments across the country is public trust," Officer Damon Gilbert, from the OPD's Recruiting and Background Investigations Unit, told the 30 or so of us. "We want to hire people who can help us rebuild that public trust. This is a huge opportunity for us to make our city safe. We want you to help us put the city in motion."

We went around the room stating our names and why we had come. Some reasons given were: "I want to help with recruitment and hire good people," said a city employee. "I was on the other side of the table five years ago," said a relatively new police officer. And, "I have a vested interest in who's going to be with me on the streets," said another. "I have done this before. You have changed the process. I'm interested in how it goes," Ivy said.

We learned that the 94 candidates had already passed physical and written exams. The oral interview was the next step to qualify for police academy training. And, of course, applicants would be further evaluated over those weeks of training as they competed for a job that pays, at entry level, from about $69,912, depending on prior experience, according to Gilbert.

We had received a six-page information sheet ahead of time that explained, "A basic principle of interviewing is that all questions must be standardized, that is, the same questions are asked of each candidate …." The same point was emphasized during our training session.

Choosing New Police Officers, page 7



Police Chief Anne Kirkpatrick speaks at a community meeting early in her tenure. /D. Kinkead



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Choosing New Police Officers

from page 6

When we broke up into our three-person panels, I was teamed with an experienced police officer and a civilian police employee who did fingerprinting for the department. Both had participated in the past and were very helpful.

We divvied up the questions and tried to ask them in the same way to each of the seven candidates we interviewed in two sessions, broken up by lunch. Each interview was limited to twenty minutes.

Immediately following each interview, we evaluated the candidate based on a numerical scale. It covered oral communications and comprehension; problem-solving and decision-making; dealing with people and empathy; and composure and tolerance.

That was the easier part. Assessing each candidate's performance in our own written words "in a meaningful way" was a lot harder. For example, putting down "Candidate was excellent," was considered a poor comment. "Candidate gave a well-organized, comprehensive response and had innovative ideas," with examples cited, was what they were looking for.

I was impressed with the diversity of the seven candidates our panel interviewed. They appeared to range in age from 20-something to over 40. All but two were minorities and two were women.

Since I was the newbie and both of my fellow Rockridge residents had done it before, I wanted their views.

"The six candidates for OPD that my panel interviewed were much better as a whole than I remember in previous times," Shawl wrote in an email. "We used to get one or two candidates that we felt should proceed in the vetting process with the majority not as thoughtful about their responses or just unable to think and express themselves clearly.

"Communication skills are so important in police work that I give it more weight when judging a candidate," she said.

Shawl has volunteered for the oral panels four or five times for the police and once for fire department recruits. "It gives me a sense of being a part of the community. I've always been a concerned citizen and like being active in any way that might be useful."

"I see the OPD oral board interviews as an extension of my service as an NCPC secretary," Ivy emailed me. "I've done the oral board interviews maybe two or three times before this last one, because my normal volunteer load is quite heavy.

"Our candidates included no women and no African-Americans," she said. "They were all very well-dressed and very nervous. They all spoke well. Being neither a cop nor an HR (human resources) specialist, I have no idea how to tell if one of these young men would repeat some of the things the earlier rookies are said to have done."

In Ivy's opinion, "If OPD is going to stop having startling articles in the newspaper, the change has to come from the new chief, who has to stay long enough to make a difference; and it has to come down through the command structure to the captains and sergeants."

I thought it a good sign that the police officer and civilian employee on my panel were both excited about the new chief, Anne Kirkpatrick. The first woman to head the OPD had been on the job for about two weeks at that point, but both had already met her. "It's the first time a chief has come to our department to meet us personally," the fingerprint specialist told me. That was the officer's experience as well.

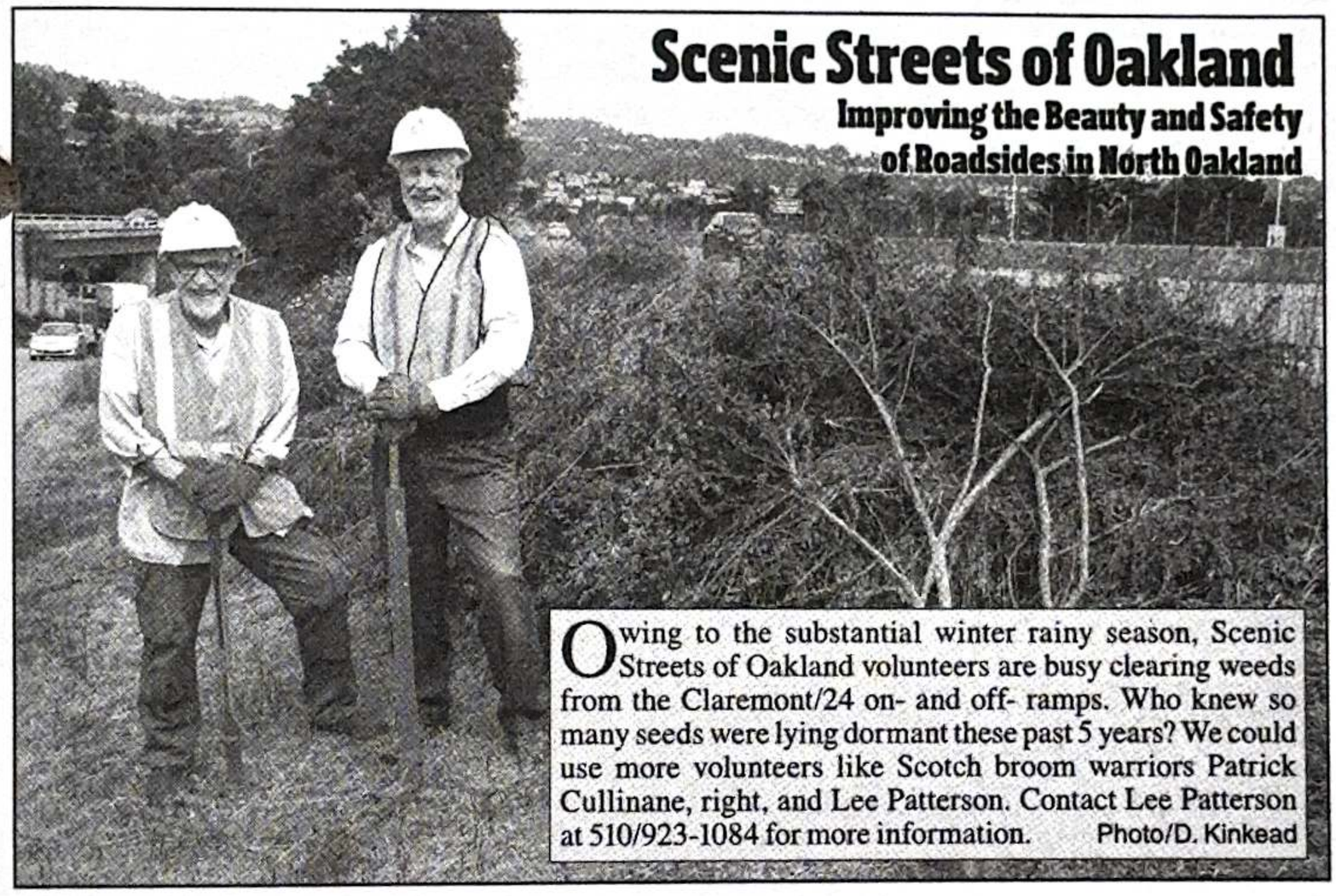
The police candidate interviews take place approximately every three months, according to a police department spokeswoman. "We've actually had a couple hundred interviews in a day," she said.

The next oral interviews are scheduled for June 6-7. To be put on the list as a community member for those or future dates, email DGilbert@oaklandnet.com.

I plan to take part in the interviews at some point again. I think I could do a better job the second time around.

Maybe I'll see you there.

To comment on this column or to suggest subjects for future columns on your neighbors or neighborhoods, please email judyberne@att.net.



Scenic Streets of Oakland

Improving the Beauty and Safety of Roadsides in North Oakland

Owing to the substantial winter rainy season, Scenic Streets of Oakland volunteers are busy clearing weeds from the Claremont/24 on- and off- ramps. Who knew so many seeds were lying dormant these past 5 years? We could use more volunteers like Scotch broom warriors Patrick Cullinane, right, and Lee Patterson. Contact Lee Patterson at 510/923-1084 for more information. Photo/D. Kinkead

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Letters to the Editor

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

MacArthur Station Tower a Dangerous Precedent

Editor:

I am writing to express my personal and deep disappointment that RCPC decided not to take a position on the MacArthur BART housing tower and that the City Council (including our representative) voted unanimously, contrary to existing zoning. I believe this could be a precedent-setting building. I know RCPC is concerned about its jurisdiction, but RCPC should have taken a stand. If it were in Rockridge – and we are a transit location next to BART – wouldn't you want others to stand with us?

I understand this "village" (more of a high-rise skyscraper) is the near-equivalent in height to some of the tallest buildings in downtown Oakland. Given the surrounding buildings in the Temescal area, this structure is far out of scale and will stand out from far away (similar to the 30-story Pacific Park Plaza in Emeryville).

How is the "situation very different from Rockridge (or any other Oakland area similar to Rockridge)?" As I note, we, too, are next to BART. It seems the whole thrust these days is to go beyond zoning and height-limits, ignoring resident's wishes. I urge RCPC and our district representative(s) to stand up against tower/skyscrapers. Our representatives should support the existing zoning regulations established in the community. Do not let a precedent be set.

— Carol Behr

Thank you for remembering Kevin Faughnan

Editor:

Just a quick note of thanks to RCPC and Brendan Havenar-Daughton for remembering Kevin Faughnan in the April issue of The Rockridge News. Kevin was an incredible neighbor and friend to all of us. He kept us posted on what was happening in Rockridge, helped rally folks for neighborhood cleanups and always had a smile and a great hike recommendation ready for you. There were so many folks from Ross and Clover Street at his memorial service. We miss our friend and neighbor and appreciate you honoring him as we process this sudden loss.

Best and thanks,

— Ingrid Aguirre Happoldt

Town Hall

from page 3

He said that in this session alone, the Legislature was considering more than a hundred pieces of housing legislation. While many of those bills would not be enacted, he thought that we could expect the legislative foundation for housing development to continue to change rapidly. He also noted that the City had recently passed increased tenant protections, and that both Oakland and Alameda County voters had recently approved additional financial resources for developing affordable housing.

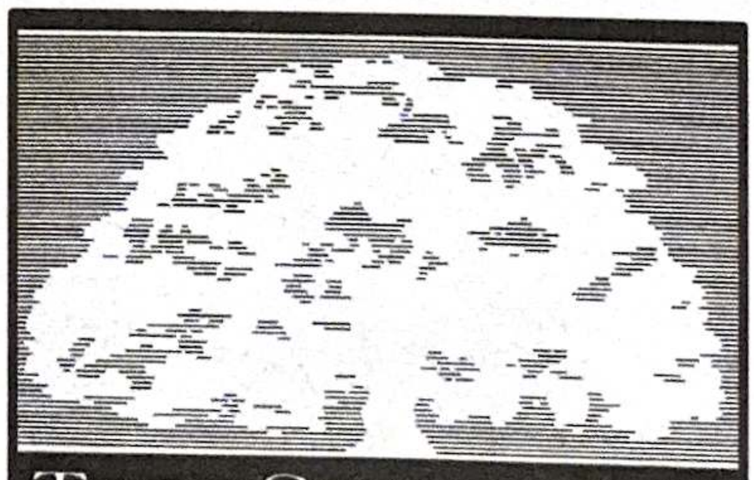
Lively comments and questions from the audience followed the panel presentations. While three scenarios had been presented, the audience consensus was that much more discussion was needed before people could make informed choices about what made the most sense for Rockridge's housing future. Specifically, speakers wondered about the pluses and minuses of different choices and whether there needed to be more choices and a wider range of options. People also felt they wanted more expert evaluation of the different options.

Land Use Committee Will Continue Research: You Are Invited to Contribute

The RCPC Land Use Committee will continue to explore housing policy options, gathering more public and expert opinions via RCPC's Facebook page, through articles and polling in The Rockridge News and using on-line resources.

The Land Use Committee meets the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College Avenue at Manila. Meetings are open to the public; your participation is encouraged.

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New Senior Living Center Pumps Up Rockridge Population

by Judith Doner Berne

Hey, Rockridge: Make room for a slew of new neighbors.

That's because Merrill Gardens at Rockridge, the senior living mid-rise that has been under construction at Broadway and 51st Street for two years, opened in mid-April with five or so new move-ins per day.

"I've been waiting to sit in this place all my life," Richard Crocker said, as the retired Cal Berkeley music professor and his wife, Gloria Crocker, sat at a table in "The Bistro" of the assisted living complex. They were there with their Realtor, finalizing the sale of their home in the Berkeley Hills.

"This is the Grand Hotel," said Gloria, their dog Alfie (yes, he's moving in, too) at their feet.

"The Crockers are our first residents," Merrill Gardens Community Relations Director Kristine Schrudder told us, with a smile. "Tons of (incoming) residents are affiliated with UC Berkeley," whether they be professors, administrators or graduates.

Deposits have been put down on 115 of the 126 studio to two-bedroom-two-bath apartments in the five-story building, which also includes a 16-bed memory care unit, she detailed. Base prices range from $3,500 to $9,000 per month.

Thus far, most (60 to 70 percent) potential residents are from Rockridge, Piedmont, Montclair, and Berkeley. About 20 percent are couples; the average age is 75. "A lot of people who are coming in are younger than you might expect," Schrudder said. She attributes that to their moves from hillside homes, where steep steps may have prompted a departure.



Richard Crocker and his wife, Gloria Crocker, with their Realtor (left) complete the sale of their Berkeley hills home at a table in "The Bistro" of the assisted living complex. /Don Kinkead

"Some of them sell and others are not going to do things with their homes right away or will rent them out," she said. "It's a very independent, active community."

On our walk-through with Rockridge News editor Don Kinkead, my husband and I experienced a first floor reminiscent of a cruise ship, featuring airy living and dining rooms, comfortable furnishings and large windows, though they may look out on Broadway rather than a broad ocean.

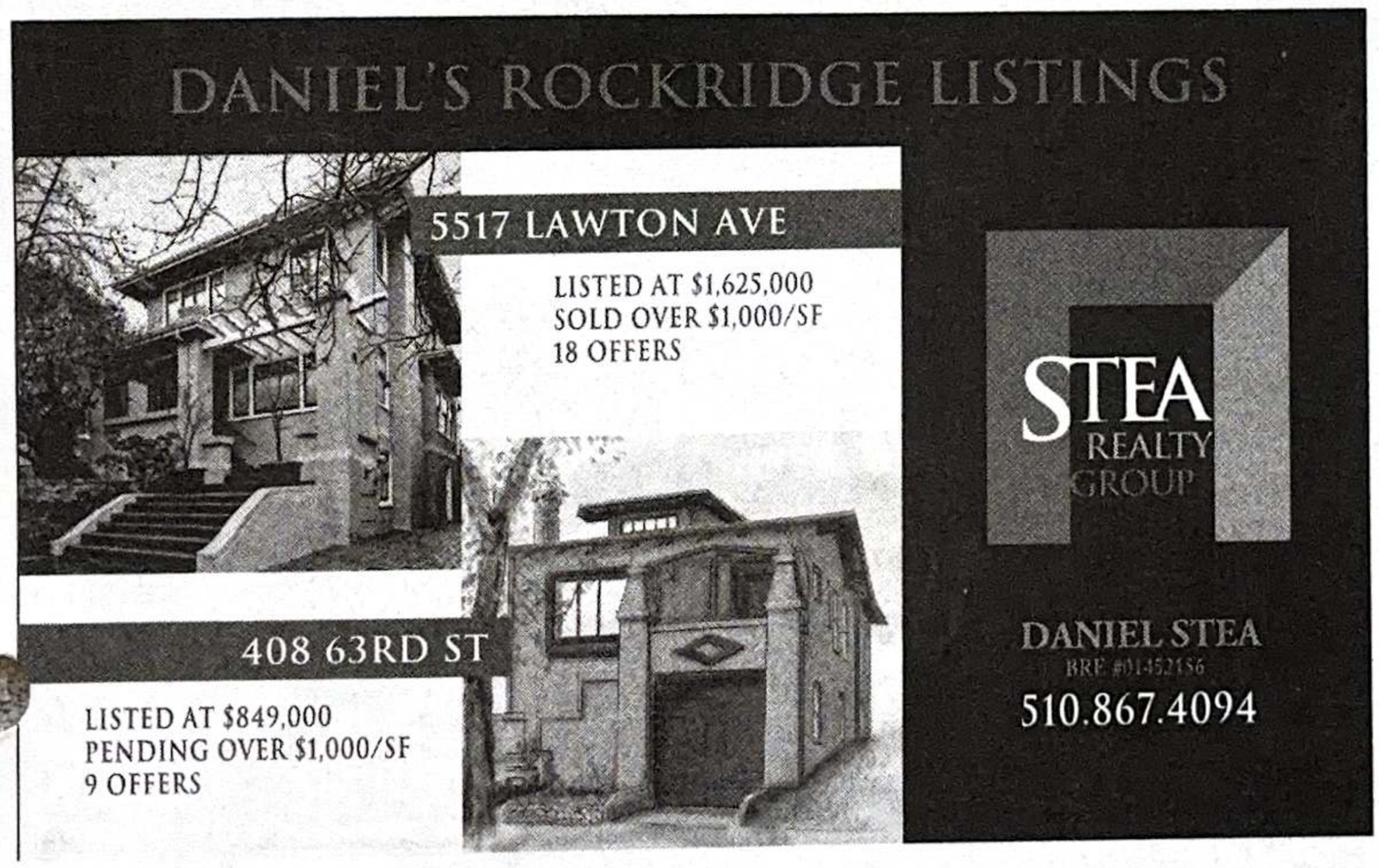
Views from the upper floors can take in downtown Oakland, downtown San Francisco and the Oakland and Berkeley Hills. A dining patio and roof-top garden, where soil-filled, raised wooden beds await would-be gardeners, allow all residents to enjoy the outdoors, whether or not their room has a balcony.

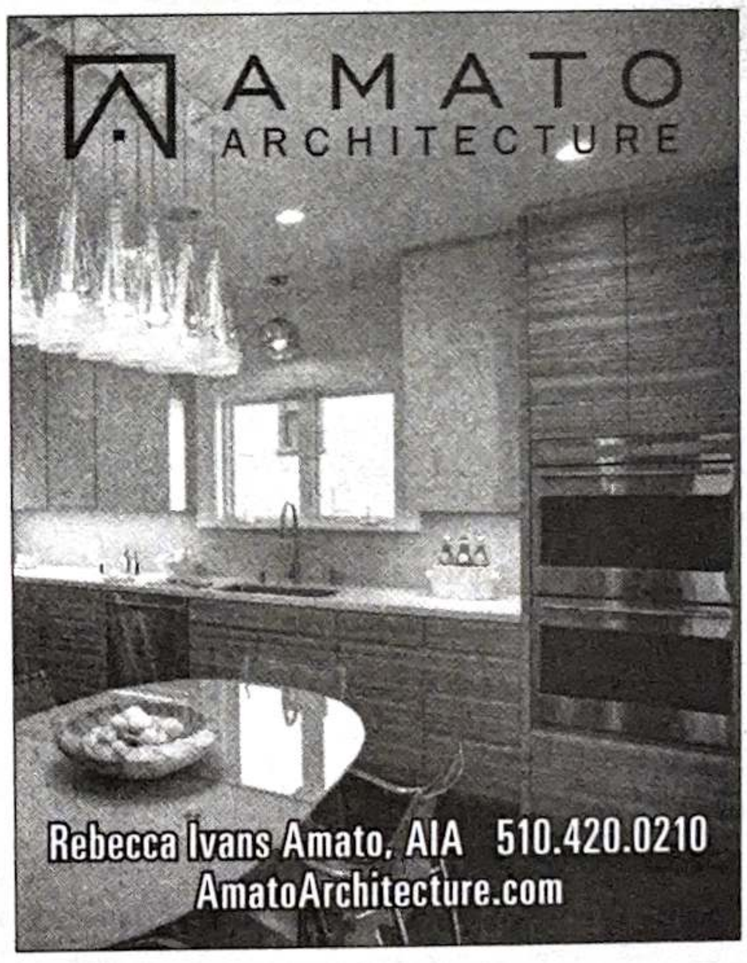
And like a cruise ship, you have your theatre/lecture hall, exercise room, hair and nail salon, library, dining room, card room, computer center, bar, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. anytime dining, and daily activities, both inside the building (we saw a bingo set) and excursions (we saw a small bus in the drive).

"We don't want people to be isolated in their rooms," Schrudder said.

For those of us living in the immediate neighborhood, the back of the building with its brightly colored panels somewhat relieves a massiveness that we are still getting used to. After all, the six-story assisted living complex replaced a block of vacant low-rise retail shops.

It was a nice surprise to hear Schrudder explain: "We chose the colors for the panels from the houses in the neighborhood."





The Lake Merritt Institute: Guardian of a Watery City Jewel

by Katie Noonan, editor "The Tidings," and Lake Merritt Institute board member

Green space, urban refuge, and "Jewel in the heart of the City," Lake Merritt draws Oaklanders and East Bay residents to its shores year-round. People come from all over for daily exercise, family fun, a competitive race on land or water, company picnics, to celebrate the arts, or to express their feelings about events and issues of the day and to seek a sense of community. Lake Merritt is the "there" in Oakland.

Yet not everyone knows that the beauty of the lake has been guarded for 26 years by the work of a small nonprofit – The Lake Merritt Institute (LMI) – supported by Oakland's Public Works Department.

LMI is a uniquely structured Oakland operation that cannot be defined simply as a trash abatement service. For example, the Institute maintains three beautiful aeration fountains in the lake that have become as iconic as the Necklace of Lights as a symbol of Oakland. LMI's founder, Dr. Richard Bailey (Doc Bailey), envisioned a public institution that would advocate for the health of the aquatic ecosystem using science and best management practices, celebrate diversity and the arts, and most importantly, rally ordinary citizens to own their lake and to work together to take care of it.

According to new executive director James Robinson, water quality in the lake is the best it has been for over a century.

But there is a continuing lurid fascination with the body of water which once served as the city's open sewer. It is hard to buck the appellation "lake of a thousand smells" applied in the East Bay Express article appearing February 21, 2017: "Lake Merritt's Weird, Polluted – and Stinky – Legacy," but there is more to the story.

The Camron-Stanford House on Lakeshore offers a series of lectures this spring, Sundays 1-4 pm, titled "Slough, Cesspool, City Jewel: The Evolution of Lake Merritt." KQED's Bay Curious recently (March 23, 2017) devoted a segment to a viewer's question: "What would it take to make Lake Merritt swimmable?"

Taking the long view, LMI volunteers envision a day in the not too distant future when the lake's reputation as an Oakland jewel will be secure against all detractors.

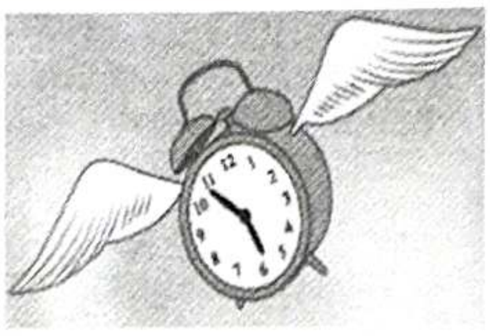
LMI has strong city support in its efforts; the organization's contract with the city has just been extended to 2019. The institute is a 501(c)3 nonprofit charity, supported and sponsored by the city and by subscriptions and donations made by everyday citizens. It was founded in 1992 by Dr. Bailey to promote education, research and capital improvements such as the fountains, trash barriers and storm drain filters around the lake (Institute Bylaws).

On your next visit to the lake, please take note of LMI's many enhancements and find out how you can get involved.

Read the Bulletin Boards

LMI maintains four bulletin boards for the education and enjoyment of thousands of visitors. In addition, become informed about local public initiatives such as the Measure DD Project. Pick up an issue of The Tidings, LMI's official newsletter. The newsletter is also available at many local coffee shops and other venues. The late Ray Perman, former Tidings editor, made bulletin boards and newsletter holders a personal mission. With his business acumen, talent and appreciation for

Watery Jewel, page 11



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Watery Jewel

from page 10

the arts, Ray launched the "Love Your Lake" movement. He designed Scout programs and mentored local Eagle Scout candidates in building and maintaining the attractive and useful bulletin boards.

Subscribe and/or Make a Donation

It's expensive to maintain the LMI truck, the specialized equipment – extendable nets, gloves, and pickers – and aeration fountains; and to do public outreach to keep Lake Merritt beautiful. You can help by becoming an LMI member or by making a one-time donation. Members enjoy the monthly Tidings newsletter delivered electronically or by mail. To contribute to LMI, use PayPal at the LMI website (lakemerrittinstitute.org) or send a check to: Lake Merritt Institute, 568 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610-5026. Contact LMI at 510/238-2290 (office) or by email lmi@netwiz.net.

Volunteer

LMI hosts several community clean-up days throughout the year such as on Martin Luther King Day, Coastal Cleanup Day, and Earth Day. Also, join fellow citizens on a regular Tuesday or Saturday cleanup. Meet in the LMI office upstairs at 568 Bellevue Avenue. The Institute provides tools and instructions for safety and proper trash disposal. Ray Perman was the beloved cheerleader and mainstay of the regular A-Team lake volunteers. He organized celebrations and social events to keep the enthusiasm going. His spirit will carry on with this dedicated and amiable group of Oakland citizens.

Be Spontaneous

Do your own cleanup event using one of the four "U-Clean-It" boxes around the Lake. You will find gloves, trash bags, barrels, nets, directions and a sign-in sheet. The "secret" combination lock code is 1-6-1-6. It is important to sign in and follow the directions for safe cleanup, proper waste disposal and securing the tools for the next volunteers after you are done.

Arrange Cleanups

Sign up your school, club or business for a Lake Cleanup to show their appreciation for the lake. Call director James Robinson (510/238-2290) or email lmi@netwiz.net.

Support Science-based Stewardship

Lake Merritt was declared an "impaired body of water" by the EPA because of trash and low dissolved oxygen levels. LMI has kept the spotlight on this problem since its founding and meets with Oakland's Lake Merritt Water Quality Technical Committee to address the issues. Detailed studies of the lake ecosystem can be found at the LMI website.

Scientists and conservation groups coordinate with LMI for research. Last October, Ray Perman accompanied Dr. Jim Carlton (Smithsonian National Ocean Hero and Oakland High alumnus 1966), Dr. Andrew Chang of the Smithsonian Lab in Tiburon and LMI staff to repeat Carlton's famous 1966 study of marine invasions in the lake.

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4/21/2017	2	1	288 Whitmore St #116	$459,000	$459,000	14	$601,000
4/21/2017	2	2	5863 Chabot Road	$1,250,000	$1,250,000	13	$1,625,000
4/28/2017	3	1.5	5572 Claremont Avenue	$995,000	$995,000	15	$1,120,000

Homes that sold in April closed 31% over the asking price on average.

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Projects' Progress

from page 2

that will light when pedestrians or bicyclists are in the crosswalk. This change was developed in response to confusion about the red arrow.

■ Grinding out the first right turn arrow on eastbound Broadway just before the break in the cycle track median and installing a sign limiting motor vehicle access through the break to homes adjacent to the cycle track. Although the arrow was meant to direct motorists onto Brookside, some have misunderstood and have driven in the pass-through and onto the cycle track.

Construction of a separate project on Broadway between Keith Avenue and Broadway Terrace has also begun. The primary goal of this work is to make the roadway safer for all roadway users: pedestrians; cyclists; and motorists. The project will construct bulb-outs and reconstruct existing ADA ramps to meet current standards; add pedestrian refuge medians at key intersections to reduce the distance people crossing Broadway on foot must travel in the roadway; and improve underground infrastructure at specific locations to support signal improvements at the Broadway/Manila/Monroe intersection and the new pedestrian-activated traffic signal at Lawton, also part of this project.

When these improvements are complete, the project will resurface the roadway; reduce the number of traffic lanes from four to three (one in each direction with a two-way center turn lane); install high-visibility crosswalks; add bicycle lanes on both sides of the street; and install the pedestrian-activated signal at Lawton.

Construction of this project began in November 2016 with the bulb-outs, underground infrastructure improvements and related concrete work. The contractor is targeting mid-June to pave, which needs to happen before the new signals can be turned on and the new striping installed. This schedule is dependent on work PG&E must do to prepare for the signals.

For more details on either of these projects, or to be placed on a list to receive periodic updates about either one, contact Oakland's Caldecott projects coordinator, Victoria Eisen: victoria@eisenletunic.com or 510/525-0220.

Kitchen Tour

from page 1

and gives architects, designers, and builders responsible for the kitchens a chance to meet potential new clients.

If you have or can recommend a new or classic kitchen, this is your final opportunity to submit it for consideration for the 2017 Rockridge Kitchen Tour. For more information, contact us at kitchentour@rockridge.org.

Money raised by the 2017 Rockridge Kitchen Tour will fund ongoing projects of the RCPC, such as the Kevin Faughnan Community Grants program, named in honor of the RCPC board member and Kitchen Tour chair who died unexpectedly in March. Proceeds will also support Town Hall presentations that cover many topics of current interest to Rockridge residents, the most recent of which featured a panel discussion considering affordable housing in Rockridge. Finally, events such as Rockridge Out and About and the annual College Avenue Halloween Parade benefit from the Kitchen Tour.

RCPC works diligently to keep on top of issues affecting Rockridge, and the Kitchen Tour helps make that possible.

Coming issues of The Rockridge News will present further Tour information including the announcement of the beginning of ticket sales.

To volunteer with the Kitchen Tour committee leading up to the event, or as a docent on the day of the Tour, contact us at kitchentour@rockridge.org.

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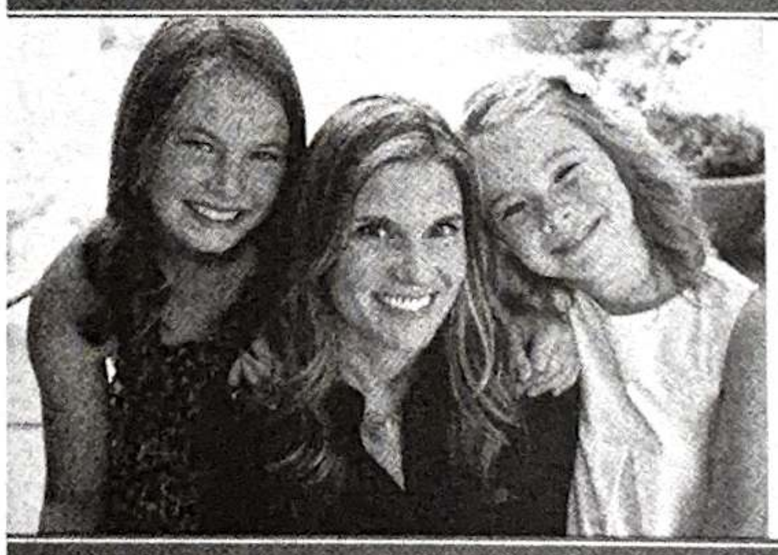
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Community Patrol

from page 2

also been responsible for a few arrests and have been involved in assisting residents deter crimes in progress. A statistical analysis found that the introduction of the patrols decreased robberies and burglaries by 30 percent.

Safer Rockridge continually works with the security patrol service provider (PPS) to improve responsiveness and visibility. PPS has implemented a GPS tracking system on its patrol cars, giving Safer Rockridge insight into coverage gaps and increasing accountability. Just about every street in the patrol area is visited two or three or more times per day by the service. PPS has also added additional decals to its patrol cars and LED beacons at night to make them more visible.

Funding for the Safer Rockridge patrols depends entirely on the generosity of the community. In a typical month, Safer Rockridge's funding draws from over 300 individual donations (with most at the suggested amount of $30/month) and several commercial sponsors. Safer Rockridge accepts both recurring and one-time donations at saferrockridge.org. For info on how to send checks or to provide feedback, please email saferrockridge@gmail.com. For patrol hours, please subscribe to the monthly newsletter at saferrockridge.org/subscribe.

The Upper Rockridge Neighborhood Association (URNA) was formed by volunteers about six months after the formation of Safer Rockridge to cover the area between Broadway and Highway 13 to address similar concerns about increased crime and reduced police resources in that area.

With few commercial businesses in upper Rockridge, outreach is done directly to residents with a membership-based revenue model that has two levels. Residents can choose to get full services, or simply contribute to support more patrol hours even if they have alarm/patrol services already (many do).

URNA's goals — and those of four other neighborhood associations in the Oakland hills — mirror those of Safer Rockridge, and they have collaborated at group meetings with OPD and city council members to try to get the best information and safety enhancements to residents, as well as applying political pressure to the city to raise resource allocations to their former, higher, levels. URNA runs patrols with shifting hours, provides security assessments of homes, offers a vacation watch, and supports several cameras with video storage at a key location in the area with plans for more.

For information about the URNA patrols, safety tips, services description, (free) newsletters, and subscription details, visit URNA-oak.org or email info@urna-oak.org.

Unforced Error

Late in production of the April issue of The Rockridge News, a careless edit in the story on Oakland's new police chief erased the name of Carolina Juárez and seemed to attribute her remarks (which were quoted) to Karen Ivy. The Rockridge News regrets this error.

The Rockridge News

Harwood/Ross Route Available

Many of you read the news in last month's Rockridge News about the sudden death of Kevin Faughnan. Kevin was an incredible volunteer. Not only was he an active member of the RCPC board but he also delivered The Rockridge News to two routes. We found a volunteer for one of those routes, but there is one more we hope to fill by one of his neighbors:

Route 04D	6200 block of Harwood and 5900/6000/6200 blocks of Ross.

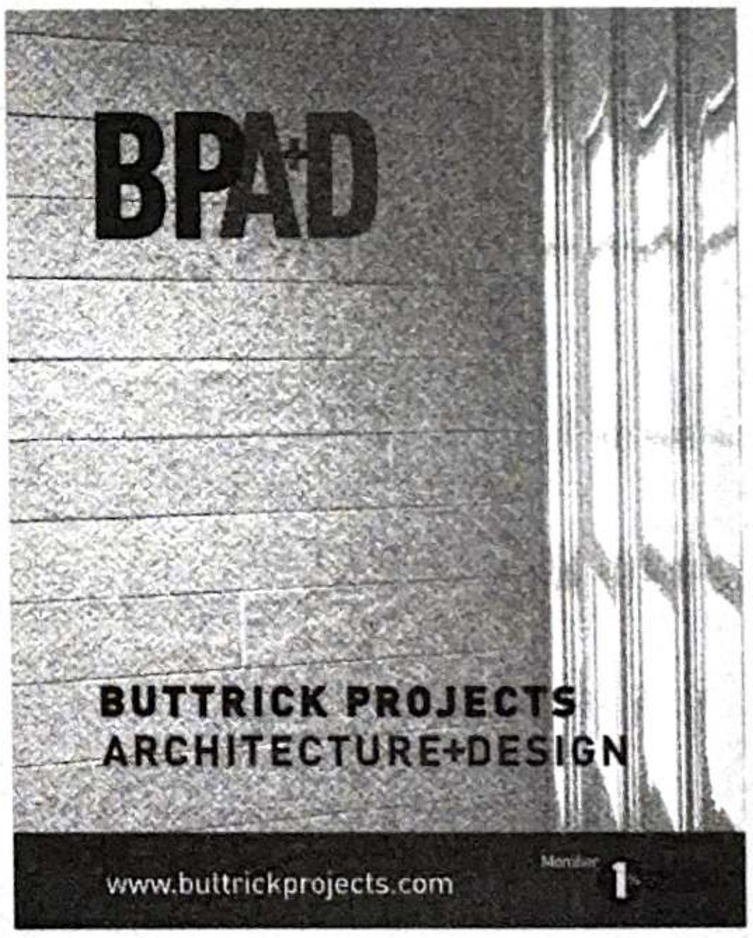
The newsletter is published the first weekend of each month except August. Call 510/547-3855 or email Susan at smontauk@gmail.com to volunteer.

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May 11: Bike to Work Day (+ More)

May is National Bike Month, as declared by the League of American Bicyclists. Locally, WOBO (Walk Oakland Bike Oakland) is sponsoring a wide selection of events throughout the month, including Bike to Work Day on May 11.

Among the many events are:

- Sunday, May 7th: Grizzly Peak Century Ride
- Thursday, May 11th: Bike To Work Day
- Friday, May 12: Bike decorating at the Oakland Museum of California during Friday Off the Grid
- Saturday, May 13: Ride to Cleophus Quealy Beer Co (10 miles flat terrain) in San Leandro for small scale craft brew
- Sunday, May 14: Cyclofemme Ride for Mother's Day
- Sunday, May 21: Group ride with the Oakland Museum of California and learn about the Punk History of the East Bay
- Thursday, May 25, WOBO-Bike East Bay Women Bike Happy Hour (location tbd)

Visit WOBO's web site for more information: https://wobo.org/bike-to-work-day/

Put your mettle to the pedal.

RN classifieds

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Your 36-word message is $22. (Phone number counts as one word.) Mail to: **RN Classifieds**, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. *June issue deadline is May 18. June issue distribution begins June 3.*

For information: smontauk@gmail.com

Mother's Day Special! Penelope's Aesthetics

Professional Skin Care Salon: offering a full deluxe stress reduction facial with massage and eyebrow wax for $59. Gift certificates available. Located 2 blocks from College Ave. Call today for an appointment. www.penelopecalef.com 510/594-1552.

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Email 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

District 1 Councilman Dan Kalb

Drop-in Community Office Hours: Temescal Farmers' Market, 5300 Claremont Ave. (off Teleg.) at DMV parking lot. 3rd Sunday each month,10:30am-12:30pm. Times/locations of other office hrs or more info: mmharris@oakland.net or www.dankalb.net/contactdan.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597–5017

Technology for all ages:

- **One–on–one computer tutoring.** Sat, 10:30am –12:30pm. Help with basic skills. Sign up during the week or drop–in.
- **eBook Help:** Tuesdays, **by appointment**, 6–7:30pm. Help downloading eBooks. Make appt. at www.oaklandlibrary.org or in person at any library.

FOR CHILDREN

- **Family Story Time:** Stories/songs/rhymes (for all ages); Saturdays, 10:30am.
- **Toddler Story Time:** Songs, active rhymes and stories (for 9 months to 2 years), Thursdays, 10:30am, upstairs.
- **Pre–School Story Time:** Read–alouds, songs, and rhymes (ages 2 to 5); Thursdays, 10:30am.

All story times followed by Play Time; parents and caregivers invited.

Special Events

- **Kamishibai:** Tuesdays, 7pm. Celebrate Asian & Pacific Islanders Heritage Month AND Bicycle Month with Kamishibai stories – every Tuesday night in May (5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23). All ages welcome. **Japanese treats served.**
- **Bicycle Story Time & Craft:** Saturday, 5/20, 10:30am – 12:30pm. Ride your bike to story time; hear stories about adventurous bicyclists and make handlebar streamers.
- **TWIG, Rockridge (Tween Interests Group):** call Erica (597-5017) for details.

FOR TEENS

Free Comic Books Day: May 6. Come early; supplies limited.

- **DIY Anime Keychain:** Make anime character keychain with shrink–dinks or cardboard. 5/10, 2 pm.
- **Teen Advisory Board (ages 14–18):** Help advise the library how to better serve teens; **get community service credit for school.** 2nd Sat. each month, 1 to 2pm.
- **Teen 'Scape Program:** Play video & board games; make crafts; **enjoy meals.** Tues, Thurs, and Fridays: 3:30 – 5pm and Wednesdays: 1:30 – 5pm.
- **Homework Club: High School Tutors Available:** A quiet place to do homework. Tues and Thurs, 4-5pm; Wednesdays 3-4:30pm.
- **Yu-Gi-Oh Card Game Club:** Beginners OK. Every Friday, 3:30 – 5pm.

FOR ADULTS

Computer Help (until May 16): Saturdays 10am–12pm and Tuesdays 5:30pm–7:30pm.

- **Lawyers in the Library: Free legal info and referral. 1st Tues each month;** 6pm–8pm. Sign–up for lottery starting 5pm; lottery at 5:45 pm. Call day of program to confirm.
- **Bike for Tibet: Climate Change at the Roof of the World.** Sat, 5/13 11am. **Nâm Arya** discusses the impacts of climate change in Tibet.
- **Rita M. Gardner** reads from her memoir *Coconut Latitudes: Secrets, Storms and Survival in the Caribbean*. Sat, 5/20 11am. Co-sponsored by the Amer. Assoc. of University Women.
- **Writers Support/Critique Group:** Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. (double-spaced, MS margins) of any prose for on–site reading/discussion (or come empty-handed). **Third Sat. each month,** 1 to 5pm; wheelchair–accessible. Sponsor: Calif. Writers Club of Berkeley. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com. Call to confirm.
- **Wine + Watercolors:** Drink wine and learn about watercolor painting. Must be 21. **Small venue;** only the first 25 to sign up will be able to participate. Sat, 5/27, 1:15pm.

Gallery Exhibit

May: Merritt College Portrait Drawings.

June: Oakland Art Association Paintings.

Lobby Display Case

May: Bike Month

June: Pride Month

LIBRARY HOURS

Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed, Thurs & Sat: 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri, 12 to 5:30pm.
Closed: Sun and Mon:
also Tues, 5/30 for Memorial Day.

Diesel Book/Readings and Events

FREE and open to the public.

- Tues, 5/9, 7pm. Publication party for **Edan Lepucki:** *Woman No. 17.*
- Thurs, 5/11, 7pm. **David Weisberg:** *The American Plan.*
- Sat, 11/13, 7pm. **Elena Passarello:** *Animals Strike Curious Poses.* In conversation with **R.O. Kwon.**
- Tues, 5/16, 7pm. **Stephen Mikesell:** *A Tale of Two Bridges: The San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridges of 1936 and 2013.*
- Thurs, 5/18, 7pm. Panel discussion from ***Granta 139: Best of Young American Novelists*** with **Lauren Groff, Esm Weijun Wang,** and **Anthony Marra.**
- Tues, 5/23, 7pm. **Madison Smartt Bell:** *Behind the Moon.*
- Wed, 5/24, 7pm. **China Miévil:** *October: The Story of the Russian Revolution.*
- Thurs, 5/25, 7pm. **Peter Rock:** *Spells.*
- Fri, 5/26, 6pm. **Pajama Party Story Time for Kids.** Come in PJs; bring teddy bear; have milk and cookies. Local author/illustrator **Michael Wertz** reads a bedtime story from *ABC Oakland.*

DIESEL, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave. More info abt the authors, books and other events: 653-9965 or events@dieselbookstore.com.

Peralta in Bloom

Sat, May 13, noon to 4pm. Annual spring festival for the whole community and **fundraiser to support art and other enrichment programs.** Events for all ages, including live music; fresh food and BBQ; arts and crafts projects; climbing wall and bouncy house, petting zoo, cartooning with Lloyd Dangle, and an emceed cakewalk featuring beautiful cakes donated and designed by parents. Other events include expanded carnival games, cool prizes for kids, a basket raffle, and the raffle of a new quilt. Peralta Elementary schoolyard, 460 63rd St. More info: www.peraltaschool.org or 654-7365.

Jazz at the Chimes

Featuring vocalist **Andrea Claburn** with **Matt Clark** (piano), **Peter Barshay** (bass), **Alan Hall** (drums), **Terrence Brewer** (guitar) and **Erik Jekabson** (trumpet & flugelhorn). Sunday, May 21, 2pm. Advance tickets: http://andreaclaburn.brownpapertickets.com/ or at the door (cash only) beginning 12:30pm (doors open 1:30): $15. Refreshments and reception follows. Info at http://www.andreaclaburn.com. Honoring the unique artistry of Bay Area jazz musicians in a landmarked Julia Morgan venue: Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave. **Wheelchair accessible. Free parking.** More info: www.jazzatthechimes.com, chimesjazz@gmail.com or 654-0123.

Wisteria Ways House Concert

Claudia Schmidt: Singer, songwriter & entertainer of multiple genres. Sample podcast at http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/claudia–schmidt-6-23-08/id81555339?i=79487889. Fri, May 12, 8pm. House opens 7:30 (inside venue, not wheelchair accessible). $15-20 donation for musicians (cash only at the door). 383 61st Street. Reservations: info@WisteriaWays.org or 655-2771.

North Oakland Senior Center

Mon. – Fri., 9am to 4:30pm. 5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way: 597-5085

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

- **COMMUNITY FLEA MARKET: Annual Spring Fundraiser.** Saturday, June 3rd. 9am to 4pm. **Purchase vendor space now.** NOSC members: $12. Non–members: $18. **Cash only.**

Seniors age 55+ join for $12 annual dues to get discount and other benefits. Receive "The North Oakland Senior Times" for full schedule of classes/events, lunch menus, and volunteer opportunities. Info: 597-5085.

Temescal Farmers' Market

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

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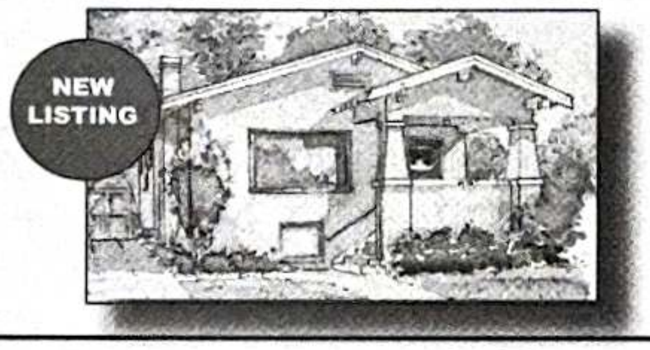
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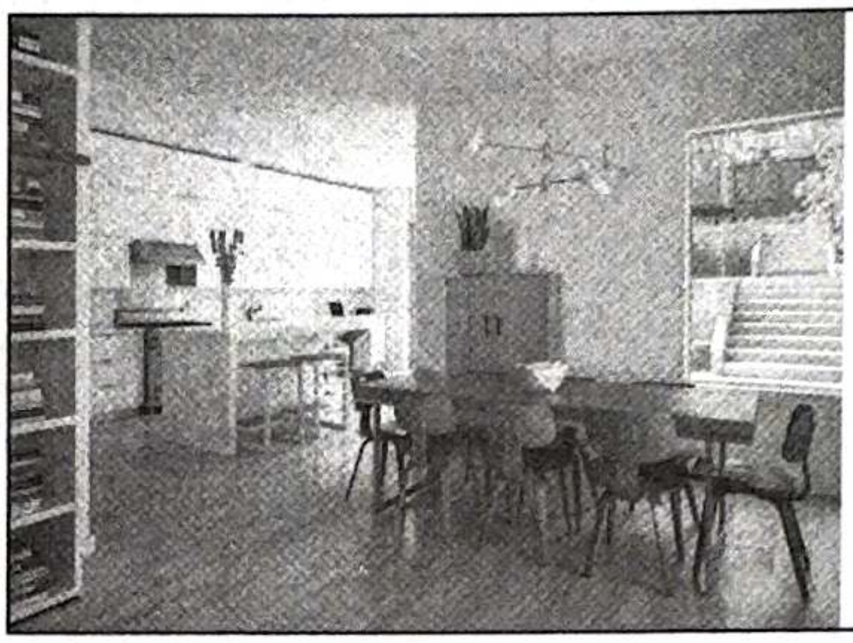
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