THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

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Voting on the GoBike relocation.

AGENDA: RCPC Town Hall Meeting
March 15, 7:30 – 9 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library Upstairs Meeting Room

Ford GoBike Redux and More. At the close of January's Town Hall meeting, City representatives promised to revisit the decision to locate a Ford GoBike bikeshare station in front of the Oakland Firestorm Memorial tile mural at the Rockridge BART station. On February 22, the City, true to its word, held a walk-through of three alternative sites for the bikeshare station. The City collected public responses and comments, both at the tour and through a Google online poll. (Photo, left.)

At the March Town Hall meeting, City, BART and Motivate (the bikeshare provider) representatives will present the results of the walk-through and polling, and their tentative decision on a final site for the bikeshare station. If you're interested in this topic, you will want to be there.

In addition, staff from the Oakland Transportation Department (OakDOT) will also discuss and hear feedback on other topics of interest to Rockridge residents, including **planned changes in enforcement of Residential Permit Parking** and more general issues around the City's bikeshare program, as well as other steps the City is taking to improve Oakland's streets for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

GoBike Rider Warns: 'Check Your Bike for Damage'

Rockridge resident Wendy Wheeler recently posted this report on Nextdoor: This morning I jumped on the Ford GoBike

Check Your Bike, page 8

RCPC Board Election Set for April Town Hall

RCPC will hold elections for new Board members at its **April town hall and RCPC annual meeting.** At that time, candidates will address the audience about their interest in being elected to the Board and will take questions. The April Rockridge News will contain candidate statements and photos in advance of the meeting.

Incumbents running are:

Leonora Sea, M.C. Haug, Courtney Welch [appointed].

New Candidates: Sally Smyth; Ashley Cruz

One elected seat and the appointed merchant seat remain vacant.

Thus, five candidates are running for six elected seats. After the election, up to three seats will be filled by Board appointment, including two seats normally filled by candidates standing for election, together with the always-appointed "merchant" seat.

April Town Hall: Elections, page 16

Why I Joined the RCPC Board
– Eduardo Gutentag –

I have been living in Rockridge since the early 1980s, initially in a rental for a couple of years on Boyd Avenue, then for a short while in San Francisco, and then uninterruptedly in Rockridge since 1986, first in a rental on Claremont Avenue and then, since 1991, in the house we own on Hudson Street, with my wife and daughter.

Although I'm a formally almost-trained linguist, having first studied abroad and then through an aborted (because the 70s) PhD at UC Berkeley, like many others I joined the IT industry in the mid-80s and worked in it until 2012 (principally at Sun Microsystems from 1988 to 2010, then Oracle for a couple of years) and have been consulting since then (most notably Adobe in 2015-2016). My areas of specialization are standardization, policy setting, organizational processes, and corporate intellectual property rights in the context of the IT industry. I have participated in many standards organizations' boards, as an elected member, as chair and president, and even as a special advisor (notably the UN/CEFACT Bureau).

And now, not having to deal anymore with the insane hours and impossible schedules of the IT industry, and having mulled over the RCPC Board's call for participation, I decided it was time to become more involved in the doings of the neighborhood and to contribute to it to the best of my ability by bringing in my extensive experience in board activities and practices, as well as my interest in communications and neighborhood betterment.

Having spent so many hours, days, sometimes weeks, with so many people that I would have otherwise never encountered, let alone be friendly with, I have learned some pretty good lessons as to what's best when participating at meetings, how and what to contribute, how to work for the common good, how to be patient, and how to be effective. I hope to be of value to RCPC and its Board.

Resident New to Rockridge Finds Local Weather a 'Magic Trick of Mother Nature'

by Ben Friedman

When I moved to Rockridge on October 1 of last year, the unoccupied triangle of land on the southern end of the College and Claremont six-way intersection appeared dead. Its state of abandonment was strikingly incongruous with the rest of the bustling neighborhood.

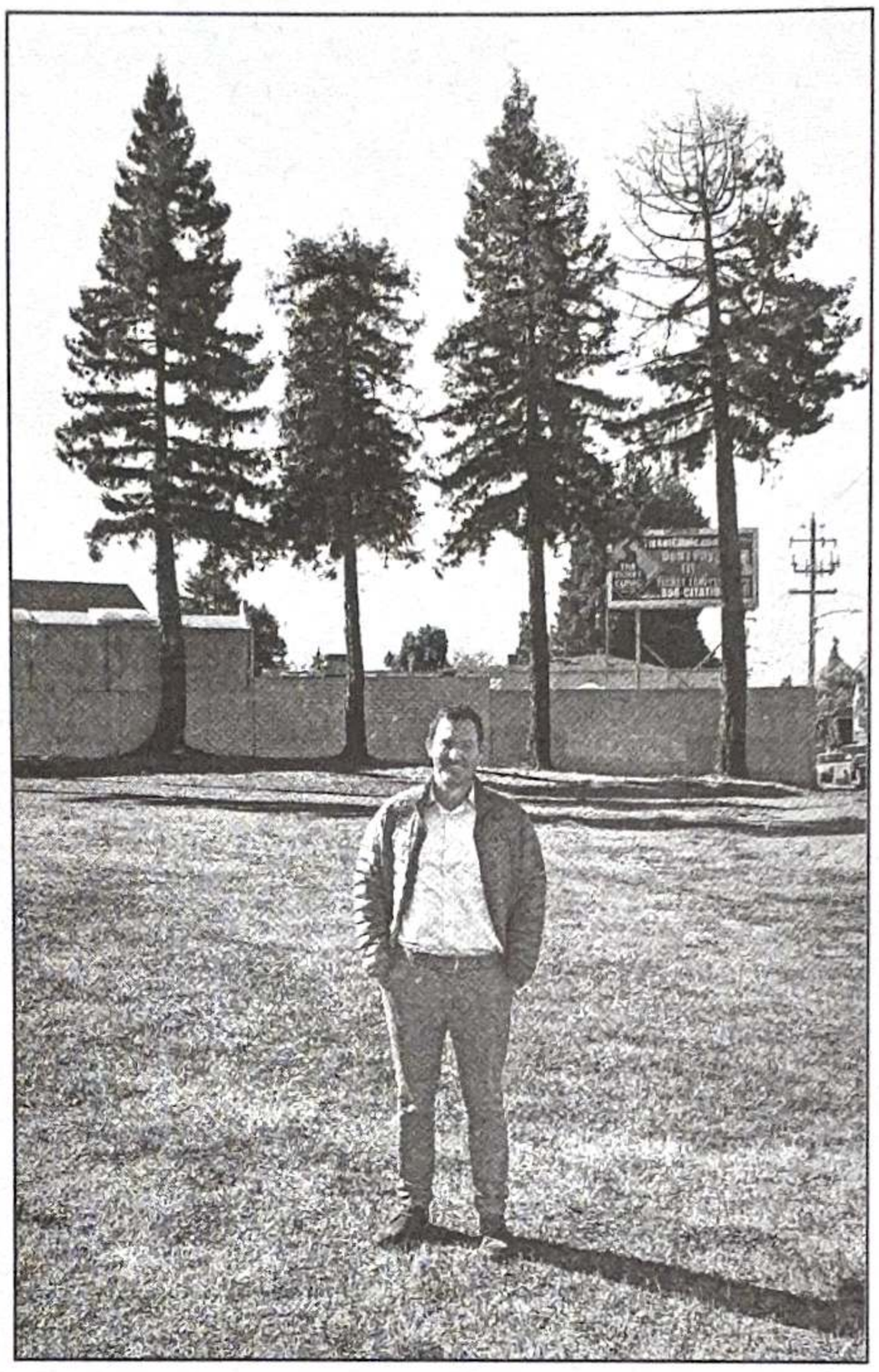
Yes, the stately redwood trees along its southern edge stood tall and healthy, but the grass in the lot was sunbaked straw – fried by the heat of summer and early fall, including the astonishing record-breaking 100-plus degree heat of Friday, September 1. October, of course, was dry too, setting the stage for the tragic Northern California fires.

November was different. The Oakland airport recorded three inches of rain during the month, and I remember rejoicing at the first of our blustery nights. Rain in California is a magical thing; the air becomes full of earthy fragrance, as if water is literally injecting life into the exhaling soils.

Seemingly overnight, the Claremont-College intersection triangle changed. Fresh grasses appeared and painted the little landscape a lively green. Our wet spell in mid-January provided more rain, and the grasses grew lusher. The weather station my fiancée's family gave me over the holidays tells me Rockridge got more than four and a half inches of rain in January. It was still green out there in mid-February, despite the recent bone-dry weather.

This is how I've been schooled to California's wet and dry seasons. I grew up

➧ Nature's Magic, page 14



Rockridge newcomer Ben Friedman would like to see the neglected greensward at College and Claremont avenues become available for public use. /D. Kinkead

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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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Jo Ellis.....Asst. Editor
Judith Doner Berne.....Eyes on Rockridge
Jo Ellis.....Advertising & Community Calendar
Susan Montauk.....Business Manager
Don Kinkead.....Graphics & Layout

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To subscribe to **The Rockridge News**, send your check for $20, payable to *Rockridge News* Subscriptions, to: *Rockridge News* Subscriptions at the address below.

Contacting The Rockridge News

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

Contact us at one of the following:

Editor: editor@rockridge.org;
www.rockridge.org;
The Rockridge News,
4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611

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 April issue is:
☛ April 7, 2018.
☛ Submission deadline: March 22.

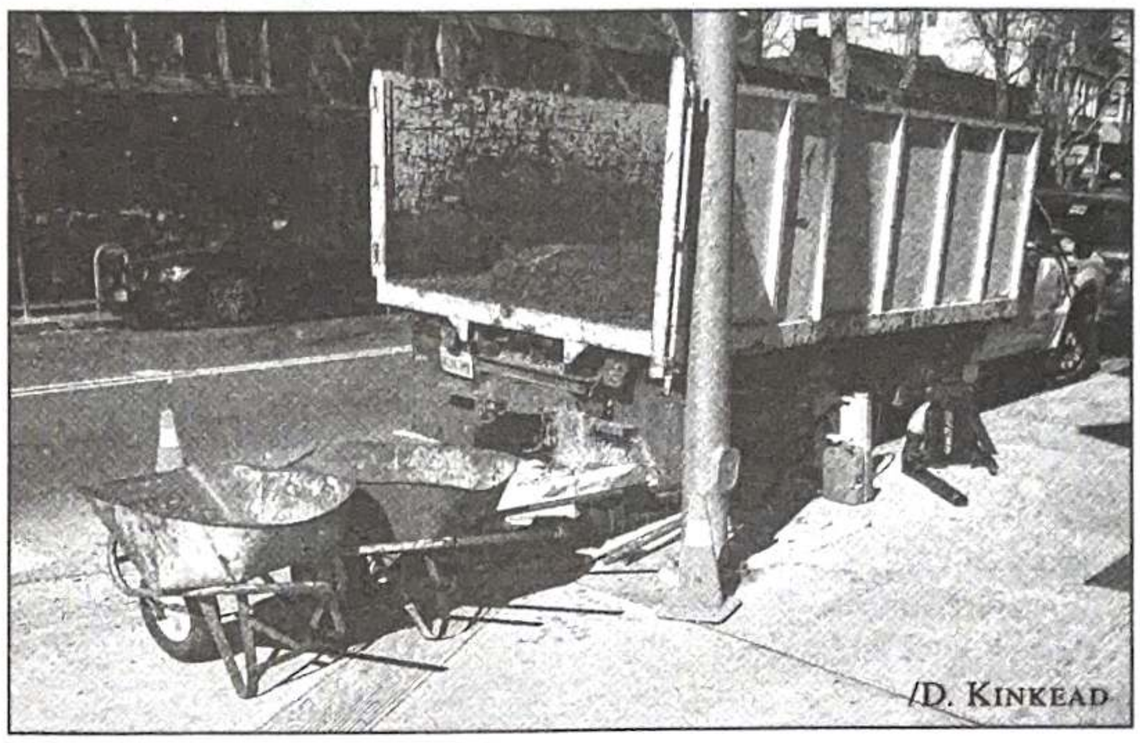
Advertising rates are $26/column inch. 3 month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at 653-3210 (after noon), or email joellis1@hotmail.com. RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad that it deems inappropriate. (Classified ad contact, page 14.)

RCPC Land Use Committee

Editor's note: The February 28 Land Use Committee meeting was scheduled to be held on a date subsequent to the publicaton of the March issue of The Rockridge News. That meeting will be reported in the April issue of the newsletter, due to be ready for distribution on April 7.

An Early Spring? College Avenue Safeway Begins Exterior Landscaping

A looming white truck with loose soil in the back and wheelbarrows and motorized blowers nearby and at the ready in front of the College Avenue Safeway drew the interested attention late in February of shoppers and passers-by. Could it be that the long-neglected and parched planting areas facing the sidewalk were soon to realize their destiny? Two gardeners returning from lunch confirmed the the answer: they were cleaning up the flower beds and landscaping the area. Asked why the beds might have been left fallow for so long, the gardeners had no information. For a long time, Rockridge residents and the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) had no answer from Safeway, either. Perhaps the concerns and complaints finally paid off. Or, perhaps a new manager had something to do with it. Either way, call it progress. *—Don Kinkead*



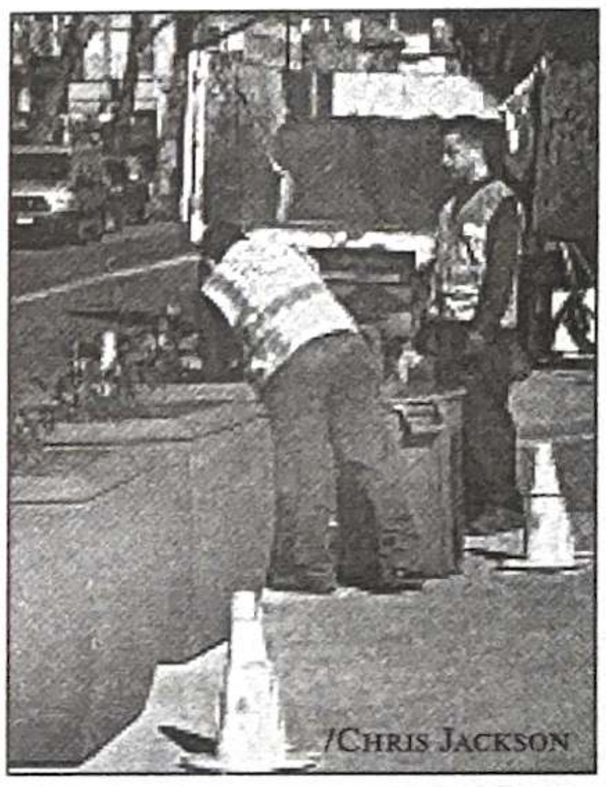
/D. Kinkead



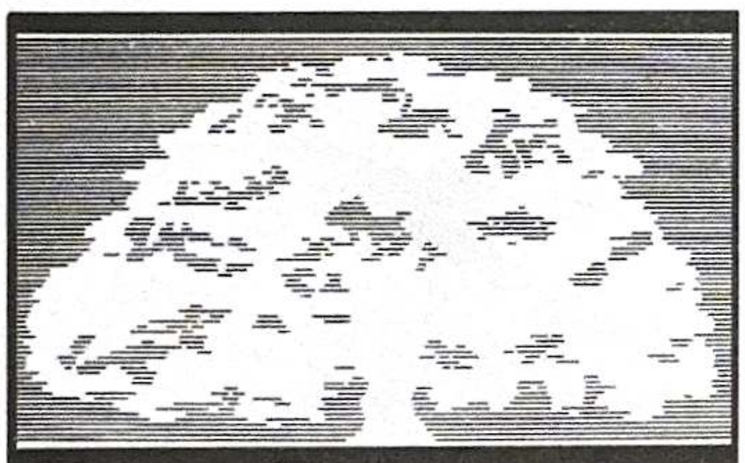
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/Chris Jackson



TREE SCULPTURE

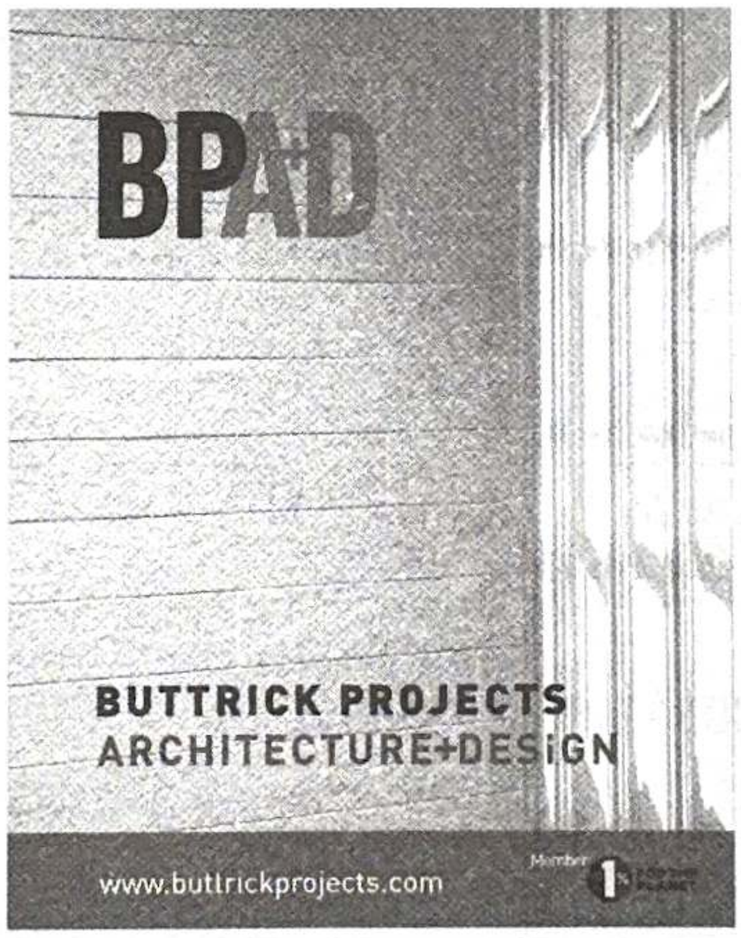
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Rockridge Community Planning Council 2017 Financial Statement Fiscal Year January 1 - Dec 31

RCPC General Fund	
Income	
Contributions	1637
Rockridge News	41606
Interest Income	25
Kitchen Tour	24444
Merchandise Sales	83
Total Income	67795
Expenses	
Rockridge News	36719
Contractors	4939
Insurance, Permits, Sales Tax	1777
Misc Administrative & Program Expenses	1987
Events	505
Total Expenses	45927
Net Receipts (RCPC)	21868
Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt (FROG)	
Income	
Contributions	6182
Interest, FROG	18
Total Income	6200
Expenses	
Playground New Construction & Planning	17982
Miscellaneous Expenses	835
Total Expenses	18817
Net Receipts (FROG)	-12617
Scenic Streets	
Income	
Contributions	1015
Earned Income	8
Total Income	1023
Expenses	
Misc Administrative Expenses	778
Total Expenses	778
Net Receipts (Scenic Streets)	245

Locksley Gardens No activity in 2016

BALANCE SHEET	
Assets	
RCPC Assets, Savings/Checking	102404
Locksley Gardens Assets, Checking	749
FROG Savings/Checking	78544
Total Assets (1)	**181697**
Equity & Liability	
KF Community Improvements Prgm	5640
Legal Fund Reserve	55000
Equity	111561
Net Income	9496
	181697
Total Equity & Liability	**181697**

(1) Excludes $100,000 of Fourth Bore Coalition settlement funds towards FROG's playground improvements



Scenic Streets of Oakland

Hands-On Community Improvement Offers Immediate Reward

If you want to get involved in community service and beautification you're in luck. Rockridge volunteer organization **Scenic Streets of Oakland** needs additional volunteers to maintain sidewalk plantings as well as the foliage on the Claremont Avenue/Hwy 24 on- and off-ramps. Current volunteers all report that a genuine sense of satisfaction is gained from the community improvement accomplished through their efforts with Scenic Streets of Oakland. It's also a great way to get to know your neighbors through teamwork and actual face-to-face contact.

If that sounds like something you'd be interested in, contact Lee Patterson at lee.scenicstreetsoakland@gmail.com.

Scenic Streets of Oakland is now affiliated with the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation. For more information, see www.oaklandparks.org.

NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL — CITY OF OAKLAND — NCPC — Greater Rockridge

The NCPC has no meeting in March. Our next meeting is Thursday, April 12.

Email the NCPC at chair@rockridgencpc.com if you have items you'd like to add to the NCPC agenda.



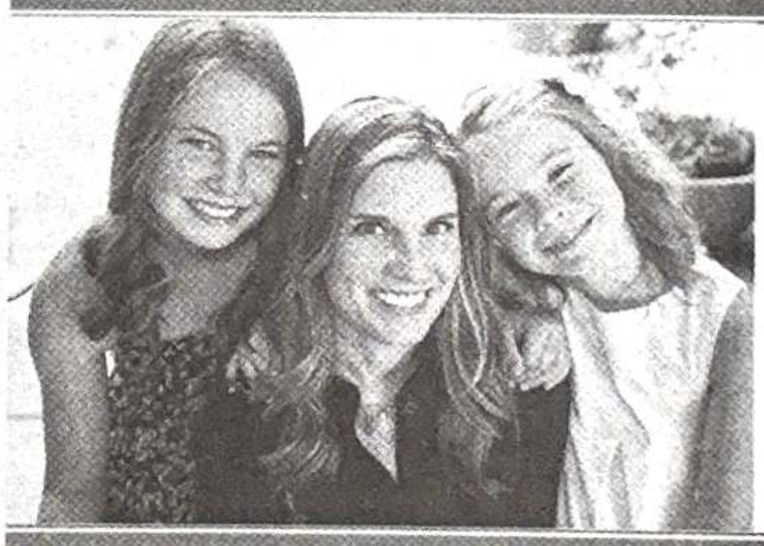
The USPS makes a close-to-final visit as Cole Coffee Beans readies for a two-month closing for retrofitting beginning February 28. /D. Kinkead

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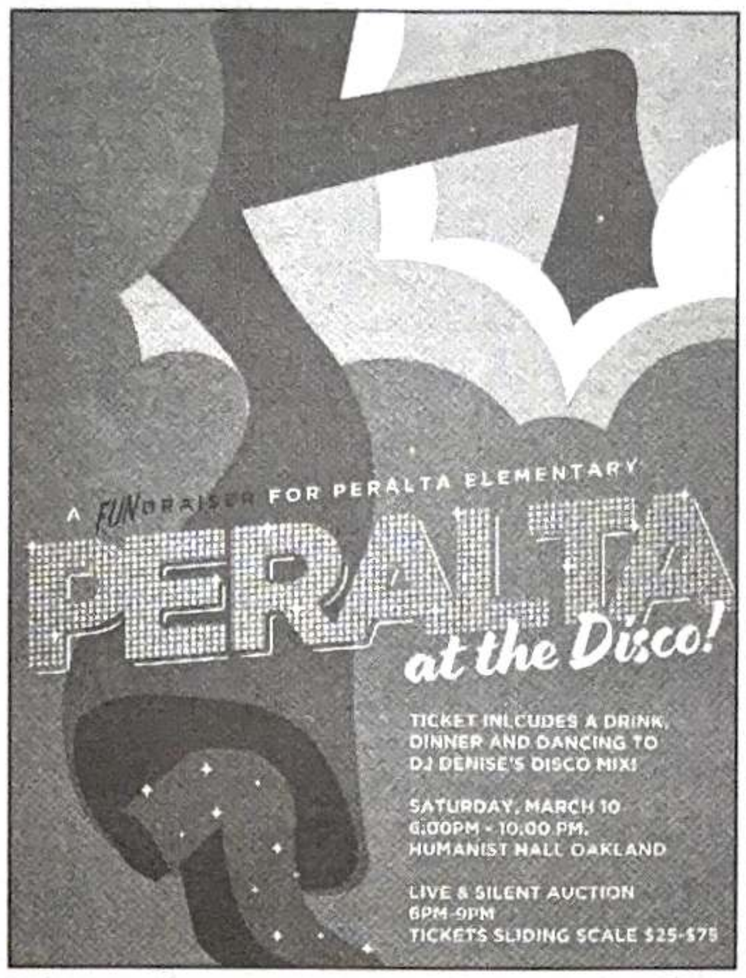
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Peralta School Annual Auction Heralds Fun, Variety, Chance

The 2018 "Peralta at the Disco" auction is on Saturday, March 10, 6-10 p.m., at the Humanist Hall in Oakland, 390 27th Street.

For those new to the Peralta Auction, it is an adults only party featuring a live DJ, delicious food, cocktails, beer and wine, and, of course, a silent and live auction, all under the light of a disco ball. It is your chance to bid on fantastic and one-of-a-kind items, including vacations, meals out, art, and tickets and camps (and that's just a small sample). You get a night out, a chance to mingle, to have fun and to wear your best '70s duds (leisure suit, anyone?), and Peralta gets the cash that helps to keep supporting so many of the things we value about our community: music, art, physical education and teachers' aides).

Tickets can be purchased at https://peralta2018.auction-bid.org/microsite.



You'd like to donate to the auction? Yes, please. We'd love your talents/stuff for the auction. All donations are tax-deductible.

And last, but not least, to make this event a success, we need volunteers to help set up and break down and staff various areas of the auction for the event. We promise you'll still have time to have fun.

To make donations or be a volunteer or if you have any other questions about the event, email auction@peraltaschool.org.

Peralta is a small diverse arts demonstration school within the Oakland Unified School District. We work to create a welcoming environment where every child develops the confidence to succeed. For more information about Peralta School and its programs, visit https://www.peraltaschool.org

Free Community Plant Exchange

Want an instant new garden? Bring your plants and pick up new ones. All types and sizes of healthy plants welcome, small cuttings to full size. No time to repot donations? Bags and newspaper will do.

The Plant Exchange encourages resource sharing, reuse, and recycling. The premier program is a free, one-day event where gardeners, landscapers, urban farmers, educators, and enthusiasts come together to exchange plants, equipment, tools, and information.

The event also features gardening demos, food trucks, a live band, silent auction, and more. Ample free parking.

Saturday, March 31, noon to 4 p.m., 4500 Lincoln Avenue (just down hill from the Mormon Temple). More information at 866-8482 or http://theplantexchange.org.

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Market nuggets
* interest rates have been edging up, but demand still far exceeds supply.
* Tax deductions for property have changed, with little impact on market.
* Parcel tax increases proposed for library and school funding measures
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Eyes on Rockridge

A Community-Minded Rockridge Resident Presides Over Games People Play

by Judith Doner Berne

If your kid or grandkid plays the game Magic: The Gathering, he or she likely has spent time and money at It's Your Move, the game store just over the Rockridge border on Telegraph in Temescal.

Co-owned by Rockridge resident Chris Specker, mom to a sixth-grade girl, and Temescal resident Will Kreber, dad to four sons, the 15-year-old store embodies its motto: "Locally owned, gamer operated."

On a gray Wednesday late afternoon, the brightly-lit, game-lined store is occupied only by Specker, tucked into a sheltered corner behind the counter, and 14-year-old Sam Mossberg, who sits at a long rectangular game table surrounded by piles of Magic cards.

Magic, first published in 1993, was the first trading card game, according to Wikipedia. Each game represents a battle between wizards who employ spells, artifacts and creatures depicted on individual cards to defeat their opponents.

Until Specker and I sit down for an interview, the lone sound is the slap, slap, slap of the Magic cards that Sam is sorting. "He comes after school, sorts cards and in return searches for cards that he wants for his deck," she tells me. "The kids come and play games here. Some help out. They have to have an interest in hanging out."

Their reward is getting to pick the cards they want, she explained, and as they get older and gain experience, "We teach them about the cash register and they can run games for other kids. We're basically volunteer-run and an incubator for these young kids' first jobs."

Indeed, Sam is soon joined by 12-year-old Isiah Goldstein and his brother Julian, 9. Although the two boys live in Rockridge, they had started playing Magic at another game store. "We slowly found our way here because it's closer," Isiah said. "I personally like this community more."

Specker, who is pretty much the face of It's Your Move, is a true gamer herself. "I was playing games here for many years," before she put her money where her interests lay to join Kreber as an owner six years ago. "We do a little of everything," she said. "That's how we survive."

While I was there, for example, two people came in with ready-to-send packages — the store is a UPS pick-up and drop-off site. "We started out taking in mail for the tenants who live on the building's second story," Specker said. "It just kind of evolved."

"One of our big messages," she said, "is to be as much of a community place as we can. We promote local game artists, local art and we have local comedians (Critical Hit Comedy Club) on Saturday night," she said. For the comedy club, they have the ability to quickly fold up the tables to transform the back end of the store into a mini-theater. Other outside groups that use the facilities include an adult Scrabble club and the Oakland Green Party, which holds its monthly meetings there.

"We love this place," said Sylvia Pughsley, the Oakland resident in charge of the venerable Scrabble club. After having to relocate twice, the group has been meeting at It's Your Move every other Saturday for 15 years. "Chris puts up with us," said Terry Veevers, who drives in from San Mateo to join as many as 20 players.

But drop-in, communal game playing — whether Magic, chess, board or role-playing games — is where it's at, with much of the space taken up by the long, white, metal game tables and matching chairs. Each player pays from $2 to $15, depending on what's involved and ability to play, to participate in daytime or evening sessions.

On Friday's Open Game Night, a mix of teens and adults streams into the store, many arranging themselves at the front tables for board and table top games. The rest settle in at the back of the store, geared up for several hours of Magic: The Gathering play.

"I always hostess on Friday nights," Specker said. "It's the night to come with an open mind, to teach or learn a new game." She makes it a point to master them herself, since "There's rarely a Friday night that we don't have at least one or two game designers testing new products."

"Chris does a great job of making this a friendly space and getting people to try new games," said Eric B. Vogel, pointing to the

Games, page 7

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Games

from page 6

shelves devoted to his and other local game designers' inventions. "She also makes it comfortable for women to join us geeky guys," he said, with a smile.

"We have more women playing Magic here, probably, than anywhere in the Bay Area," Specker proudly said. "Half the adults have come here since they were little. And our Magic community is giant with kids as young as eight years old and adults, most of whom stay until midnight."

"The community is very supportive of us. Most of our games are donated." In return, Specker and Kreber do what they can to support Oakland schools, which their own children as well as many of their young players attend.

At Claremont Middle School's winter fundraising auction, a number of parents successfully bid to have their children attend a Magic: The Gathering party, sponsored by two families.

"Chris not only provided the cards at cost, she also arranged to have two experts of the game run the event for free," said Laura Mytels, who co-hosted the party at her Rockridge home. "It was a super successful event and the helpers that Chris recruited volunteered for over five hours. The kids had a great time."

In 2014, the Oakland City Council recognized It's Your Move during National Small Business Week. The council's resolution read, in part: "The owners, Chris Specker and William Kreber, take extra measures to provide a friendly space for low-income families, under-socialized youth and the LGBT community. Both believe that providing service to the community should come before profit and we are pleased that no one is turned away, thanks to their sliding scale policy."

"The object is to have fun," Specker emphasizes. That's what playing games is all about. This is what we love."

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



/Judith Berne

Chris Specker, center, joins in the fun as Isiah and Julian Goldstein and Sam Mossberg (left to right) sort Magic cards at It's Your Move game store in Temescal.

Claremont Middle School Science Night and Pi Day Extravaganza

Includes pizza pie dinner, and dessert pies, too!

Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math! Oh my!

Come see Claremont Middle School's amazing science program in action at the annual STEAM Night and Pi Day Extravaganza.

Wednesday, March 14, 5 -7:30 p.m.

5 p.m.: Pizza dinner sponsored by the PTA
5:30 p.m.: Pi contest for Claremont students
6-7 p.m.: Hands-on science activities in the classrooms and throughout the school
7 p.m.: Dessert pies

Where? Claremont Middle School, 5750 College Avenue, Oakland

This is a fun, free event for families. Great for 5th graders who will be attending Claremont next year. And, 4th grade families who are considering Claremont can come see all the exciting science that is happening there.



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2/15/2018	1	1	6384 Dana St	$550,000	$550,000	12	$651,000
2/28/2018	2	1	5516 Vicente Way	$799,000	$799,000	13	$1,300,000

Homes sold in February closed 55% over the asking price on average.

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Reminder: Chabot School Spring Auction and Gala



One of Chabot Elementary's primary fundraisers, the Spring Auction and Gala, is being held this month in a school-wide effort to help Chabot raise $175,000 of the $400,000 needed annually to support vital programs not paid for by the school district.

Fundraising proceeds pay for Chabot students to have access to art, library, music, science, Spanish, and media/technology courses, as well as intervention programs that focus on closing the achievement gap. Because state and local budgets continue to restrict funding for the school's nearly 600 K-5 students, reaching the annual fundraising goal is critical to supporting the continuity of these programs and maintaining an excellent and vibrant neighborhood school.

The Online Auction

Anyone in the community can support this neighborhood school by bidding in the online auction, making a monetary or business donation, or volunteering at the March 17 event. Check out the Chabot auction website at http://www.chabotelementary.org/pta/auction or email us at auction@chabotelementry.org.

The online auction runs from March 7 through March 14 and features more than 400 items, including jewelry, gift certificates from local merchants and restaurants, tickets to sporting events, and lots of great activities for the family. Again, everyone is welcome to participate and bid on the many items available. The more bidders, the better.

The Gala Event

The Gala event will be held the evening of March 17 at the Greek Orthodox Ascension Community Center, 4700 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland. The Gala will include a photo booth, generously donated by Tomfoolery, and dancing with DJ services provided by Chabot parents. Dress is black tie optional. The facility is wheelchair-accessible, and handicapped-accessible parking is available. **Note: Tuesday, March 6, is the LAST DAY to buy gala tickets.**

Chabot is grateful to our sponsors, who demonstrated their commitment with generous financial donations: Adventure Time (Title Sponsor); Think Tank Research; Stea Realty Group; Hope Broderick of The Grubb Co.; MPR Financial; Maxi Lilley Red Oak Realty; Fremont Bank; Camp Galileo; Bakesale Betty; Piedmont Dental; Amato Architecture; Zoe Caldwell, L.Ac.; 1st United Credit Union; and Abio Properties.

Check Your Bike

from page 1

on Shafter. I went towards the intersection and a car ran through the stop sign. I grabbed the right brake and... nothing. Almost got hit. When I got off the bike, I found the brakes were damaged. I went back to the docking station to find all the bikes had damaged brakes and flat back tires.

"I know many do not like the bike station on Shafter, but please watch out for vandalism because someone could get killed."

Jean Walsh, Ford GoBike Director of External Relations, reports vandalism has diminished at the Shafter/Cavour kiosk. Also, a field team member visits the station every morning to ensure bike safety, she said.

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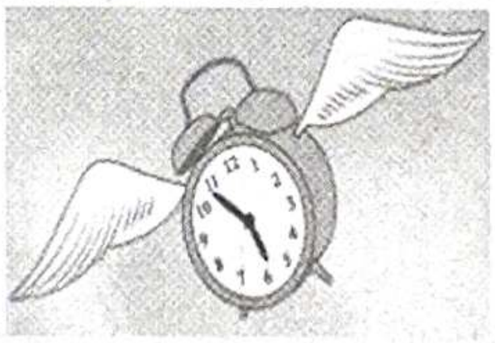
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Q&A With Hardy Dog Park

by Linda Zunas

You've seen lots of articles about the Hardy Dog Park here, but may want to know more about us. Here are some answers:

Q: Where is the Hardy Dog Park?

A: We are on the corner of Hudson and Claremont, under Highway 24 and adjacent to FROG park.

Q: What is the Hardy Dog Park?

A: It was Oakland's first public dog park, created in the mid-1990s on Caltrans property that was unused after Loma Prieta Earthquake repairs were complete.

Q: Who can use the park?

A: Everyone is welcome. We do have a few rules from the City that have to be followed: No more than three dogs per person; no aggressive dogs; dogs must be vaccinated and at least 4 months old; no dogs in heat. Please pick up after your dog.

Q: Who runs the park?

A: While the City of Oakland is the leaseholder and maintains the trash cans, all other maintenance, upkeep, and upgrades are handled by volunteers. The volunteers are the Hardy Dog Park Group; our mission is to improve the park and make it more accessible and safer for everyone.

Q: What have you done to improve the park?

A: The group was formed in Fall 2016. Since then we have added bag dispensers, two extra trash cans, leash racks, a water station, and sturdy seating. We run the monthly cleanups, and have re-graded the low spots of the park to eliminate winter flooding. We are working on plans to upgrade the footing and add a section for small dogs to the park.

Q: What are you doing next for the park?

A: We will be fundraising this summer for our upgrade plans, so keep an eye out for more updates.

Q: I'm not a dog-owner but want to support you. What can I do?

A: We have newspaper bag donation bins at both entrances, as we always need clean bags to pick up poop. You can also tell your friends with dogs about our little park.

Q: How can I help?

A: We clean up and fix our park from 9-10:30 a.m. the first Saturday of every month. Please join us. When you are at the park, please pick up poop and trash, and encourage your fellow park users to do the same. Spread the word and encourage friends to come to the park.

Q: How can I learn more?

A: Check out our website: www.HardyDogPark.org, or email HardyDogPark@yahoo.com

See you and your dog at the park!





CollegePrep

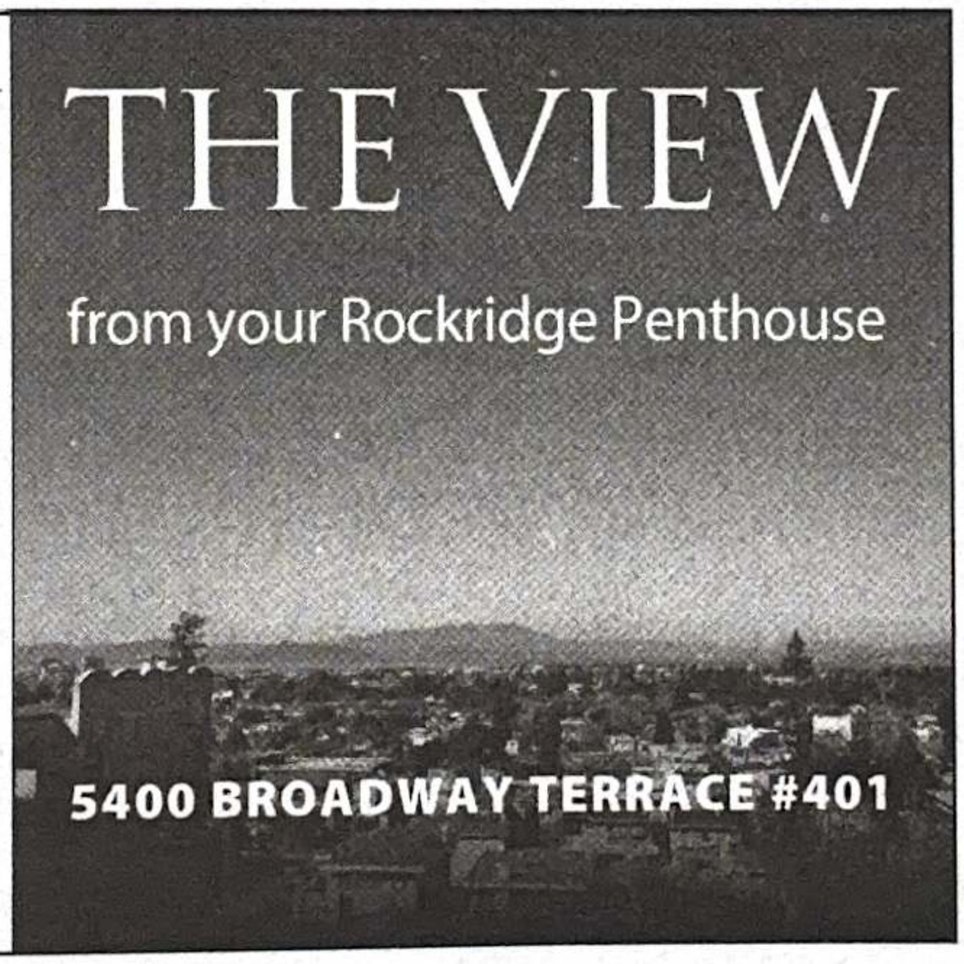
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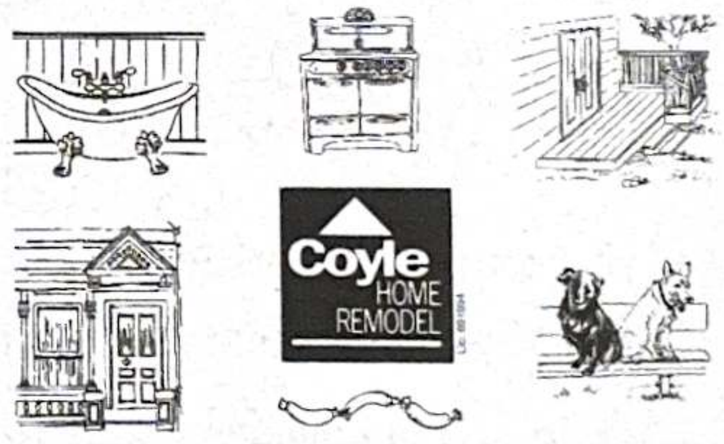


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Letters to the Editor

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. *Unsigned or anonymous letters will not be published.* 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.

Bike Station by Firestorm Mural Wall Makes Sense

Editor:

I think the placement of the bike station at BART makes perfect sense. I walk under those tracks every day; I don't see people spending time there in contemplation. In fact, before the bikes, almost no one stopped at all – it's so loud and dirty under there it's more like everyone is trying to get through a tunnel as quickly as possible. The area was just a big, flat, dark slab of pavement.

If the memorial had been covered to put in the bikes, I could understand the concern, but it was not.

The bikes make the area more vibrant and appealing, more green and eco-friendly, so the whole area under the BART track now seems more attractive and full of promise.

I suggest the bike station folks offer to put in another bench and add some lighting for the mural at night – then expand the bike stations to every BART station.

On the other hand, I think the bike station at Shafter and Cavour should be removed immediately. That was a nasty thing to do – especially with the advertising board. I feel so sorry for the neighbors there.

— Red Lustig

Letters, page 13

Article in Feb issue – "New Bill... Would Transform Rockridge and the East Bay" deserves comment

Editor:

The facts are that we need a significant amount of new housing in the Bay Area and in many other areas of California. Change in how we zone our cities is necessary and will happen. We need to work with policymakers to ensure that the need for denser housing is met while balancing the need of our communities to be desirable places to live. The article painted a picture of impending doom instead of a picture of impending change that is both beneficial and deserving of serious consideration. As policy, it will change with constructive feedback from local communities. We need to do our part to present constructive, forward-looking feedback to help us transition into a more dense yet highly livable community.

— Gary Barg

RCPC Land Use Chair Replies: RCPC Housing Study Undery Considers Housing Shortage

Mr. Barg is correct that change is likely to occur in Rockridge, as well as the rest of Oakland and indeed much of California.

There is almost universal acknowledgment that California is facing a long-brewing housing shortage due to the disparity between how much is being built and how many people continue to move to the state. That's the main reason RCPC has undertaken its housing study. Indeed, Sen. Wiener's and Skinner's bill is similar to what has been proposed as Scenario 1 in the housing study.

SB 827 has certainly gained notoriety. It has been praised in editorials from as far away as Boston and New York. On the other hand, it has been sharply criticized by many, including large coalitions of groups in both the Bay Area and Southern California. And these are not just a bunch of NIMBYs (Not In My Back Yard). Affordable housing advocates object that the bill will be a windfall for builders of market-rate housing, who can easily outbid affordable housing developers for the sites. They point out that lower income residents of affordable housing as much stronger users of transit, would derive the most benefit from living near transit, and they are much less likely to own

Housing Shortage, page 13

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Windows to the Past, Today

by Eric Warren

In the February 2018 issue of The Rockridge News, I saw the photos of the dates stamped in sidewalks around our neighborhood.

Over the years while walking my dog, I have had occasion to look at a lot of these dates recorded in the sidewalk by cement masons. The oldest one I have seen locally is on Lawton Avenue and dated 1907. (I didn't even know that Lawton had been subdivided in 1907!) I thought readers might be interested in a photo of this old sidewalk date, the oldest that I have seen.

I like to look for these old dates because they remind me in a very physical way that there were people walking this neighborhood before me and that others will come after me, so it's best not to get overwrought about the present. I think of these little bits of history that are, literally, under our feet as little windows to the past.

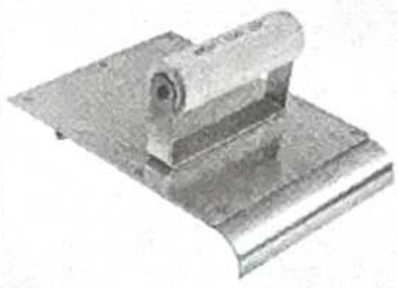
The next oldest date I have seen is [illegible] 1910.

***Ed. Note:** Mr. Warren's cement stamp photo is at right along with two others submitted without comment by another reader.*

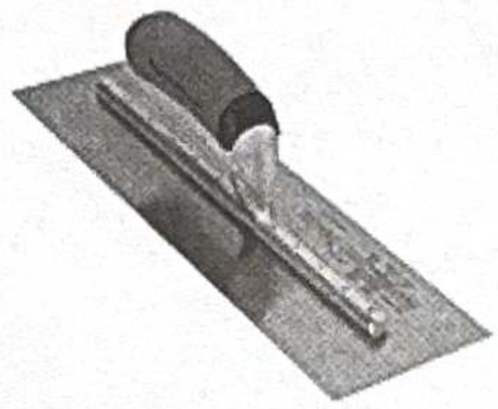
There is much to learn about local and area concrete stamps: https://oaklandsidewalks.wordpress.com



Vicinity of Lawton Avenue | Photo: Eric Warren



Edger/Groover Tool



Finishing Trowel



Vicinity of Lawton | Photo: Chuck Afflerbach



Margarido at Manila | Photo: Chuck Afflerbach



Margin Trowel







Oakland Marathon Seeks Volunteers

by Oakland Marathon Staff

Experience Oakland's diversity and beauty with a race that touches all aspects of Oaktown, and finishes with one hella awesome party.

Over 1,000 volunteers are needed to make the Oakland Running Festival successful. Volunteer opportunities are available at the pre-race Health and Fitness Expo and on race day. All volunteers will receive an event t-shirt.

Description of the volunteer positions:

Pre-Race Volunteer Opportunities
The Health and Fitness Expo
Friday, March 23

- assist with runner distribution of bibs and shirts to runners
- assist with runner registration

Saturday, March 24

- assist with runner distribution of bibs and shirts to runners
- assist with runner registration

Race Day Volunteer Opportunities
Sunday, March 25

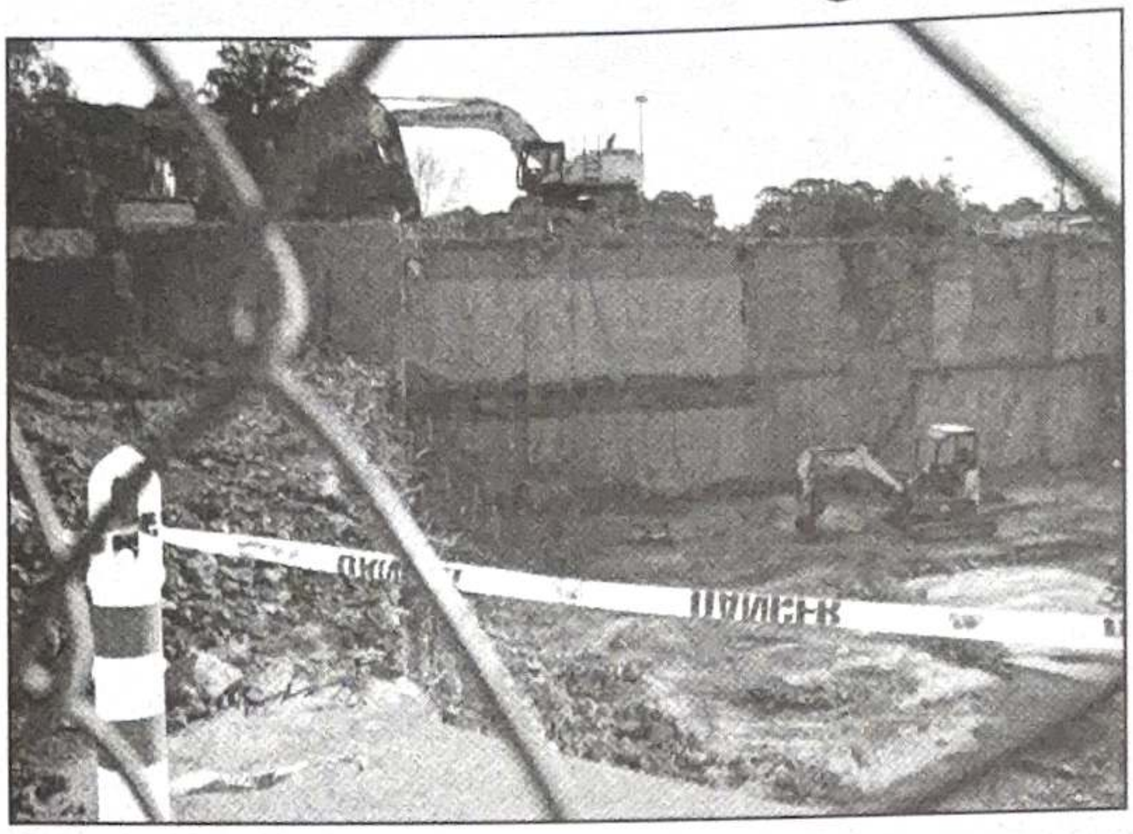
- manage people flow
- provide water
- direct finishers appropriately
- assist in recovery area (food/drink distribution)
- medal presentation

Group Volunteer Opportunities: Contact Colin Tiffey (colin@corriganssports.com) if you have a group interested in volunteering together.

Note: Water Stop volunteer opportunities are assigned to groups who commit to staffing the stop's entire need. If your organization is interested in volunteering as a group at a water stop or in another capacity, please email Colin Tiffey (colin@corriganssports.com).

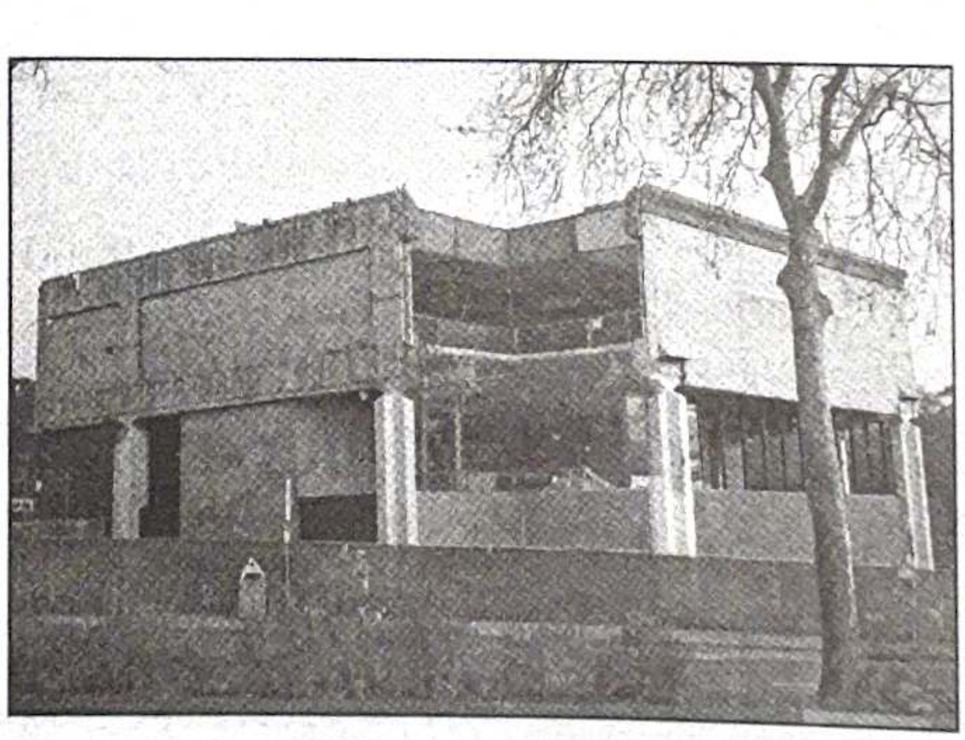
SMASHED TO SMITHEREENS

Old Chase Bank Finally Reduced to Rubble After Hazardous Building Material Removed



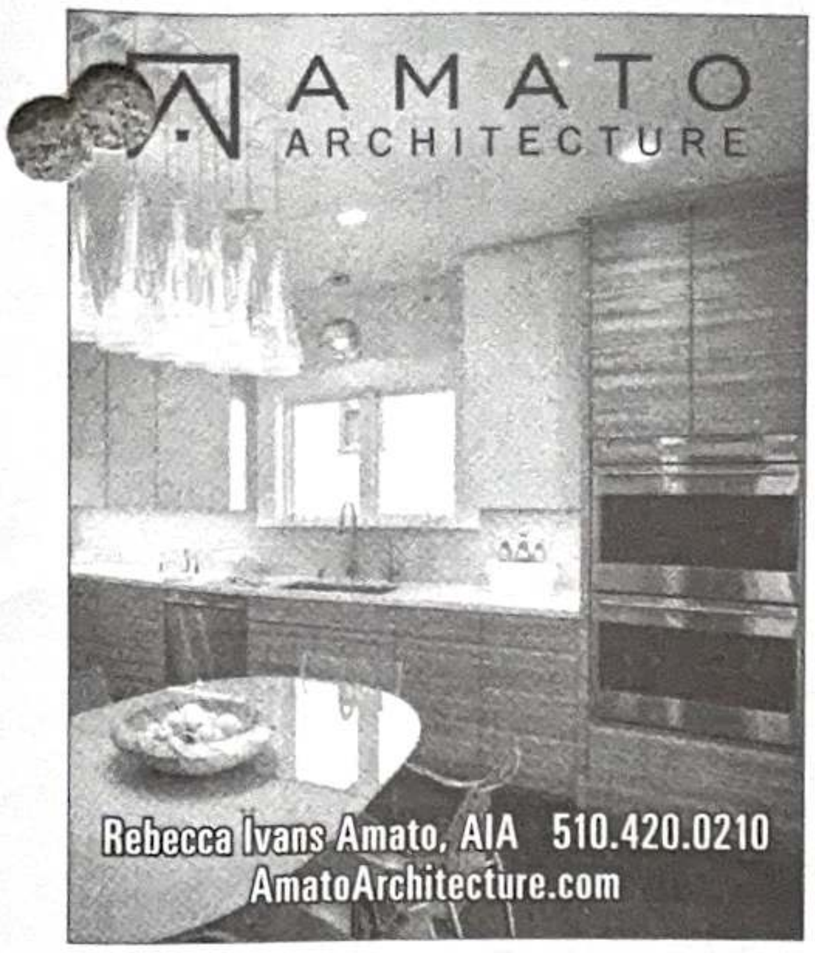
The building was originally known as the Great Western Savings and Loan building. It had a sister building with similarly striking design features at 51st and Telegraph. A housing development is under construction on that site.





Chernobyl" was just one of the evocative names brought to mind by the stark appearance of the partially demolished Chase bank building. The unexpected discovery of asbestos in the structure stalled the building's removal until the pesky and obsolete — and dangerous — insulation material could be removed under City supervision.

/Photos D. Kinkead



Housing Shortage

from page 10

and use cars than the much higher income residents of market rate projects. Tenant advocates also complain that the bill would result in displacing tenants, especially in rapidly gentrifying areas like West Oakland and Fruitvale. (A local developer told me that Rockridge residents are less likely to see short-term effects, as the current already high land costs will send developers elsewhere.)

Even the bill's primary author, Senator Wiener, acknowledges that his bill still needs a lot of work, and he has said that he is talking to various stakeholder groups about amendments. It's likely that if the bill eventually passes, it will look very different from what was just introduced, but the way that will happen will be for people concerned about it to speak up and be heard.

— Stuart Flashman
Chair, RCPC Land Use Committee

Letters, from page 10

I Support SB 827 and Density Development Around Mass Transit

Editor:

I am supportive of SB 827 to increase the density of development around mass transit, and I hope other residents of the Rockridge neighborhood will join in support. A street of single family detached homes would receive the largest upzoning as a result of this bill. As a consequence of this bill, someone might build a 4-8 story apartment building next door to me. While this would not be in my selfish interest, I would support it, because California desperately needs more housing and less traffic, and the way to solve both is by building housing near existing mass transit.

Rockridge is lovely neighborhoods with a long-standing master plan for single-family detached housing. But times have changed, and the population of California has doubled since that plan was enacted. We must not be free riders at the cost of homelessness and our kids being unable to live anywhere near us when they are grown. We must not cloak NIMBYism in the guise of progressive ideals, holding out for the perfect bill, environmental impact, neighborhood control, or uneconomic levels of affordable restrictions — putting on a face of progressive moral high ground while, preserving our status quo. It costs $250M a mile to extend BART. It is much wiser to build reasonable density around the existing transit system.

The construction of market-rate housing, even luxury housing, has a positive impact on affordable housing. A 1,000 sqft, 2bd/1ba condo near Rockridge BART just sold for $1.5M. The lack of construction turns what ought to be a starter home into an unreachable luxury.

There will be many steps involved in fixing this problem, and SB 827 is just a start, but let's get started. If you see ways to improve the bill, speak up; the proponents are open to input and improvement.

— Josh Hannah

Thank you to the local community for helping me have another Top Rockridge Producer Year! There's no other place I would rather be selling than the place I know and love so well.

If you are thinking about a move or an investment, ask me your questions! Long range planning is essential, so it's never too soon to start a conversation or get an evaluation on your property.

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For information: **smontauk@gmail.com**

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Nature's Magic

from page 2

in New York, and am experiencing my first year of California here in lovely Rockridge. It's been extremely gratifying to arrive at the turn of the seasons and see our landscape change. It instills a sense of gratitude too; the green feels like a gift. The verdant winter has been a total surprise, a magic trick performed by Mother Nature. "Voilà!" she exclaims. "And you thought these hills, and those little vacant lots, were dead."

So this vacant lot in the heart of our neighborhood is not dead. Since it is, rather, very much alive and breathing with the rhythm of the seasons, we should cherish it. I think it should be a public park. It would help subdue our most chaotic intersection and make it more pedestrian-friendly. It would surely provide financial benefits to the businesses directly adjacent to it. It would give our community some much needed green space. (The plaza outside Safeway is simply *not* adequate for such a gregarious neighborhood.) Most importantly, it would be pleasant. A flat piece of green space for everyone to call their own. (Colby Park is wonderful but so teeny.). It would be a central gathering place of our town.

Its ownership is, to me, a mystery. I've tried to access the parcel's ownership using Oakland's online map resources but haven't gotten far. From what I can gather, it is not owned by the city. Right before press time, I made an inquiry of Councilmember Dan Kalb. Hopefully, I'll have his response to report on soon. If it is in fact privately owned, a campaign to acquire the land and develop a park could be in our future, dear neighbors.

Until then, I'll continue to relish how California's seasons can be read in her lands. In this, my inaugural year in Rockridge, it's all been a delightful surprise. As the grasses have taken root, so have I.

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Community Calendar

from page 15

North Oakland Senior Center

5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way: 597-5085 Mon. – Fri., 9am to 4:30pm. **Programs include:** Arts/crafts; health counseling; dancing and exercise; trips, tours and theater outings; Alzheimer's support groups, computer classes/more.

- **AARP FREE Tax Filing:** for those with middle-and-low incomes; special attention to those 60 and older. Thursdays, through April 12. **Make appointment now.**
- **Fire Prevention For Seniors:** including fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. **Karen Cox,** Fire Safety Educator. Thurs, 3/8. 10 to 11am. RSVP NOSC Reception D
- **Hoover Elementary School's ann Living History Museum.** Wed, 3/14, 10-11:30am. Meet 4th graders portraying famous Americans who were 1st in their fields and support Oakland school children.
- **Lawyer in the Center:** Third Wednesdays; 20 minute slots. **Call to make appointment.**

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. More info at 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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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, 4611. 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

FOR CHILDREN

****Summer Camp Info & Planning**: Stop by the children's area on Sat, 3/10 or 3/24, 10-11am, to try out InPlay software, (developed for OUSD & City of Oakland), to choose summer camp for your school-age children. **

- **Family Story Time:** Stories/songs/rhymes (for all ages); Saturdays, 10:30am; (not on 1/6).
- **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;** rents and caregivers invited.

ECIAL EVENTS:

- **Saturday Crafternoon:** 3/10 and 4/14, 3:30-4:30pm. March: Drop in for a hands-on nature-based craft – a woven tree from Russia; April: bookmaking and poetry.
- **90-Second Newbery Film Festival:** Saturday 3/17, 3:30pm. Fabulous 7th annual video contest in which young filmmakers tell the entire stories of Newbery-winning books in a minute and a half. Hosted by authors **James Kennedy** and **Marcus Ewert.** All ages welcome. Reserve your free ticket online at: http://90secondnewbery.com/events - click on the Oakland screening.

Register in advance for a free, all-day workshop on Sat, 4/21, 10am-4pm **to make a 90-Second Newbery Film:** learn to condense a novel into a brief retelling, act it out, and make a film. Ages 8 to 14 only. Contact Erica at esiskind@oaklandlibrary.org or 510-597-5017.

- **Paws to Read with BARK:** Wed, 3/14 & 4/11, 2-3pm. **Children ages 5 to 9** read aloud to a certified therapy dog who loves listening to stories, to increase reading confidence, skill, and enjoyment. Natasha the dog will be here the second Wednesday of every month. Sign up at the Children's Reference Desk.

FOR TEENS

Learn SCRATCH at Ready, Set, Connect! Tuesdays 4 – 6pm. No sign-up necessary; drop d try creating a program with help from our intern. One-on-one or small group work.

- **Study Room Hours:** Do your homework at the library. A high school tutor is available for homework questions. Tues & Thurs, 4 - 5pm; Wed: 3 - 4:30 pm (during school days).
- **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. Every Tues, Thurs, and Fri 3:30 to 5pm; Wed 1:30 to 5pm (during school days).
- **LED Button Making:** To celebrate Teen Tech Week. March 7, 2pm.
- **Blackout Poetry Program:** To celebrate National Poetry Month, you will use a sharpie to black out words you do not want from a book page to create a poem. **All supplies provided,** April 11, 2pm.

FOR ADULTS

- **Ready, Set, Connect!** One-on-One computer help. Tuesdays 4-6 pm and Saturdays 11am to 1pm. Call 597-5017 for appt.
- **eBook Help:** Work one-on-one with a librarian to download eBooks; get started using amazing collection of digital resources. Fridays, 2 -3:30pm. Make appt. online or call 597-5017.
- **Writers Support/Critique Group: All Welcome.** Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. (double-spaced, MS margins) of any prose for on-site reading/discussion (OK to come empty-handed). 3rd Sat. each month,1 to 5pm; wheelchair-accessible. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com. Call to confirm.
- **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.
- **Knitting Meet-Up:** Third Saturday each month, 3pm. Bring your project to inspire or get advice. Beginners can learn to knit and crochet. All levels welcome.
- **The Life and Art of Isadora Duncan:** Tues, 3/13, 6:30 pm. Dancer, choreographer, and historian, **Lois Flood,** performs dance and spoken word to celebrate and inform about the life of Isadora Duncan, whose innovative style paved the way for modern dance.
- **From Age-ing to Sage-ing:** Grow whole, not old. **Janet Piggins,** LCSW, will facilitate interactive workshop with a focus on reviewing our lives and setting hopes and goals for a vital second half of life. Sat, 3/24, 10:30am -12pm.
- **Podcast Meet-up:** Tues, 3/27, 6pm. Learn about podcasting: share ideas and resources.
- **Spring Refresh: Practicing Mindfulness:** Sat, 3/31, 11am. Learn and practice Mindfulness techniques that help calm and uplift your body and mind.
- **Gardening Basics:** Sat, 4/7, 11am. Workshop for new and beginning gardeners to learn the basics of successful gardening in Oakland and the Bay Area. Taught by an Alameda County Master Gardener.

Art Exhibit; upstairs gallery

Jonathan Taylor, Lea Delson, and Julie Cohn; photography and watercolors. **Reception: Sat, March 10, 11:30am -1:30pm,**

LIBRARY HOURS

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

East Bay Booksellers Book/Poetry Readings and Events

FREE and open to the public.

- Tues, 3/13, 7pm. **Patrick Nathan:** *Some Hell.* In conversation with **Scott Esposito.**
- Wed, 3/14, 6:30pm. **Freud's Bar** (talks by local Bay Area psychoanalysts/psychologists, aimed at students ages 16-25, while enjoying drinks and snacks). Continuing this winter's theme of Tickling the Unconscious, this meeting's topic is: **"What Does Psychoanalysis Have to Teach Us About the Hatred of Animals,"** presented by **Lisa Buchberg, DMH.**
- Thurs, 3/15, 7pm. Two book discussions: **Ramona Ausubel:** *Awayland*, and **Kim O'Neil:** *Fever Dogs.*
- Fri, 3/16, 7pm. **Hilary Zaid:** *Paper is White.* In conversation with local author **Jane Mason.**
- **Sun, 3/18, 3pm. Poetry Flash:** *So Many Voices,* a new anthology celebrating Poetic Matrix Press's 20th anniversary including selected works of their authors from 1997 to 2017. Readings by many of the contributors.
- Tues, 3/20, 7pm. Memoir by **Lamont "U-God" Hawkins:** *Raw: My Journey Into the Wu-Tang.* In conversation with Hip Hop historian **Davey D.**
- Fri, 3/23, 7pm. **David Coulter** will discuss his translation of *The Novel of the Tupinamba Indian,* in conversation with **Bob Ernst.**
- Fri, 4/6, 7 pm. **Curtis White:** *Lacking Character.*

East Bay Booksellers, 5433 College Ave. More info abt. the authors, books and other events: 653-9965 or info@ebbooksellers.com.

Jazz at the Chimes

Featuring guitarist **Bruce Forman** in a one man show entitled "The Red Guitar." Sun., Mar 18, 2pm. Tickets $15: in advance at https://bruceforman.brownpapertickets.com/ or at the door (cash only – depending on availability) beginning 12:30pm (doors open 1:30). Refreshments and reception follows. 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: http://www.bruceforman.com, www.jazzatthechimes.com, chimesjazz@gmail.com or 654-0123.

Square Dance in North Oakland

Music by The Squirrelly String Band. Calling by Jordan Ruyle. 1st Fridays each month, 8 – 10pm. All levels welcome; all dances taught on the spot. Come alone or bring friends. $5-10 sliding scale donation. The Niebyl-Proctor Marxist Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave. Info: squirrellystringband.com.

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April Town Hall: Elections

from page 1

All seats with terms expiring in 2019 are occupied: Stu Flashman, Ronnie Spitzer, Andrew Masalin, Jesse Ortega, Alden Conner, and Eduardo Gutentag [appointed]. None of those members will be termed-out in 2019.

Incumbent not running: Laura Schlichtmann, who was termed out.

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