THE Rockridge News

www.rockridge.org

VOL. 33 ■ NO. 7 ■ ISSUE NO. 355 ■ July 7, 2018 CIRCULATION: 5,800 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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Have you come close lately to being run down by a speeding cyclist or shaky rent-a-scooter rider on College Avenue? It's hard to consider that most cyclists and scooter riders are careful about in the street when remnants of The Wild Bunch weave recklessly among hapless pedestrians who often must crowd up against nearby buildings to stay whole.

Contd 14

What to do?

Members of the Neighborhood Crime Prevention

Editor's Note: Writing to The Rockridge News in March 2013, Molly Brostrom, Rockridge resident and parent, related her "tears of concern and frustration" following the family's decision to enroll their youngest son in kindergarten at their neighborhood school, Emerson Elementary. She closed that letter with, "We are grateful and happy to be attending Emerson Elementary, our neighborhood school."

Writing to The Rockridge News now, five years later, she brings the story up to date in the following letter.

Finding Diverse Community in Public School

by Molly Brostrom

Recently I've been worrying about when I will have the chance to be part of a diverse community again. You see, my son graduated this month from Emerson Elementary, a public elementary school in the Temescal neighborhood. While he will continue in Oakland public schools (Claremont and Oakland Tech), I know that it is in elementary where school families are most bonded in the shared hope of getting our kids a good start in school and life.

At school drop-off each morning, we mingled with children and parents of all colors, ethnicities, and economic status. Most of the families at our school were eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch. A majority are African-American, but many are Hispanic, Asian, mixed race, recent immigrants, and a few of us are white. My son has classmates who live in public housing, whose parents work the night shift, or pick up shifts at the Gap to make ends meet. His school offers a glimpse into lives that we don't often come into contact with in our otherwise Rockridge lives.

We chose Emerson for this diversity but struggled with the decision. The school has the low test scores that are too often associated with schools with mostly low-income student

Finding Diverse Community, page 12

(Literally) Painting the Town in Oakland



The Story of our Ayala/Hermann Mural

by Gabriel Kleinman

We started with nothing, and ended with a mural that has transformed the southwest corner of Rockridge into a beautiful gateway to our community.

It began with a one-sentence email in October 2017 from Andy Waggoner to a small group of Ayala and Hermann Street neighbors: "We gotta do this!" *This* was Oakland's Paint the Town initiative announced last fall.

Andy, a Rockridge resident since 2010, had for years been eyeing the sprawling Ayala Avenue and Hermann Street intersection as an artistic canvas. When the announcement came, he knew exactly what to do. Enlisting the help of neighbors on 57th, Hermann, and Ayala, Andy and 12 of the neighbors began the process of determining what they wanted and how they were going to make it happen: permits, logistics, fundraising, volunteering, and creative.

Erin Lenhert handled an overwhelming amount of the nitty gritty (120 gallons of paint anyone?), Adam Fishman took on marketing and crowdfunding (and bookkeeping), Andy made magic happen with the city, and Molly Dickens — along with her father Harry, the Renaissance Man — went for the creative.

Over the next eight months, the planning came into shape with everyone chipping in, from bake sales (thank you, Heather

Painting the Town, page 12

Recreate at Our Local Parks

by Ashley Cruz

Summer is here! Within a one-mile radius of the RCPC boundaries lie acres of public open space to suit you and your family's recreational needs. Visit our Facebook page for an interactive look inside this article.

Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt: Better known as FROG and Hardy Park. This 2.16-acre greenbelt provides amenities for toddlers to teenagers, and pets alike. Play structures, open space (lawn), basketball courts, restroom, and interpretative signs offer experiences for everyone. Location: 371 45th Street.



Chabot Recreation Center: Recently, the three tennis courts have been resurfaced! There is also a baseball field and plenty of open space to kick around a soccer ball. There is street parking and a small lot next to the tennis courts: 6848 Chabot Road.



Lake Temescal: Located on the northeast corner of upper Rockridge, this roughly 50-acre East Bay Regional Park provides passive and active recreational options, including hiking (1.1-mile loop trail), swimming, fishing, wildlife viewing, play structures, open space and picnic areas with grills. There are parking fees as well as an indoor/outdoor facility, the Beach House, which can be rented for special occasions. Location: North Entrance — 6500 Broadway.

Mountain View Cemetery: Besides providing insights into life in Oakland dating back to the 19th century, this space, designed by noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead, contains memorials to local leaders and renowned artists and authors, while providing many avenues to walk, view wildlife and catch a beautiful sunset. There are free tours twice a month, on the second and fourth Saturdays at 10 a.m.: 5000 Piedmont Avenue.

Temescal Swimming Pool: This aquatic facility is one of six in the city. Summer hours offer time for dedicated lap swim as well as open public swim (2-3:30 p.m., M-F, 3-5 p.m. Sat). The Olympic-sized swimming pool is surrounded by lawn to lay your towel out and sunbathe, too. Visit the interactive map to find more about Swim Team and Jr. Lifeguards for kids ages 6-18 years old: 371 45th Street.



Dover Park: This fenced-in park has two play structures, a paved pathway, and plenty of open space for creative play. There is also a community garden within the park that has active workdays and potlucks: 5707 Dover Street.

Enjoy Local Parks, page 13

Note: The Rockridge News Does Not Publish in August. The September Issue Will be Ready for Distribution September 8.

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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To subscribe to **The Rockridge News**, send your check for $20, payable to ***RCPC*** *with* ***"Rockridge News Subscription"*** *on the memo line.* Mail to 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;
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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 September issue is:
☛ **September 8, 2018.**
☛ **Submission deadline: August 16.**

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.)

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More Summer To-Do's

Editor:

Thank you for including information in your June issue about the **free walking tours** offered by the Oakland Tours Program. I'd like to offer more information: These **free tours** are offered by the City of Oakland. The tour leaders are volunteers; I serve as the part-time tours coordinator. We have **eight different tours repeated throughout the summer** until the end of October. We also offer private tours for groups year-round for a small fee. Learn what tours are offered by visiting www.oaklandnet.com/walkingtours. Reservations are suggested.Email aallen@oaklandnet.com or call the tours hotline, 238-3234. It is also O.K. to just show up. I can also recommend other tours such as the **Oakland Heritage Alliance** tours (www.oaklandheritage.org) and **Oakland Urban Paths** tours (www.oaklandurbanpaths.org).

Lastly, the **Oakland Municipal Band** will be performing **free concerts** in Lakeside Park in July and August: www.oaklandmunicipalband.org for information.

— Annalee Allen, *30-plus-year Rockridge resident.*

May We Get You a Street Tree?

You can have it 'Made in the Shade'

by Arthur Boone

When the City of Oakland stopped planting trees in 2008, three local non-profits worked to fill the gap. Urban Releaf (headquartered on 57th Street) and Trees for Oakland and the Sierra Club tree team (working out of the Epic School yard on Twenty-Ninth Avenue) are planting about a thousand trees a year throughout Oakland.

Each organization has different funding sources and screening rules but all have websites and will be ready to plant when the fall/winter rains start.

If you have an underemployed child over 10 on your hands this summer, some organizations have summer programs underway: pruning existing trees; cleaning up trashed tree wells; removing stakes no longer needed; and so on. Details from our websites: UrbanReleaf.org; sierraclub.org/sfbay/tree-planting, and TreesForOakland.org.

Questions? Call ARBoone at 510/910-6451.

RCPC Land Use Committee

The next Land Use Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 25th at 7:30 PM in the upstairs meeting room of the Rockridge Branch Library. The tentative agenda is an update and discussion on the Rockridge Housing Study and relevant state legislation. The August Land Use Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 22nd, also 7:30 PM at the Rockridge Library. Check the calendar at https://rockridge.org the prior week to confirm time, place, and agenda items for both meetings. Continued page

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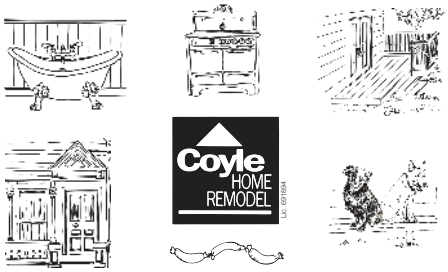


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Claremont Student Band Jazzed by Trumpeter's Unexpected Visit

by Debbie Berne, Claremont Parent

Internationally known trumpeter John Faddis made a surprise appearance at the Claremont Middle School spring band concert in May. The musician, a protégé of Dizzy Gillespie and former leader of the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, went to Claremont as a 7th grader in 1965. While visiting Oakland, he saw news of that evening's concert posted on the school's marquee along College Avenue.

"He just walked into the office and asked if he could sit in," recounts Ari Brown, Claremont's Director of Bands. "When the office called me and said, 'There's a musician standing here, name's John Faddis.' I said, 'Shut up!' I couldn't believe it. He's a trumpet player I've been listening to since I was a kid."

Faddis joined the Claremont Jazz Band on two numbers, Freedom Jazz Dance and Groovin' High, taking solos along with the student musicians. As his bold playing filled the gymnasium, the band kids looked up at him with mouths agape. The audience of parents and families were equally wowed.

Says Brown: "This is part of the legacy of giving. This is what musicians do for one another. He was given to as a young person, and now he's the elder statesman and he's giving back".

Claremont Middle School Jazz Band with trumpeter John Faddis (back row, right), Band Director Ari Brown (center row, with beard) and guest saxophonist, Carlos Vega (front row, right.) Photo/Eva Helena Vargas

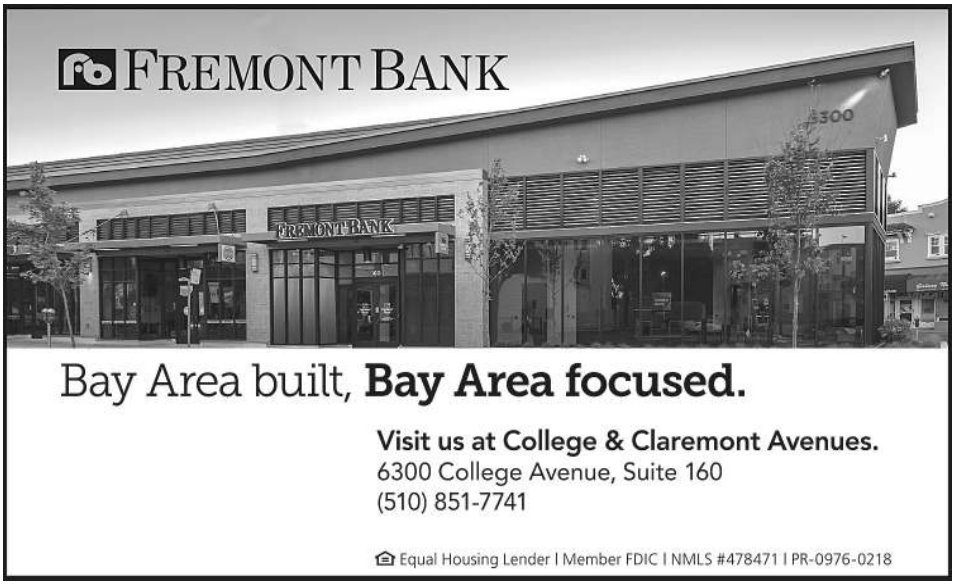


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Welcome, Again, to Your Library

by Sarah Washburn, Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL)
www.RockridgeFriends.org

The Friends of the Rockridge Library, the Oakland Public Library, and library supporters and users across the city were ecstatic with the news that Measure D passed with almost 77 percent of the vote. Oaklanders agreed that libraries are cornerstones of our vibrant neighborhoods, and we're so pleased people came out to support the library with their votes. Thanks to all of the grassroots organizers, the phone bankers, the door knockers, the emails, social media, everyone who talked about Measure D and encouraged neighbors to vote in support of our library.

With the city's commitment and the funds secured, we're starting to hear about plans for the library. A very popular change is the return to six days of service (just typing that phrase fills me with joy!) that will make an appearance in January 2019. You can also expect to see new faces around the library, as a bevy of new staff will be hired to join our fully-staffed library. You may have heard that beloved Director Gerry Garzon retired earlier this year. The search process is in full swing with a number of pubic community meetings and surveys that just wrapped up in June. Lots of changes coming to the Oakland Public Library.

What won't change are the creative and thoughtful programs, the insightful and smart staff, and the materials and computer resources each library possesses. If you haven't been to the Rockridge branch lately, be sure to visit during the summer months to enjoy a program or sign up for summer reading, available for youth AND adults. (That means even adults get prizes for reading.) Enjoy the summer at your library.

When You Have a Problem

In April, the City of Oakland launched OAK 311, a service designed to make it easier for Oaklanders to report non-emergency problems and request infrastructure maintenance for issues including potholes in their streets, graffiti on their neighborhood public spaces, and piles of trash left on their sidewalks.

There are four basic ways to reach OAK 311:

Phone: Call 311 from any phone within Oakland. (If calling from outside Oakland, continue to use the number (510) 615-5566.)

E-mail: OAK311@oaklandnet.com

Web: 311.oaklandca.gov

App: OAK 311, available free for Apple and Android smart devices (powered by SeeClickFix).

See the program's website: https://www.oaklandca.gov/services/oak311

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Eyes on Rockridge

All photos: Judith Doner Berne

When you read this, you might wish that you could live on Upper James

A Rockridge Love Story

by Judith Doner Berne

Theirs is a Rockridge love story. Mick Kenney found out Louise Markison's ring size by wrapping the pop top lever from a can of Olympia Beer around her finger. "I need a (engagement) ring that size," he said, when he took it to the jeweler.

The two Rockridge natives, now married 50 years, met at Claremont Junior High, dated through Oakland Tech where they graduated in 1963, and wed in 1967. Their children, Michael and Karen, and now the two of their four grandchildren who live in Rockridge, are following in their footsteps at Claremont and Tech.

Family photographs line the cabinets and walls of their 1913 Craftsman house on James Avenue — the house his parents bought in 1950 and where Mick grew up. And that very block, known as Upper James, was also where his great-grandmother and grandmother lived, where his mother was born and his uncle later owned a house.

"Our kids were the fifth generation on this block," Mick, a retired Consolidated Electric sales engineer, said, as we sit in their leafy, eclectic backyard. Two mammoth trees, a redwood and a red cedar, loom overhead. Four grills, including the impressive built-in brick barbeque his dad constructed, surround us. And found objects — old license plates, rusty saws, straw hats and a fishing creel that was his grandfather's — line a side fence above a workbench, hung like artwork in a museum, although Mick calls them "my junk."

Growing up, he said, "There was no crime. You left your bicycle out front – unlocked. We all had paper routes." For excitement, kids would walk the six-foot high storm drains that cut an intermittent path from behind what is now Chabot Elementary all the way to the DMV. His dad owned a shade shop at 5519 College Avenue, the current home of Phoenix Optical. And, until the age of five, Mick lived in the nearby fourplex, still at 5469 College.

Meanwhile Louise was raised, one of 11 children, "in a big house up on Hillegass." Even today, it is listed as six bedrooms and four bathrooms. She attended Peralta Elementary; Mick, the now extinct Rockridge Elementary (the current site of Oakland Tech's Upper Campus). Her dad ran Markison Plumbers from a storefront near Dreyer's Ice Cream on College Avenue.

"You couldn't get a plumber to come today for what we paid for this house," said Mick, who first rented, then bought from his mother in 1972. Faced with the need for a new foundation, "We built it ourselves."

"When we moved in here, it was all older people and lots of Italians," Louise said. "I used to take Jello with whipped cream over to the people who couldn't get out." And she greeted newcomers – and still does – with her homemade wine cakes. When young families began to move in, "At one point there were 24 kids on this block," Mick said. "The streets were open for the kids to play and ride their bikes."

They have fond memories of camping trips along the Iowaldnee River with several families on their block. And when neighbors needed a sitter, they often brought them to Louise. "I was like a second Mom," she said. "She raised every kid on the block," Mick added.

Everyone sat out on their front porches, both when he was growing up and "even when our kids were young," Mick said. "We don't see that at all anymore. I try to say 'Hi' to all those high school kids walking by," but he finds most are engaged with their phones.

Marriage vows cover "in sickness and in health." And both have had major bouts of illness. Mick appears robust as he takes his daily bike rides around the area – trading a traditional bike for an electric-assisted version when he is on a hilly route. But he relies on an oxygen pump at home ever since a harsh case of pneumonia left him with COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease).

Louise was treated for brain cancer in the mid-80's, undergoing a series of operations over the years with neighbors taking turns bringing them dinners until she recovered. She doesn't see well out of one eye and is being treated for macular degeneration in the other.

Although the down-to-earth Kenneys

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A Love Story

from page 6

might question my calling them foodies, they spend a part of each day driving around to various markets for the specialties they love. The outings, which he calls "Driving Miss Weazy," are a way for Mick to make sure Louise gets out into the world. So it's off to Berkeley Bowl for their homemade potato chips, or to a bakery in El Cerrito "to get our bread," or to Alameda "for our wax peppers. We like to move around. It's almost our recreation."

"They really take care of each other," said Catherine Firpo, who coordinates housing for the city of Emeryville, and who has been their neighbor for 18 years. "When Louise was ill, that really changed their life."

"Mick's around a lot," Firpo said. "He rides his bike. He knows everyone. He's really a calming influence on the block." She urged me to visit their basement, where I witnessed a precisely laid out, extensive tool array. "He's old school," Firpo told me. "He's an original maker. He can fix anything. He's a great historian and super helpful. He's like a block ambassador. It's kind of a blessing to have them both around."

"Mick and Louise have had a key to my house for years," said Brooke Levin, retired director of Oakland's public works department, who has been their neighbor for 32 years. "My parents didn't live here. She took care of my kids on numerous occasions. They are just really down-to-earth people who are generous with their time and their knowledge," she said. "They're a rock in this neighborhood."



"It just worked out. It was so easy for us," Mick Kenney says of his and Louise's 50-year marriage.

Look for Mick along Clifton Street in early December. He'll be the one riding his bike, stopping to decorate the stop signs and utility poles with holiday garlands as he has done for the past several years. And, if you're sharp-eyed and around Rockridge BART Plaza, you just might see an ornament he has placed hanging from the O on the Rockridge sign.

"I wouldn't go anywhere else," he said, of their long tenure in Rockridge. "I lean to the right, but I can get along with everyone. I like the diversity." "He gets on his bicycle," Louise added, and because he stops to talk along the way, "it takes him an hour to get to the end of the block."

To comment on this column or to suggest that you, a neighbor or your neighborhood would make for interesting reading, email judyberne@att.net.

Land Use Committee, from page 3

The June Land Use Committee meeting held June 27 heard a presentation by local representatives of Dreyers/Nestle about potential changes to the retail store on College Avenue. More specific information will be provided as plans become clearer.

Experience * Knowledge * Performance

Real Estate Market Update: Locally, we still see solid demand in Rockridge. Nearly all new construction in Oakland in transit areas is earmarked for rent, not purchase. A respected CA economist predicts single digit appreciation in 2018 after 6 years of double digit appreciation, followed by flattening in 2019. If interest rates keep rising, they predict soft depreciation begins in 2020. Rockridge has enjoyed more stability/less downward fluctuation in soft years but has had some single digit downturn. Basic economics of more demand than supply may continue but the affordability index could cause a slow down. Let's face it, no one knows for certain as there are many factors, but the indicators are there.
FYI, there will be an attempt to reverse the single family and new home construction exemption from rent control on the November ballot. Multiunits are under rent control.



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Letters to the Editor

Bikeshare Station Helps People Focus on Tile Memorial Wall

Editor:

I've lived in Rockridge for over three decades, working here for half that time, and have witnessed with delight all of the developments that have contributed to its livability. Sometimes a week goes by with my car undriven. From that perspective, I warmly greeted the introduction of the bikeshare stations throughout the neighborhood. I use them almost daily. Other riders have shared with me that when parking at BART, they have seen and appreciated the tile-work Oakland Fire Memorial for the first time. I applaud this environmentally friendly effort and hope the community and the RCPC fully embrace it, as well.

— Phillip Rubin

Broadway and Lawton Intersection Is Confusing

Editor:

I'm confused about the design of the Broadway and Lawton intersection. It seems like the new left turn lane is only for turning left across Broadway to Rockridge Blvd. Do we enter the same left turn lane if we want to proceed through the intersection to turn left on Lawton? If yes, it looks like a head-on collision waiting to happen (with northbound cars turning left on the other stretch of Lawton). If not, then where/how does a car wait if there's oncoming Northbound traffic on Broadway before turning left on Lawton, without completely blocking all Southbound traffic on Broadway? The whole intersection is a confusing mess!

— Sharon Taylor

P.S. I had to look up the rules for cars when there are alternating blinking red lights. Perhaps there should be a sign saying something like "After stopping, proceed with caution if no pedestrians present."

City contractor Victoria Eisen replies:

Dear Sharon:

The new left turn lane from southbound Broadway is meant to be used to turn left onto either Rockridge Blvd. or Lawton Avenue. This area is considered one large, 5-legged intersection; therefore, the turn

Lanes Confuse, page 14



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6/6/2018	2	1	5369 James Ave	$800,000	$800,000	17	$1,105,000
6/6/2018	4	3.5	6003 Auburn Ave	$1,895,000	$1,895,000	16	$2,605,000
6/8/2018	2	2.5	457 Cavour St	$1,095,000	$1,095,000	12	$1,611,000
6/8/2018	3	2.5	5355 Manila Ave	$1,495,000	$1,495,000	14	$2,367,340
6/15/2018	2	2	5405 Carlton St	$835,000	$835,000	16	$895,000
6/15/2018	3	3	6087 Ocean View	$1,595,000	$1,595,000	15	$1,700,000
6/19/2018	3	2.5	5637 Ocean View Dr	$1,799,000	$1,799,000	26	$1,850,000
6/22/2018	4	1.5	6237 Rockwell St	$1,350,000	$1,350,000	24	$1,580,000
6/25/2018	4	3	6022 Rockwell St	$1,895,000	$1,895,000	15	$2,600,000
6/27/2018	2	2	5405 Carlton St	$1,100,000	$1,100,000	12	$1,750,000

Homes sold in June closed 30.5% over the asking price on average.

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Mulch Ships Passing in the Day: Lee and Stuart Keep on Rolling

Scenic Streets of Oakland volunteers made a small dent in the mulch pile and backlog of street tree weeding during our annual spring workday on June 16. Lorrie, Margaret, Andrea and Judy tackled the trees and made nice out of mess. Stuart and Lee wheeled countless loads of mulch from the main pile to the Claremont Avenue Highway 24 on-ramp, where it will be deployed later this summer, hopefully to make weeding there less challenging.

In addition to keeping the trash picked up and finishing the street tree weeding, we hope later this season to add some new plantings to the ramps. The hard lessons of experience will shape our choices for a few additions to the colors and shapes lining those gateways to our community.

More help is always welcome. The ramp team usually meets on Wednesday mornings under Lee's supervision to make progress there.

Street tree workers can tackle those opportunities as time and energy permits. We usually have a fall workday as well.

If you have a little time each month to help beautify our neighborhood, please email Lee at lee.scenicstreetsoakland@gmail.com for further information.

Judy at Work to Make the Tree Plantings Look Good.



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Who's Who in Luxury Real Estate

Resident Steps in to Aid Fellow Seniors: 'Wow! You Are Our Hero...'

by Judith Doner Berne

Thanks to one of their own, senior citizens living at Merrill Gardens Senior Living Center in Rockridge won't have to try and scramble across Broadway's four traffic, one left turn and two bike lanes to the count of 12, the signal's limited duration.

As of June 13, the time to traverse Broadway at Coronado Avenue, the pedestrian crossing nearest to the senior facility, has doubled – all due to resident Liz Alpert.

The retired 79-year-old computer science professor, who has grown to love Oakland since she moved here last year from Santa Cruz, had tried to contact various city departments with no success. But, when she finally dialed 311, Oakland's newly-minted non-emergency response number (see related story, page 5), she got instant action. City workers extended the timing that very day.

"My plea worked," Alpert emailed to Rockridge News editor Don Kinkead, who had suggested, among other ideas, that she call 311. "I am so ecstatic about this that I feel like crying. I was living in fear that another one of our dear residents might one day be very seriously injured or worse."

Alpert took matters into her own hands, after she returned from a board meeting in New York City in early June to find that a fellow resident, Pete Schneider, had fallen in his rush to make the walk signal on a trip back from The Ridge shopping center across the street.

Schneider, an 85-year-old retired Golden Gate Bridge staff engineer, was treated for severe bruises on his forehead and broken bones in two fingers. "You've got to be ready to move and look mournfully at all the cars," Schneider, who has not lost his whimsical sense of humor, said of his regular forays across Broadway under the former 12-second walk signal. Looking fondly at Alpert, he said: "I call Liz the house mother."

"This didn't have to happen," said Alpert, an outspoken member of the residents' health and safety committee at the assisted living center, which opened in April 2017. "We recognized this problem when the light first became operational almost a year ago and tried getting the light adjusted. I believe a work order went to the city and that our city council person was contacted, but nothing had been done."

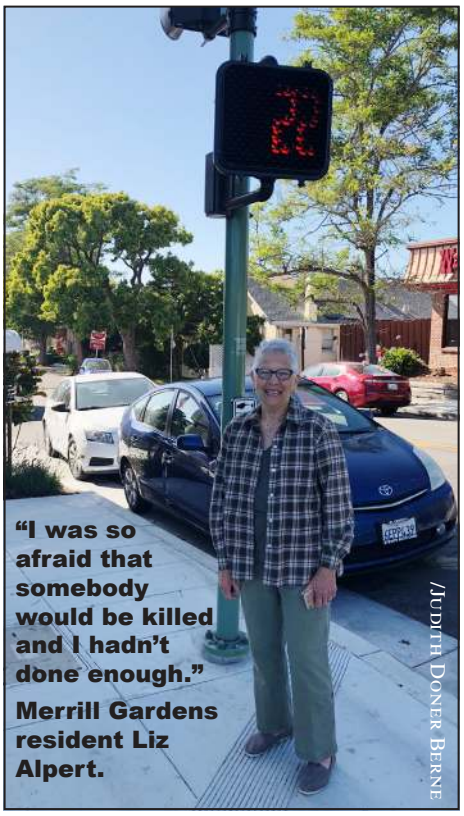
So, directly after Schneider's fall, residents sent a letter to their Merrill Garden general manager imploring immediate action. "We do see this as a matter of urgency before another resident is injured. Please let us know as soon as possible if you/Merrill Gardens Corporation would like to work with us to solve the problem." The response: "I will see what I can do to get this heard on behalf of MG (Merrill Gardens)."

"GREAT JOB," Jeri Shields, Merrill Gardens' corporate vice president of operations, emailed to the health and safety committee members when she learned of Alpert's feat. Alpert's response: "So why didn't they take care of it?"

"We were working on it," Shields said, when contacted by phone at her Seattle office. "We've become aware that that (the short walk signal) caused problems for people. Our residents are independent. It's a great outcome for them and for the community."

"Wow! You are our hero," Diane Kavanagh, secretary of Merrill Gardens'

'Our Hero,' page 13



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Ashby Village: Support and Caring

by Natalie Castelo

When you walk into the office of Ashby Village, you are likely to be greeted by a small cadre of volunteers chatting and working at computers; by Operations and Volunteer Manager, Pat; and by Lola, Pat's friendly 11-pound rescue dog. "Welcome," they will say. "How can we help you?"

This is a central question at Ashby Village. Part of the National Village Movement, Ashby Village is a membership organization connecting older adults to a wide variety of social events, classes, programs, and services aimed at supporting their continued growth and independence as they age. With neighborhood groups extending from Rockridge in the south to El Cerrito and Richmond in the north, Ashby Village offers members the opportunity to engage with each other and their communities in dynamic and invigorating ways. Many members also choose to join a team of nearly 300 Ashby Village volunteers, illustrating the mindset that each village is a reciprocal community where "villagers" can rely on one another.

Offerings are member-driven, and neighborhood and interest groups are member-led. With a single call or click, you can listen to a speaker, join a class to improve your balance and strength, get a ride to your medical appointment, finally get your garden weeded, get some meals made, or even have a companion come over for a walk and some conversation.

In addition to taking advantage of the wide array of Village-wide events, classes, and services, Ashby Village's active Rockridge neighborhood group holds monthly potlucks — always friendly and casual gatherings — as well as a monthly Android support group where Rockridge members can get help troubleshooting issues with their Android devices. One member recently commented, "I am a new member and still learning about Ashby Village services. The more I learn about A.V., the more I realize how valuable and needed your Village is to everyone involved, both serving and being served. You are all well organized, highly skilled, kind, creative, loving and dedicated individuals. No wonder Ashby Village is expanding so rapidly. I will continue to recruit members & volunteers because at A.V. everybody wins big time."

Learn more about membership or volunteering: Ashby Village website: www.ashbyvillage.org, or phone: 510/204-9200.



Ashby Village volunteers help in a member's garden. Ashby Village

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Finding Diverse Community

from page 1

bodies. I worried for my son, but I knew that he had access to books at home, piano lessons and summer camps, and lives in a safe neighborhood. And I worried for the kids we'd leave behind by opting out of the lower-performing school. At that time, I wrote in The Rockridge News:

Why does giving your child a good, public education have to be such hard work? Why do decisions to benefit our own kids have to be at the expense of other kids in our city? Why aren't the masses of children attending chaotic and underperforming schools more of a concern to our country?

What will he miss out on by not being at a school with more resources? Will he lack challenges by not being in a cohort of similarly privileged classmates? Will the family challenges of some of the students [at Emerson] overwhelm his teacher? The tears of concern brought on tears of frustration: Why does giving your child a good, public education have to be such hard work? Why do decisions to benefit our own kids have to be at the expense of other kids in our city? Why aren't the masses of children attending chaotic and underperforming schools more of a concern to our country?

Six years later, I can say unequivocally that it was a good decision. Our son loved Emerson – his friends, the teachers and staff. He was always excited to go to school and wanted to stay until the final minutes of the after-school program. His sweaty pink face and blond hair were a fixture on the basketball court late into the afternoon. During the school day, he eagerly learned what was offered, and buried his head in books when he needed to, developing an uncanny ability to focus in chaos.

I know he wasn't always challenged by the academics. Behavioral issues and the needs of lower performing students often overwhelmed his teachers and they admitted to not having the bandwidth to sufficiently address the needs of higher performing kids. Yet he flourished, growing into a smart, funny, kind kid. Research shows that diversity makes us brighter; my son's experience attending a diverse school supports this finding.

And more importantly in my mind, he gained characteristics that are critical to his life and future as part of a diverse society. He is flexible; he talks about race with ease and describes the complex family and personal problems that classmates experienced with empathy and without judgment. He's learned that his needs are not more important than anyone else's, and maybe less so, given his relative privilege.

One regret I have is that achievement at the school, at least as shown on test scores, did not noticeably improve while we were there. While Emerson has made some progress, there are still too many kids years behind in learning. Leadership and teacher transitions at the school and too many OUSD "death by post-it note" strategy sessions contributed to this stalling; but the primary cause is the fact that kids reeling from the trauma of poverty need intensive and sustained support – and our schools and social support systems are not providing this.

I don't know how the kids who are grade levels behind will catch up, and I worry for them and for our country that is so blithely ignoring them. And I *should* worry, and we all should – but it's harder to feel and maintain the urgency of these concerns when our lives aren't intertwined. It's too easy to live in our separate worlds and only know others through news or statistics. And while easy, it can't be good for our psyches and souls.

Knowing each other as members of a shared community builds our understanding and support for each other. Being a part of a diverse community at Emerson was not always easy – learning of the struggles and divides could be depressing and frustrating. But the kids showed us that despite demographic differences, they were classmates first. And other parents loved my baby as I loved theirs. We lived community across the divides and that was uplifting, and an experience that is hard to replicate in our society. And I will miss it.

Thriving in diverse community is key to our country's future. What better time to learn to do so than in elementary school?

— June 29, 2018

Painting the Town

from page 1

Dodge) to GoFundMe campaigns, that raised over $1,500. The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) came in at the 11th hour with a cool $500 from the Kevin Faugnan Community Memorial Fund to ensure this mural – hopefully the first of three key intersections – got fully funded.

We had two short weekend days – a total of 20 hours – to transform the concrete slab for speeders into a traffic-easing tapestry. Beyond the beauty, there were extraordinary results in how this community came together.

More than 40 volunteers power-washed, swept, blockaded, chalked, measured, and, yes, painted. We had visitors from Albany, friends brought donuts from Temescal ('sup Courtney, John, Maya, and Stella) and even one volunteer from Santa Barbara (Uncle Rick!) came. All generations were able to participate. Pre-schoolers were painting poppies, elementary-schoolers took to the trees (thank you, Zentaro Matsui Hernandez), middle- and high schoolers and college coeds made big headway with big rollers (looking at you, Zach and Noah Beyer), and the rest of us – parents, empty-nesters, retirees, and more—just tried to keep up. (The Vaughan-Brekke's really set the pace…)

We're seeing the effects already: more smiling from more neighbors and slower traffic all around, all thanks to this community project.

In the coming months we'll be exploring our next two intersections: Ayala & Martin, and Hermann & 58th, for similar attention.

National Night Out

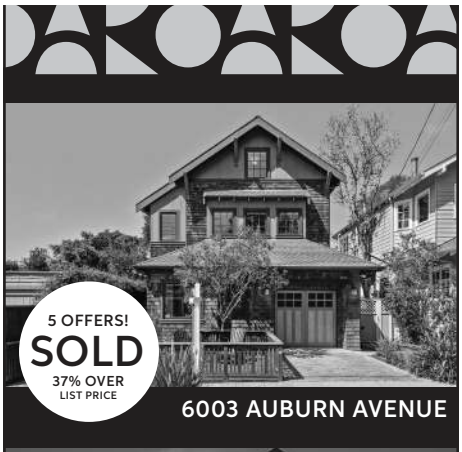
Tuesday, August 07, 2018, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Details

Organize a neighborhood block party, barbecue, ice cream social or other outdoor event that brings neighbors together.
To register your NNO block party, http://solar.oaklandnet.com/go/nno. Register by July 20, 2018 to receive give-aways for the kids, and a special gift for the host.

POLICE • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch, NNO is America's night out and a time for neighbors to get together to build neighborhood spirit and unity. Research shows that when neighbors know each other, neighborhoods are safer. Planning resources:
Block Party Guide
Sample Program Ideas
Getting to Know You



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Enjoy Local Parks

from page 13

Bushrod Recreational Center: Want to play tennis in the evening? This park offers three lighted tennis courts, as well as an indoor gymnasium, baseball and softball fields, a playground and picnic areas. Location: 560 59th Street.

Colby Park: A small 0.5-acre park is nestled in the northern edge of Rockridge. Offering shade, a play structure and open space, this is a walkable park to enjoy a calm afternoon: 422 61Street.

'Our Hero'

from page 13

Residents' Council, emailed to Alpert. Later, she said: "I'm very, very grateful to Liz. She pushed the correct buttons."

Merrill Gardens resident Bruce Hunter uses a walking stick and counts himself as "pretty moveable." Still, he said, "You could only get halfway across" and have to stop in the median with traffic flowing on both sides. "She (Alpert) did a good deed."

Coincidentally, or not, last week the general manager announced she was leaving.



Lanes Confuse

from page 8

lane could not be striped closer to Lawton. Motorists who want to make this turn are meant to wait for a break in northbound traffic in the intersection, as one would while waiting to make a left turn at any intersection. Left turns from northbound Broadway to westbound Lawton are not allowed.

The city is developing signs and other ways to educate people on the new pedestrian-activated signal.

— Victoria Eisen
Eisen|Letunic Urban Planning

Council (NCPC) and The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) have been discussing some promising ideas and presented them to about 40 attendees at the annual NCPC-RCPC joint Town Hall held February 14.

Favored among the ideas was to stencil messages such as "Walk Your Wheels" on sidewalks, an approach taken in some other cities. NCPC and the Rockridge Business Improvement District agreed to share the costs. However, when approached for its approval, the City's Department of Transportation (OAKDOT) nixed the idea, believing bicycle lanes planned for College Avenue would fix the problem. Audience suggestions to keep the idea alive included circulating a city-wide petition, contacting cycle groups for support, and police support communicated to OAKDOT. Attendees agreed with NCPC Secretary Karen Ivy that the issue should be kept on the organization's active list.

Captain Chris Bolton, newly named Area 2 Commander, and presenter of the evening, introduced himself and explained that although he had his captain's bars on now, he would only be an official new captain after his swearing in ceremony the following day.

His assignment to Area 2, which covers most of Rockridge, is not his first. Eighteen or so years ago, he was assigned here as a Field Training Officer, or FTO. He has worked most recently in the OPD's Office of the Inspector General, getting a lot of spread sheet and analysis experience.

At this point in his service, he said, he has learned a lot continues to have a passion to serve the community. His definition of success in police work, he said, is doing

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Your 36-word message is $22. (Phone number counts as one word.) **Make check payable to RCPC** and write **Rockridge News Classified Ad** on the memo line. Mail to: **RN Classifieds**, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611.

The Rockridge News does not publish in August. The newsletter's September issue deadline is August 16. The September issue *will be out on* ***September 8.*** *For information: Email Susan Montauk via* **smontauk@gmail.com**

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More Community Calendar from page 14

or bring friends. $5-10 sliding scale donation. The Niebyl-Proctor Marxist Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave. Info: squirrellystringband.com.

North Oakland Senior Center
5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. 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.

- **Cane-Do Self Defense Class.** Learn how to use your cane for more than stability! Gentle martial arts for exercise and self-defense. Canes provided if you do not use a cane (yet). Thursday's 9:30 – 10:30am. $5 (first class free). Pre-register now for classes in the Fall: in the office or call 597-5085.
- **Ice Cream Social with music and Prescott Circus Theater.** August 1st, 1 to 3pm. Free for members- join today.
- **AARP Driver Safety Class;** refresher for those who have already taken the original 8-hour class. July 26, 9:30am to 2pm. Keep your insurance discount. $15 AARP members/$20 non (checks only, payable to AARP). Register in advance of class in person at NOSC or by mail.
- AARP Original 8-Hour Driver Safety Class: for those who have never taken the AARP class. Thurs, Aug 16 and Tues, Aug. 21, 10am to 2pm. Strategies to keep driving safely and receive safe driver discount from your insurer.
- 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). Sample the goods; meet the growers. Live music. **Bring reusable bags.** 5300 Claremont Ave. (off Telegraph) at DMV parking lot.

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

FREE A's TICKETS to each person who signs up for our Summer Programs (all ages) WHILE SUPPLIES LAST.

FOR CHILDREN

*** **Annual Summer Reading Program:** Stop by to get a brochure listing events which runs thru Aug 4. Kids from birth to age 14 get prizes when they read (or are read aloud to) a little every day.

- 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.

PECIAL EVENTS:

Tuesdays at 6:30pm:

- Insect Discovery Lab: 7/10.
- Kenn Adams' Adventure Theater: 7/17.
- Oakland Symphony Petting Zoo: 7/24.
- Alphabet Rockers: 7/31.

- **Fur, Scales, & Tails**: Sat, 7/21,10:30am.
- **Chess Club**: Every Tues, 3:30pm. (All ages - best for 7 to 14.)
- **Afternoon Crafts:** Every Thurs, 3:30pm
- **Annual Paper Airplane Contest:** Thurs, 7/26, 3:30 pm.
- **Pen Pal Drop-in:** ask at the Children's Desk.

FOR TEENS

***Teen Summer Passport Program:** (ages 12 to18) win prizes by exploring Bay Area Hot Spots, writing book and movie reviews, or attending library programs. Sign up at oaklandlibrary.org/summer now thru August 4.

- **Rockridge 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.
- **Game & Craft Days:** Hang out, make new friends, and play video games; make simple crafts during the summer. Every Wed, 2 to 4pm.
- **Tie Dyed Bookmarks**: Using Sharpies and rubbing alcohol. All supply provided, 7/11, 2 pm.
- **Washer Jewelry program:** Decorate washers to make cute and personal necklaces. All supply provided, 7/25, 2pm.
- **Washi Tape Notebook**: Decorate notebooks with colorful Washi Tapes to celebrate the beginning of a new school year. 8/22, 2pm.
- **Tag Yourself Graffiti Ts**: Create your own T shirt design; use a combination of fabric painting and applique techniques to apply shapes, symbols, lettering and your own unique graphics. 8/29, 2pm.

FOR ADULTS

***Adult Summer Reading:** Now thru Aug 4. Read, write reviews, attend library programs/more. Enter to win raffle prizes. Details at the library and online: oaklandlibrary.org/summer.

- **eBook Help**: Work one-on-one with a librarian to download eBooks. Fridays, 2 -3:30pm. Make appt. online or call 597-5017.
- **econd Saturday Book Club starts Sept 8.** 2nd Sat each month, 3 - 4pm. Get book selection and more details: 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.
- **Lawyer 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 Sat. each month, 3pm. Bring your project to inspire or get advice. Beginners learn to knit and crochet. **All levels welcome**.
- **Mindfulness for Everyone:** Techniques to help calm and uplift body and mind. Sat, 7/28,11am.
- **anctuary Homes and Neighborhood Workshop**: If you work in someone else's home or you employ someone in your home, learn about a new initiative in Rockridge to build a network of support for immigrant domestic workers. Sat, 7/28, 2pm.
- **Environmental Links to Breast Cancer:** Take a tour of your home with a scientist from the Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (BCCP) to identify common chemicals linked to breast cancer and get tips on what you can do to reduce exposure. In partnership with Sutter Health. Tues, 8/14, 5:30pm reception; program at 6pm. **Call 204-5656 to register.**
- **Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Talk**: Few people know about this "hotspot" for local and migratory ocean wildlife in the Marin/Sonoma coastal waters. See the photography exhibit in the Gallery. Tues, 8/21, 6:30pm.
- **American Red Cross Community Blood Drive:** Schedule an appointment at redcrossblood.org or call 1-800 RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Sat, 8/25,10am to- 3:45pm.

Gallery:

JULY: **Bethany Garland-Wood:** collection of geometrically infused works.

AUGUST: **Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary: National Treasure, Local Jewel:** photographs.

Library Hours

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

East Bay Booksellers Book/Poetry Readings

FREE and open to the public.

- Tues, 7/10, 7pm. Bay Area writer **Zoe Samudi:** *As Black as Resistance: Finding the Conditions for Liberation.*
- Wed, 7/11, 7pm. **Nell Painter:** *Old in Art School: A Memoir of Starting Over.*
- Mon, 8/14, 7pm. **R.O. Kwon:** *The Incendiaries.* Joined in conversation by **Nayomi Munaweera.**

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 **The Dmitri Matheny Group** in a tribute to the iconic jazz trumpeter/ singer Chet Baker. With flugelhornist **Dmitri Matheny** are **Matt Clark,** piano; **Ron Belcher**, bass, and **Mark Lee**, drums. More info at http://www.dmitrimatheny.com. Sunday, July 15, 2pm. Tickets $15: in advance at https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3375670 or at the door (cash only) 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: 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

More Community Calendar, page 14

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