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Rockridge News

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Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas — *No* RCPC Town Hall in December

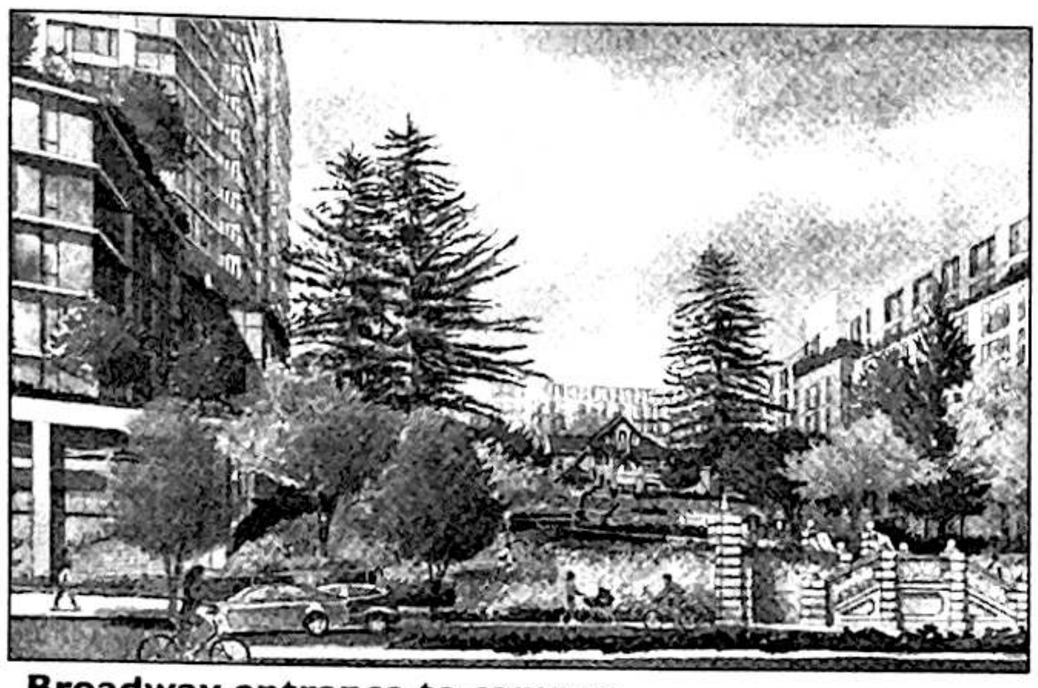
Towering Plan Presented at CCA Public Meeting

The December Town Hall has been canceled: Developers formulating the plan for reuse of the California College of the Arts' (CCA) former site on Broadway could not make the meeting and will reschedule.

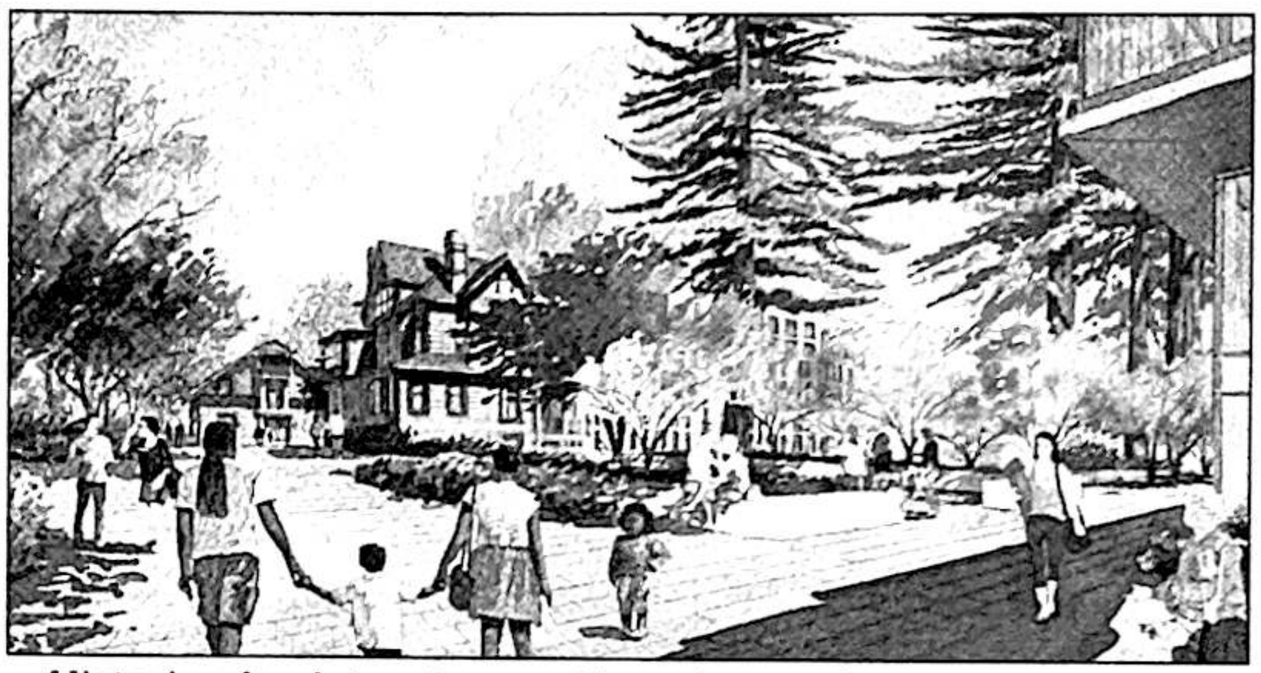
The cancellation came the day following a presentation by the school and its developers at a meeting at Oakland Technical High School, where about 75 attendees, including Rockridge residents, heard of evolving plans for the site. Most of the concepts presented — preserving existing old-growth trees; providing housing for artists and students; and enhancing and repairing architecturally significant buildings — met with evident approval by attendees. The mood changed, however, when discussion turned to the proposed 19-story tower to be located toward the rear of the property. Slides presented by developers show a leafy open space, below left. At the left edge of the slide is a tall, nondescript wall rising above the frame of the slide. It was identified as a 19-story tower to be built at the rear of the property. The audience grew restless.

When a woman in the audience identified herself as a graphic artist and distributed photomontages she had created of different likely views of the property, the tower (its image borrowed from a Kaiser building) clearly visible in several views of the site, audience questions became more pointed. Though not to scale, the artist's depictions drew concerned murmurs from the audience. The unfolding audience reaction indicated that this part of the plan could develop into a serious sticking point for the neighborhood's residents.

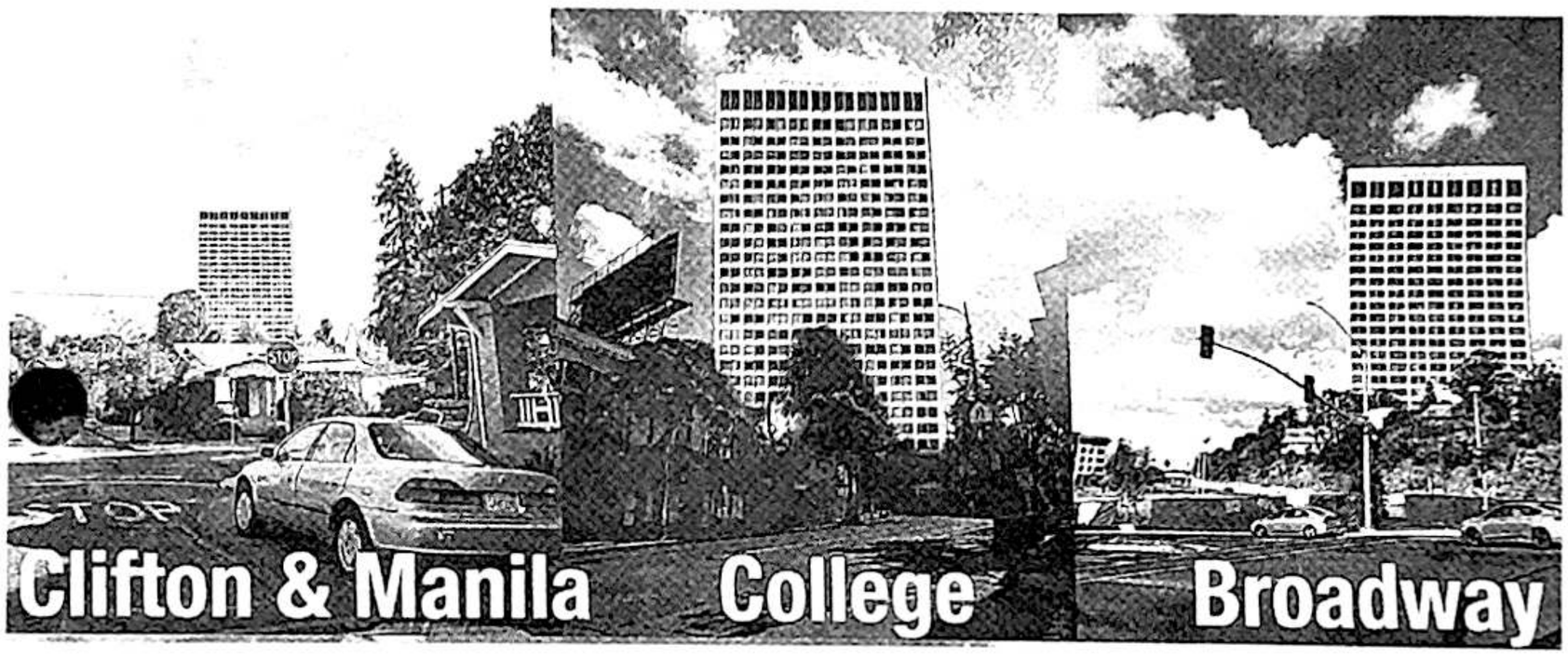
Towering Plan, continued below



Broadway entrance to campus



Historic school structures set in a plaza environment.



The RCPC Land Use Committee will review and discuss the plans at the January Town Hall.

— Don Kinkead

Left: Various potential views of tower proposed for construction on the former CCA campus. See page 3 for another view from the montage.

Rockridge Bids Adieu to Duck Soup Family Playschool and Its Owner/Director Beccarae Calato

by Jamie Longbine, Daughter, Teacher and Co-Director of the Duck Soup Family Playschool

It is with great sorrow that Rockridge bids farewell to Beccarae Calato, an unsung local hero, and the Duck Soup Family Playschool legacy which was born in this neighborhood. Our family is certain the values instilled in hundreds of children, and her good deeds spanning more than half a century, will ripple through the lives of those she touched and be renewed generation after generation.

Founded in 1980 with a love for children, the pre-school provided a safe, family-oriented environment for nearly 40 years where kids could learn and grow. The school's guiding principles were to socialize children and teach them effective communication and self-sufficiency, essential elements of a solid foundation for a lifetime of living successfully in society.



Remembering Beccarae Calato, late owner and leader at Duck Soup Play School.

/Courtesy Jamie Longbine

In 1986, Duck Soup hired a teacher named Beccarae Calato. She, like her Irish and Sicilian ancestors, had left all she'd ever known to venture to an unknown, faraway place in search of a better life and new opportunities for herself and her children, Jodi, Jamie and Jason Longbine. It was here that her passion for working with children flowered into a vocation, and would become the path she walked until her final days.

Beccarae was an adventurer, a risk-taker with drive and determination, fortunate to be afforded many opportunities. In 1990, she bought the business and, a few years later, purchased the house from which Duck Soup operated, a structure that has stood in Rockridge for 104 years.

Her childhood dream of having 12 children had come to fruition through her work.

The teachers, her daughters amongst them, guided children to think outside of themselves bringing their awareness to others, plants and animals, to be stewards of Mother Earth by conserving water, composting, recycling and tending to the garden. They also helped keep the neighborhood clean by going on litter walks and conveying thanks to the trees with big hugs for giving us fresh air to breathe. Beccarae believed that "children were meant to explore, create and learn through play, and there would be plenty of time for academia later." She followed that model until the last little Duckie left earlier this year.

I was slated to take over when Beccarae retired. Sadly, she would never retire: Diagnosed with Stage IV cancer, she died September 23, 2017, at age 68, and the business would have to close.

Beccarae spent decades volunteering for local organizations like Western Service Workers Association (WSWA) in West Oakland and groups that helped feed and clothe the needy. She made seasonal bags that she kept in her car to give out to the homeless as she encountered them. She said she gave back because it was people and places like WSWA that helped her through tough times as a single mother on welfare.

➧ Duck Soup, page 14

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Library program details/hours: Calendar, page 15

THE Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded March 1986 by Don Kinkead, is published monthly (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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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?

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Newsletter Advertising/Deadline

Publication date of the January issue is:

☛ **January 5, 2019.**
☛ **Submission deadline: December 13.**

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.)

Rockridge Groups and Projects Count on Your Support

Donate to a favorite project (or two); all are tax-deductible:

RCPC: Make check payable to RCPC, c/o 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, 94611. OR, online at RCPC's web site: www.rockridge.org.

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Scenic Streets: Checks payable to the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation(OPRF). Scenic Streets of Oakland, c/o Lee Patterson, 5339 Miles Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618 The OPRF Tax ID number is 94-2751052.

Friends of the Rockridge Library, www.friendsofrockridgelibrary.org, or mail check to PO Box 3723, Oakland, 94609

RCPC Land Use Committee Update – December 2018

The December Land Use Committee meeting will tentatively be on Wednesday, December 26, 7:30 p.m. at the Rockridge Branch Library. The agenda includes an update on the housing study. Please check at rockridge.org the previous week to confirm meeting date, time, and place.

The Land Use Committee met on November 28. A quorum was not present, so no recommendations were made. However, committee members and interested residents heard a discussion of the following items:

Update on Rockridge Housing Study

The Committee reached out to faculty at the Terner Center at UC Berkeley about providing assistance to the housing study. The Center's Director, Ms. Elizabeth Kneebone, responded that the Center's faculty were already engaged in other projects and would be unable to assist. The committee is continuing to reach out to other UCB faculty and has received offers of assistance from several Rockridge residents, including a UCB graduate student. There will be a follow-up meeting in December to consider next steps.

Redevelopment of the California College of Art (CCA) Oakland Campus, 5212 Broadway

Committee meeting attendees discussed CCA's more detailed plans for redevelopment of its Oakland campus, on the east side of Broadway just north of Shops at the Ridge, and a number of issues and questions were raised about the CCA proposal:

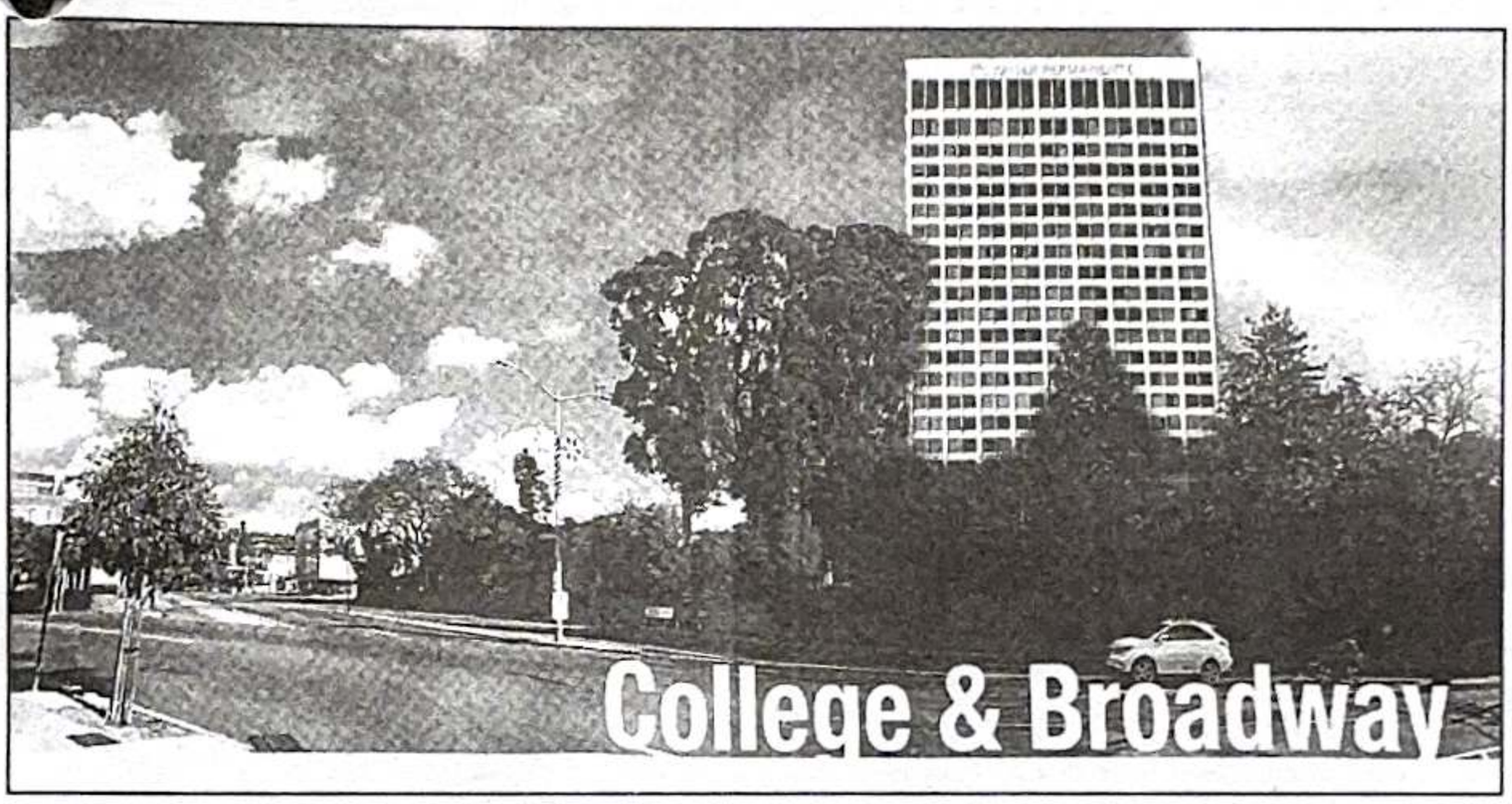
1) The height of the 19-story tower and its visual, aesthetic, and shadowing impacts;

2) The traffic impacts of adding close to 600 primarily market-rate residential units on a section of Broadway already impacted by recent development projects and which can expect further impacts from Phase II of the Shops at the Ridge project. ***How can the project be modified to reduce its traffic generation?***

3) The parking impacts on the surrounding community from adding close to 600

Land Use Committee, page 14

Towering Plan, *from page 1*



Changes Coming to Rockridge Branch Library

Friends of the Rockridge Library
Supporting the Rockridge Branch of the Oakland Public Library

by Alona Rivord, FORL

2018 was an important year for the Oakland Public Library (OPL) system. Faced with a budget crisis that would have closed branches and eliminated jobs, library advocates mobilized the public to save this vital community resource.

In June, Oakland voters stood up for the libraries by passing Measure D with a supermajority. With the budget crisis averted, OPL administrators are determining how to roll out improvements in 2019. The main library and branches like Rockridge are readying for what next year will bring for employees and patrons.

"Staff are excited about the passage of Measure D and the expanded hours, days of service, and new staff that it will provide," said Rockridge Branch Manager Paul Schiesser. "The library is in the hiring process to support these expanded hours and looks forward to releasing details soon."

In the meantime, current Rockridge Branch staff continue to innovate with new programs and services. For example, an adult book club now meets the second Saturday of each month. The month's book selection is available on the holds shelf, making it easy to participate.

Library Changes, page 15

December NCPC Meeting: Scooters
Company Reps to Speak

The December Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (GRNCPC) meeting takes place at **7:30 p.m., Thursday, December 13,** in the Rockridge Library, upstairs meeting room. **Topic: Scooters.**



Representatives from all three e-scooter companies currently operating in Oakland — Lime, Bird, and Skip — have been invited by the NCPC board to make short presentations about scooters and public safety. An audience Q and A session follows.

Community Resource Officer David Mac will close out the meeting with a report on current area crime issues and on progress on previously identified problem areas.

Karen Ivy, NCPC Secretary
karenivy@mindspring.com

The Rockridge Patrols at Five Years and Counting

by Paul Liu, Safer Rockridge

Believe it or not, lower Rockridge has been patrolled by private security professionals for more than five years.

Way back in September 2013, a mass-mugging at the casual carpool line at Hudson and Claremont triggered a local effort to provide a more regular security presence in lower Rockridge, since OPD typically has only one beat officer to patrol both lower Rockridge and Temescal. An initial phase of online crowdfunding by over 650 residents led to the creation of a nonprofit group, Safer Rockridge, which collects donations from the community to fund patrols.

The intent of the patrols is to create a visible security presence that deters crime in the neighborhood during peak crime hours. Patrol officers are unarmed and do not racially profile. While the patrols primarily serve as "eyes and ears," they have been responsible for a few arrests and have helped residents in disrupting crimes in progress. A statistical analysis supported the finding that the introduction of the patrols decreased robberies and burglaries by 30 percent.

The big news for 2018 is that in March, Safer Rockridge retained a new patrol provider, Intervention Group, Inc. (IGI), a locally owned and operated business already serving many other Oakland neighborhoods. IGI uses highly visible, Intervention Group-detailed black patrol vehicles staffed by unarmed officers with experience in neighborhood patrolling (photo, page 5). In addition, IGI offers a number of significant service enhancements, most notably that IGI patrol response can be reached 24/7 via their dispatch service at (877) 272/8765. As before, this service is available to anyone (contributor or not) within the patrol area (map, page 5). Safer Rockridge also offers scheduled patrol hours as well as additional hours at random throughout the week. (Please subscribe to our newsletter at SaferRockridge.org/subscribe to get the latest scheduled patrol hours.) Finally, for contributors, we now offer home-alarm response. After filling out a form, IGI can be listed as the first point of contact.

Rockridge Patrols, page 5

In Rockridge since 1997

Can you stay in your home when you need long term care?

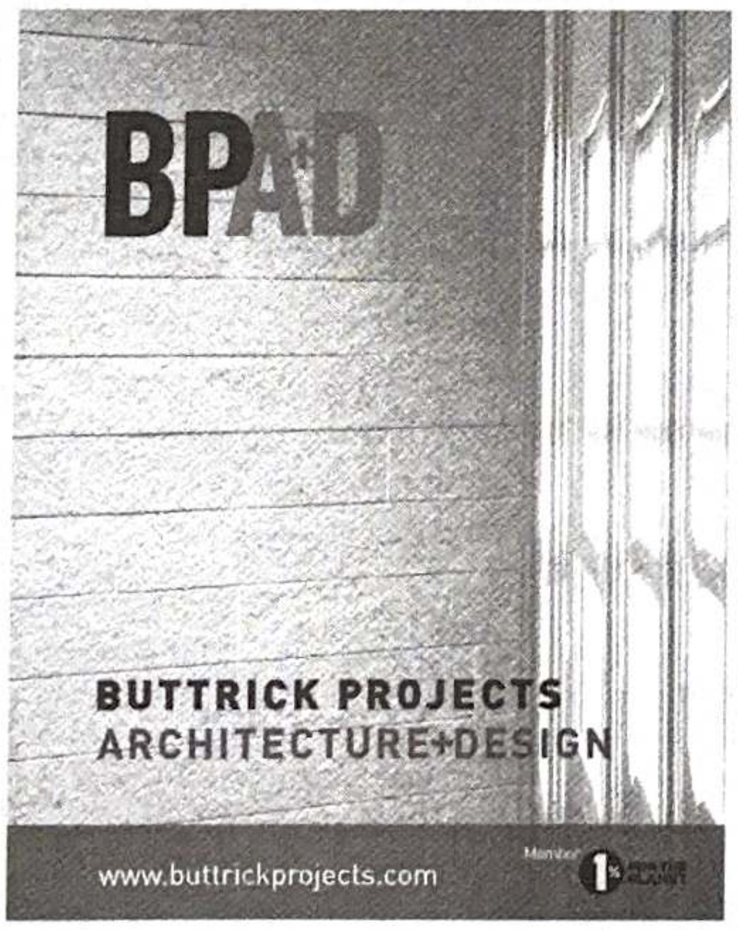
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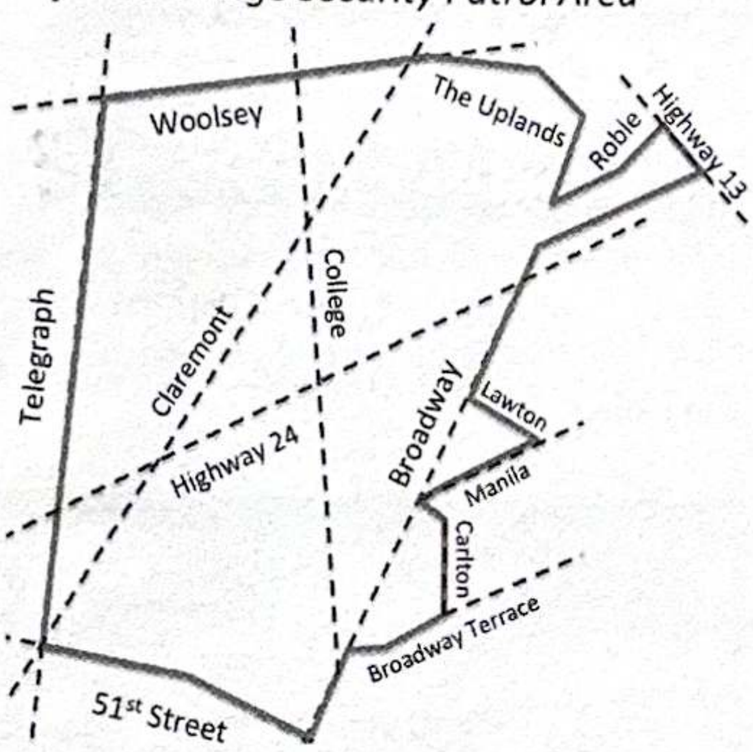
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Rockridge Patrols, from page 4



Camila Sherman and Robert Taylor, IGI Patrol Officers. /Photo IGI

Safer Rockridge Security Patrol Area



'Twas Ever Thus:

Look Both Ways Before Crossing...

Broadway/Lawton Traffic Signal Instructions

	drivers see	drivers do	pedestrians see	pedestrians do
1	BLANK	Proceed with caution.		Push the button to activate the system.
2	FLASHING	Slow down. A pedestrian has activated the system.		Wait.
3	STEADY	Prepare to stop.		Continue to wait.
4	STEADY	STOP. A pedestrian is in the crosswalk.		Start crossing when all vehicles are stopped.
5	FLASHING	STOP. Proceed with caution if the crosswalk is clear.		Continue crossing; the signal will count down.
6	BLANK	Proceed if the cross-walk is clear.		Push the button to activate the system.

In response to a few questions, this brief article reiterates the instructions the City distributed in August regarding walking, driving and bicycling through intersections controlled with "HAWK" traffic signals, such as the one installed at the Broadway/Lawton intersection.

This signal was designed to make it safer to cross Broadway on foot while minimizing delay for motor vehicles. HAWKs are typically installed at locations, like this one, where traffic volumes are too low to qualify for a full traffic signal.

The graphic that was distributed (and is posted at the intersection) explains what motorists and pedestrians should do during each signal phase. **Overall, red still means "stop" and yellow still means "slow down".** Instead of green, the signal goes dark until a pedestrian activates it and after the pedestrian has finished crossing the street.

— Victoria Eisen, Caldecott Project Coordinator

Ed. Note: According to Wikipedia, "HAWK beacon" stands for "**H**igh-Intensity **A**ctivated cross**W**al**K** beacon." Its purpose is to stop traffic while pedestrians cross. It is officially known as a "Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB). For more information, search Wikipedia Hawk Signals. Also search: Hawk signals, Oakland.



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Oakland Tech Auction & Gala Needs You

by Michelle Quinn

Oakland Technical High School's Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) is gearing up for its 2019 Auction & Gala by reaching out to businesses in Rockridge and the surrounding area and thanking the community for its continued support.



This year, the theme of Tech's Auction & Gala (set for March 9) is La Familia de Oakland Tech. Local businesses and community members are part of Oakland Tech's family and have played a key role in making Tech's auctions a success by donating goods, gift certificates and shopping parties.

"An auction only raises money if there are compelling items to bid on," said Elizabeth Falkner, co-chair of this year's Auction, put on by the school's PTSA. "Historically, businesses in Rockridge have been very supportive and that has been important for the success of the event."

There are several ways a business can be a part of supporting the auction:

- Stores and service providers can donate items or services to be bid on with all proceeds going to the school. Other businesses provide direct monetary donations, and the auction in turn gives them premium advertising through various promotional channels, such as its website and the auction program.
- In a creative way to partner with Oakland Tech, some College Avenue retailers also donate "shopping nights." The way it works is that the Oakland Tech auction promotes these nights to the school community and sells tickets to attend. The shop in turn donates a portion of sales to the school. Tootsie's Boutique/Crush on College and Nathan and Co. — and more recently, Leslie Evers — have hosted these parties to great success.

"It's such a nice way to connect with the community while we have a mutually beneficial event," Falkner said.

Of course, anyone can support Oakland Tech — as well as Rockridge businesses — by purchasing gift cards from their favorite businesses and donating them to the auction. The donation is tax-deductible.

For more information, please see https://oaklandtech.com/staff/ptsa-2/auction/

"We know that attracting traffic to our College Avenue retailers is a great way to give back to our supporters," Falkner said. "As a Rockridge resident myself, I love being a part of something that benefits everyone."

Claremont Middle School Seeks Community Help With Annual Fund

by Michelle Quinn

The Claremont Middle School PTA is asking its Rockridge neighbors to donate to the school's annual fund, which helps finance teaching staff in the classroom, the library, field trips and other important programs at the school.

The Claremont PTA has set a goal for this year's Claremont Fund of $100,000, its highest ever. As Claremont's enrollment continues to rise, the PTA strives to provide the funds needed for more enriching programs at the school.

"Claremont is a dynamic and growing school that serves a wide range of kids in Oakland," said Laura Deehan, vice president of fundraising for Claremont's PTA. "With the Claremont Fund, we can make a difference for students in the classroom and help fund many ways to enrich their education."

The Claremont Fund campaign comes as Oakland Unified School District continues to tighten its belt as it faces massive budget shortfalls this year and next. The Claremont PTA is committed to providing the school with the funds it needs to continue to offer a quality education.

The money raised by the Claremont Fund touches almost every aspect of the school. Some of the main recipients include the school's music program, which includes a jazz band, an orchestra and a required music class for every 6th grader. Aides in the classroom, funded by the PTA, allow teachers to break students into groups for targeted learning.

Giving is simple. Go to the Claremont website at claremontms.org and look for the Claremont Fund thermometer. Click on for how to give via a credit card or PayPal. Donors are also welcome to send a check to the school. Contributions are tax-deductible. See the website for more information: http://www.claremontms.org/claremont-pta/online-contributions

"From our great library to the music program, from additional teaching staff in the classroom to after school sports, the Claremont Fund really makes our school a special place," said Deehan.

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Chabot School Sets the Stage for Its Annual Auction;

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Dear Valued Donor,

It is that time of year to ask you again to donate generously to **Chabot's Annual Auction.** Our fundraising supports Art, Library, Music, Science, Spanish, and Media/Technology programs, as well as intervention programs focused on closing the achievement gap.

As State and local budgets continue to restrict funding for our nearly 600 kindergarten through fifth-grade students, reaching our fundraising goal of over **$500,000** is critical to supporting the continuity of these programs. Thank you for your support.

Our event this school year will be held **March 16, 2019**. We look to the generosity of our community, people like you, to donate goods and services for the auction.

We are happy to pick up your donation, you can drop it in the school office, or you can simply mail the item and attached Donor Information Form to:

Chabot Elementary; Attn: Fundraising; 6686 Chabot Road, Oakland, 94618

We are also offering sponsorships for this important event. Sponsorship levels range from $600-$3,500 and provide a great opportunity to raise exposure for your business, with various means of outreach to the local community, including acknowledgment in The Rockridge News, the weekly Chabot Broadcast, the auction catalog and our event website, as well as posters and banners at the school campus and the event itself. For more information, email chabotsponsorships@gmail.com.

We value your consideration, generosity and support. On behalf of the children at Chabot Elementary, we extend our heartfelt gratitude. Any questions, reply to this email address: chabotsponsorships@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Amy Hood & Mona Barra-Gibson,
Chabot Auction Procurement Co-Chairs
Chabot Elementary School
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Thank You For Your Contribution!

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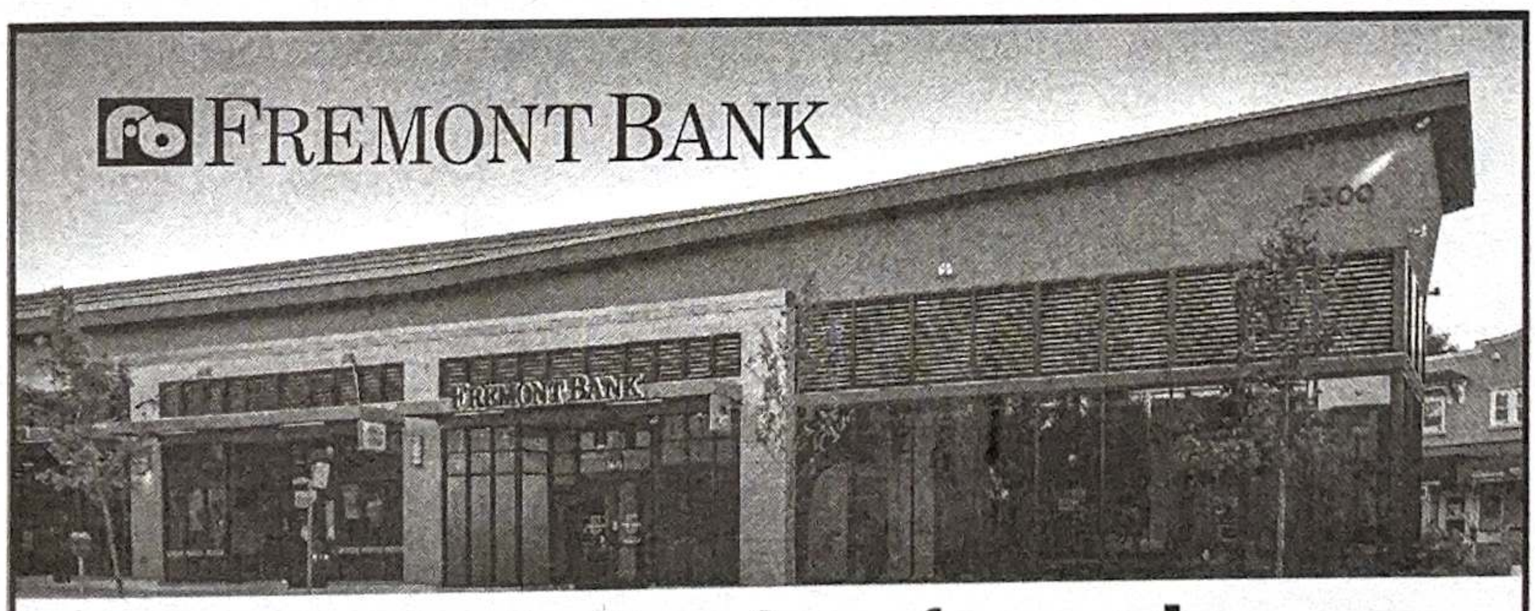
**Please Include Your Business Card, Brochure, Etc If Possible.

****Please Send Gift Certificates To: Chabot Elementary / Attn: Fundraising 6686 Chabot Rd., Oakland CA 94618**

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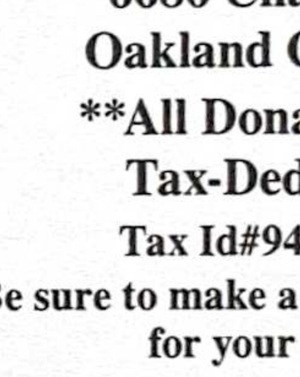


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Eyes on Rockridge

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas Thanks to Bambino Donors and Volunteers

by Judith Doner Berne

It could be Christmas every day at Bambino, the Rockridge-based nonprofit thrift shop which has benefitted UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital, Oakland, since it began in 1928 and is currently bedecked not just with boughs of holly but all things Christmas.

"We get Christmas items donated every week of the year," said Rockridge resident Carol Maes, who began volunteering in the late '90s and helped manage the store at 5290 College Avenue for 18 years. She gave it up at the end of last year in anticipation of the birth of twin granddaughters.

"I only do Christmas now," Maes told me. But that includes housing a hoard of holiday merchandise that Homesteader owner Brian Westendorf donated when he recently closed up his College Avenue home goods store and retired to the Midwest. "It's in the bedroom, the dining room, the living room," she detailed, before it was carted to Bambino in early November along with a basement-load of items, gathered throughout the year and housed by another volunteer.

Maes is one of the 50 to 60 volunteers who staff Bambino under the leadership of Lani Rumbada, a paid professional, who co-manages the shop along with volunteer Carol Miller, a Piedmont resident. "It took me 12 years to figure out how to do this and it's still evolving," said Rumbada who is famous for the hats she dons to carry out the shop's ever-changing themes.

Bambino, which early on was housed within Children's Hospital, has had locations on Shattuck and Telegraph avenues. But it has been at its College Avenue site since 1994. They do no paid advertising, but have a long list of people who signed up to receive regular emails announcing special merchandise and events. And they don't seem to lack for donors, as evidenced by the quantity and quality of what's on sale. Profits go up every year, Rumbada said. In 2016, they donated $145,000 and last year $147,000. "We gear up for the fourth quarter. I think we're on target," she said.



Rockridge resident Gail Taylor displays the sign she created to usher shoppers into Bambino's array of holiday offerings.

ALL PHOTOS: JUDITH DONER BERNE

"We do all the holidays," Miller told me, interviewed in her pumpkin suit suitable for both the Halloween and Thanksgiving shop themes. Donated articles "have to be in very good condition." Indeed, every holiday prompts a change in the shop's décor, and volunteers often dress accordingly. But the ambiance also changes when a particular collection has been donated.

"We do vignettes," Rumbada explained. For instance, when a group of African masks and wood and soapstone animals was assembled, it led to a safari motif. And, quite often, an array of Asian items – from standing screens to *objets d'art* – will take center stage. "If we can pick up the themes, we'll do it," Maes said. "We're really more of a boutique than a thrift shop," Miller added.

But it's only for Christmas that Bambino closes for two days (Friday and Saturday in early November) to completely revamp. Everyday items switch storage places with the holiday paraphernalia that has been amassed during the year. For the past two years, the Christmas collection was buoyed by a huge donation from a local doctor selling his home. "He had decorated each room of his 5,000-square-foot house for Christmas," Rumbada said. "He gave us a storage unit. This is the last of it."

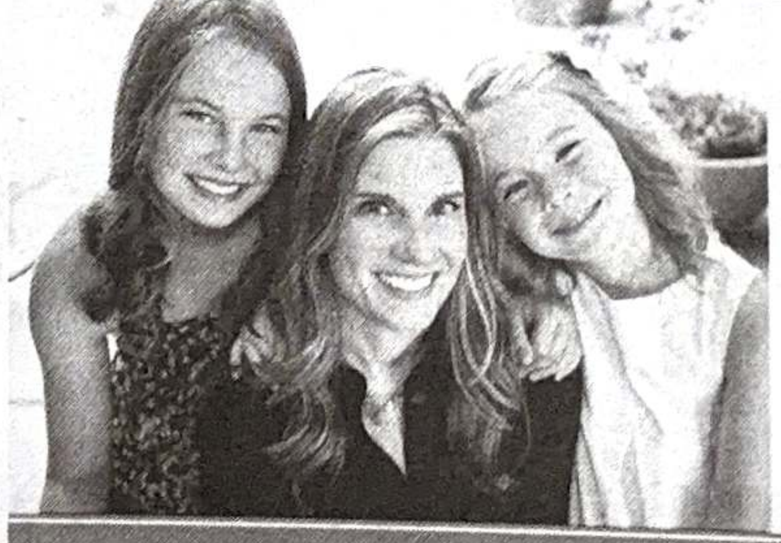
A Bambino Christmas, page 9

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A Bambino Christmas

from page 8

When I visited on the first day of closing, at least a dozen volunteers were busy pulling tree skirts out of boxes, assembling ornaments to go on artificial trees, culling related items such as candles and Christmas plates and stuffed Santas, plus pricing and sometimes re-pricing the hundreds, maybe even thousands, of donations.

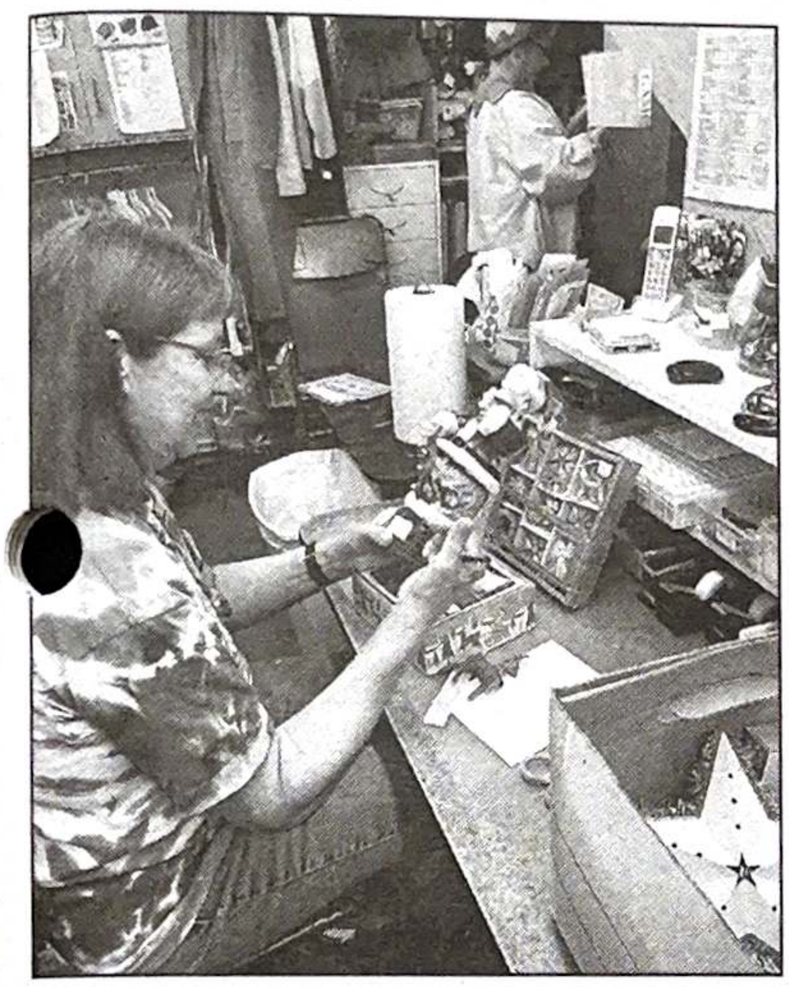
Returning the next day, I watched Bill Molmen, a former Rockridge resident who now lives near Lake Merritt, and Roger Eliassen, his friend from Piedmont, create a montage of Christmas candles, tossing out any that weren't saleable in their eyes. "We're trying to get the best candles out," Molmen said. "But we are squabbling over the prices" which they saw as too high. They called Rumbada over for a decision. "Let's half-price everything," she suggested.

"We were shopping and we liked the store," Molmen said, recounting how the two became volunteers. "They were having so much fun." Others, such as Sandy Turnbull, said: "I'm paying forward. My daughter had to spend a lot of time at Children's Hospital when she was small. She's a med student now, inspired by everything she saw when she was a patient. Ironically, she's loving pediatrics." Similarly, "Forty years ago, I had a wonderful pediatrician and he was on the board at Children's," said Fredora (Freddie) Darmstadt, who lives on the Rockridge/Berkeley border. She and many others are part of the Children's Hospital's auxiliary known as Branches.

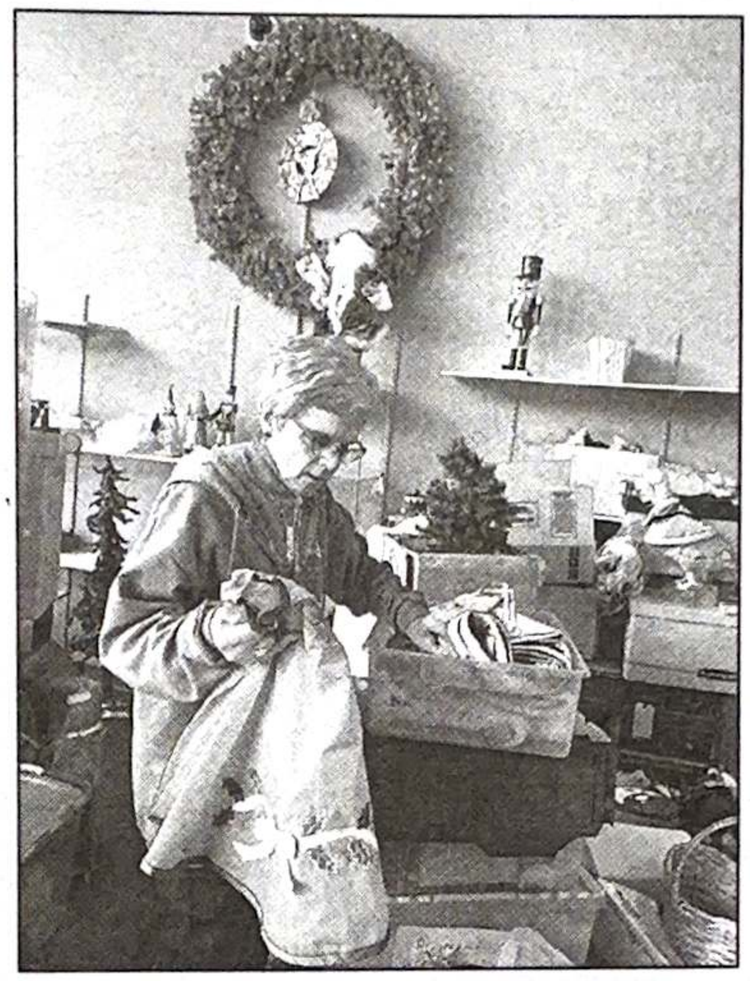
Once most of the boxes were unpacked, the volunteers with decorating expertise arrived to put on the finishing touches. Susan Sperry and Colleen Lund, both of Moraga, spent the three weeks prior making Christmas centerpieces using handpicked donated items. They placed them in selected spots throughout the store, as well as adjusting other displays. And sometime, throughout the process, 25 assorted wreaths were hung on high, encircling the room.

"Great job everybody," Rumbada, standing in the midst of what used to be chaos, called out. "She does that all the time," Miller said. "It's such a team effort." "How many man (and woman) hours have gone into this?" Rockridge resident Gail Taylor wondered aloud. No one had added them up. But as Rumbada said: "The magic happens."

Shop hours at 5290 College are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesday-Friday, and noon to 4 p.m. on Saturdays. More details at 510/658-7473 or: http://bambinothriftshop.org.



Montclair resident Sandy Turnbull relies on the Internet, knowledgeable fellow volunteers and common sense when pricing items.



Oakland volunteer Lori Framsted unpacks a box of tree skirts.



Colleen Lund of Moraga and Chris Caporicci of Rockridge stretch to add an evergreen garland to the shop's holiday atmosphere.

For comments on this column or suggestions for future columns, email judyberne@att.net.

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Competition Remains Strong in Rockridge

Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
11/5/2018	3	1	408 63rd St	$925,000	$925,000	14	$1,410,000
11/16/2018	3	2	5355 Miles Ave	$1,349,000	$1,349,000	14	$1,650,000
11/19/2018	4	2	5811 Lawton Ave	$1,725,000	$1,725,000	15	$2,150,000
11/20/2018	2	1	339 Glendale Ave	$949,000	$949,000	12	$1,350,000
11/21/2018	4	1.5	5835 Keith Ave	$1,395,000	$1,395,000	15	$1,575,000
11/28/2018	3	1.5	375 60th Street	$1,095,000	$1,095,000	14	$1,540,000
11/28/2018	3	1.5	5387 Miles Ave	$1,195,000	$1,195,000	14	$1,270,000

Homes sold in November closed 27% over the asking price on average.

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Letters to the Editor

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

Broadway Traffic Changes Bring Unplanned Problems

Editor:

Burdens vs. Benefits, Contemplated While Sitting In Traffic:

Jon Gabel's letter in the November 3, 2018, issue, raises good points regarding the reconfiguration of traffic on our neighborhood's stretch of Broadway. As Gabel notes, the City clearly "did not assess the impact of the change on travel times, fuel consumption, or air pollution."

There is now a significantly increased backup of cars on Broadway during commute hours, generating exhaust gases as they sit idling in the congestion City staff has imposed on us. We breathe more exhaust fumes, consume more fossil fuels, contribute more to global warming, while those who commute to and from work lose additional time in traffic. Has anyone weighed these burdens against perceived benefits?

And, yes, what of those empty bicycle lanes that are mostly the cause of this congestion? Great if they were being used. Encouraging the use of bicycles is a good thing. But has anyone on City staff studied bicycle use patterns to determine on which streets to place bicycle lanes such that they would actually be used? Certainly, someone seems to have actually studied bicycle use: count the many rental bike racks on and near College and Telegraph avenues, and how many there aren't on our neighborhood's stretch of Broadway. And what's the position of the Rockridge Community Planning Council's Land Use Committee on these new traffic patterns? Traffic and congestion are part of land use decision making, are they not?

— Donatas Januta

Stuart Flashman, chair of the RCPC Land Use Committee, and Alden Connor, co-chair of the Transportation committee, reply:

Actually, while consideration of the traffic implications of new development is part of the environmental review of land use proposals (although the Legislature decided several years back that increased congestion would no longer be considered an environmental impact), studying roadway configurations and their effects is not within the Land Use Committee's purview. That responsibility properly belongs with RCPC's Transportation Committee. Those community members interested in assisting that committee in studying the City's proposals for transportation changes should contact the chairs of the committee at: transportation@rockridge.org to get involved.

More Genetics Information, Please

Editor:

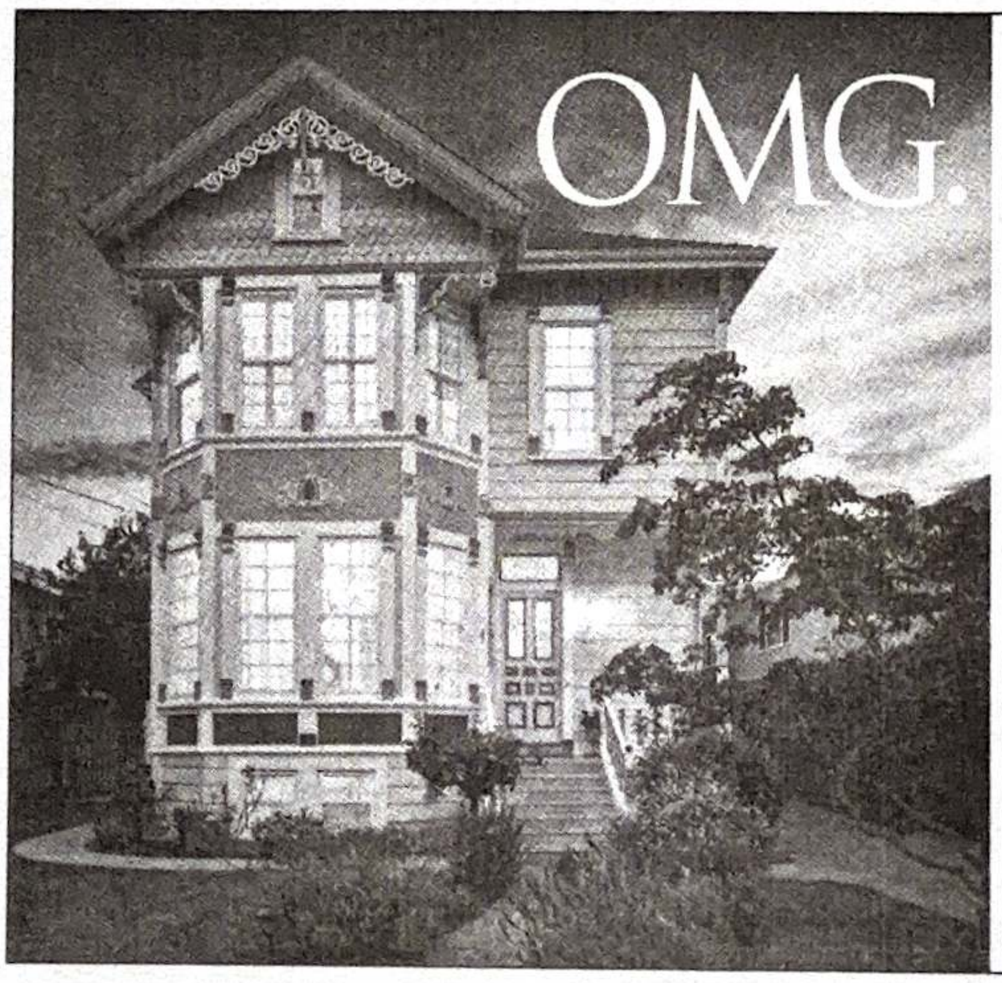
Thank you for the recent article by Judith Doner Berne about our neighbor who has so many half-siblings. As Judith pointed out, fertilization technology has enabled one sperm donor to father possibly hundreds of children. While this has brought joy to many families, it also brings up the need for genetic counseling when young people from this generation find partners and plan families of their own.

If many children are conceived with sperm from the same sperm donor — especially in the same geographic area — the likelihood increases for half-siblings to come in contact with each other. If they aren't aware of their shared parentage, this could result in tragic outcomes if they have children together.

We have many knowledgeable and learned professionals in Rockridge, and I would love to see a follow-up article about genetics, if someone is willing to share their expertise.

— Karen Gee





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FROG Park Swings and More+ Playground Update

by Carol Behr, Chair, FROG Park Committee

Many of you recall our Swings and More+ project at Big Frog (Hardy Park) and the successful community fundraising effort for new toddler swings, exciting new accessible play equipment extending play opportunities for our children, while keeping Big Frog one of the most accessible parks in Oakland. Our Swings and More+ project will also be adding a bench, rocks and improved poured-in-place rubber surfacing in the expansion area. The latest design and play equipment can be viewed at www.frogpark.org.

Great News to Share

Oakland Public Works has allocated $88,000 from Measure HH for construction and matching the money raised by the community.

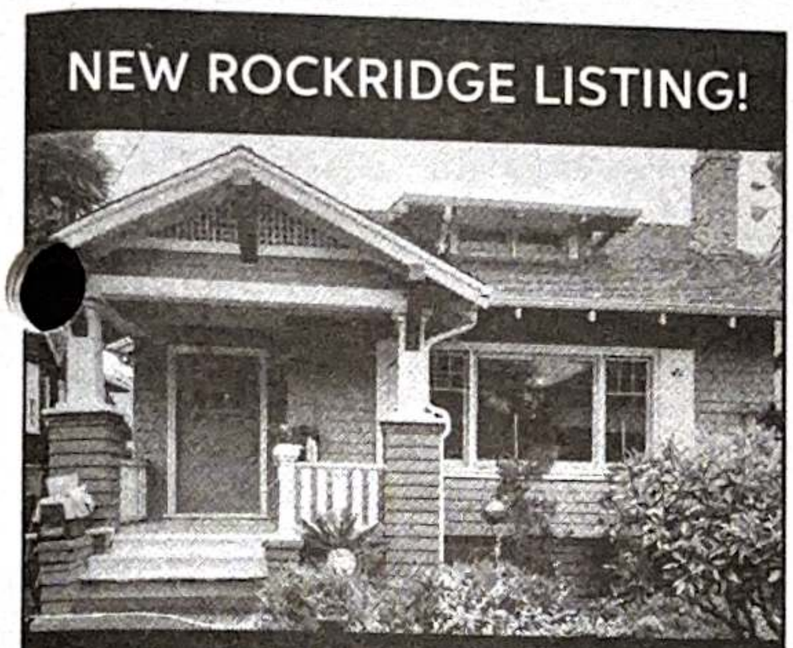
The FROG Park Committee thanks the Public Works Departmenet for its continued hands-on collaboration with us and on-going support for our project and our community's efforts.

Next Steps: Construction Planning

The City of Oakland is working to identify a contractor to implement the design and install the new play equipment. They will also facilitate construction. Though this project has moved slower than we hoped, all our raised funds ($50K from you, our community and foundation grants; ADA grant; and Caltrans 4th Bore allocation), and the Measure HH funds, our designer and City partners will further ensure our project's successful implementation. More dates and updates to come.

Volunteer: To volunteer for our FROG PARK Committee, contact Chair@frogpark.org. The following roles are available:

- Communications coordinator and writer (e.g., writing articles, social media and assisting with marketing)
- Event planner (e.g., park events and celebrations to bring our community together)
- Events coordinator (e.g., help organize our Earth Day and other cleanup events with our Committee)
- Volunteer Coordinator (help build our volunteer outreach database and activities)
- Maintenance and gardening support: partner with our maintenance coordinator and help plan planting activities – butterfly plants, etc.; help coordinate with City on repairs.



Off-Market Opportunity in the "Golden Triangle"

5505 TAFT AVENUE

Delightful Craftsman bungalow just off of College Avenue featuring many original details plus a renovated kitchen in a vintage style! Level lot and roomy detached garage for studio/ADU perhaps?

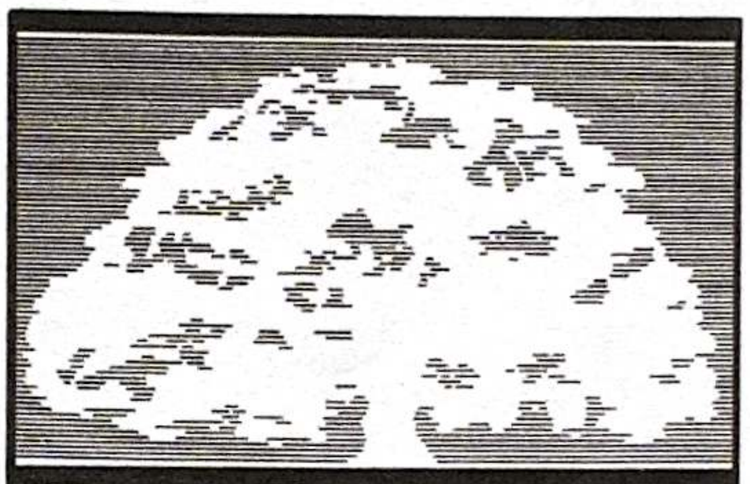
- 2+ bedrooms · 1 bath
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Shades of Yesteryear in Rockridge Terrain

by Ben Friedman

Last spring, I was inspired to write about the empty lot at the College-Claremont intersection when I saw it come alive following the winter rains (as it has again). As a new California resident after spending my first 30 years on the East Coast, it was a thrill to observe the results of the rainy season. I felt like an explorer, watching a natural phenomenon for the first time as the Earth burst forth in grasses and flowers.

I recently learned something remarkable about another local wild oasis, Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve, a protected area in the Oakland-Berkeley hills behind the Claremont Hotel. In 1858, with the Gold Rush booming and the need to get news to the growing California population, information reached the Bay Area via Claremont Canyon. It traced a path that would become Claremont Avenue and Telegraph Avenue as the transcontinental telegraph wire reached the Pacific Ocean via Rockridge (or what would later become Rockridge.) Even before the beginning of transcontinental telegraphy service, Pony Express riders carried their mail pouches along this route, if they had missed the steam boat at Sacramento. Decades before the car and before our neighborhood's grid was established, the geography of our community was largely defined by the path of this information lifeline.

This factoid has renewed that feeling of being an explorer as I complete my first year living in our neighborhood. Rockridge is a part of America's westward expansion, a neighborhood defined by Western history itself.

How cool is that? I imagine the telegraph line, carrying the days' news through the West's empty desolation, aiming for the Bay Area. The cable climbs the last crest of the Berkeley Hills, then winds down Claremont Canyon and erupts out of the hills into Rockridge, racing down Claremont Avenue past our empty lot and onto Telegraph Avenue and beyond.

Next time you find yourself at the intersection of College and Claremont, meditating on the need to turn our little wedge of urban blight into a park, look up Claremont Avenue at the majestic hill and transport yourself back 150 years, when California's growing relevance necessitated a telegraph wire through our neighborhood.

Yesteryear, page 14

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Holiday wishes: As we give one, let's also be "present" and wrap it and someone in a hug. Send our gifts of love and joy. As we prepare a festive meal, let's consider donating one. As we make things, let's also make memories. Let us feel abundance and gratitude.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!



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Let's close out 2018 with 100 percent distribution coverage of The Rockridge News. All we need is for a volunteer to step forward to become a block captain for the following route:

Route 04A: Block Captain to deliver to Harwood, both sides from College Avenue to 6049/51 and across the street from 6052, then back to College Avenue.

Call 510/547-3855 or email Susan at smontauk@gmail.com to volunteer. The newsletter is published the first weekend of each month except August. Your bundle to distribute will be delivered to your doorstep.

Susan Montauk
The Rockridge News
Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation
h. 510/547-3855
c. 510/229-2584

Hardy Dog Park

Hardy Dog Park Group wishes you Happy Holidays. While fundraising for our dog park renovations is on hold, please remember the pets impacted by the fires and consider donating to the SPCA or another rescue group this December.

We will be back in 2019 with updates on renovation designs and plans.

As always, we need clean, empty newspaper bags. Drop them at either entrance to Hardy Dog Park. Please: no bags that had food inside, as that attracts rodents.

Monthly clean-ups are the first Saturday of each month from 9-10:30 a.m. With winter rains finally upon us, we will continue our flood mitigation to prevent the lakes that used to plague our park. If you can't make our monthly cleanup, please lend a hand while visiting our park by re-stocking the bag dispensers, picking up trash, or corralling the wayward tennis balls.

Happy Paw-lidays



Cole Coffee survived a lengthy closure to finally open its new street-front coffee shop and cafe´ on College and 63rd street. Now the bean shop seems stuck in construction limbo, but the word is out: Open by the end of the year. Patience is a virtue.

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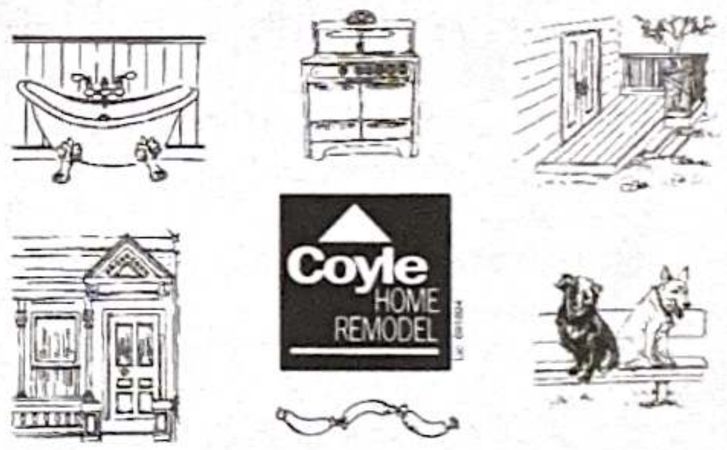


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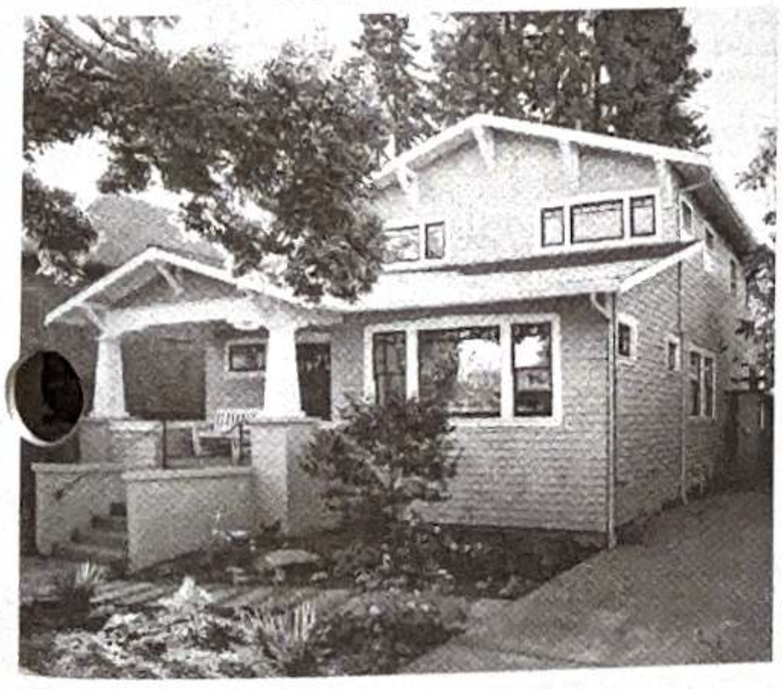
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Duck Soup

from page 2

Her heart was full of love and her willingness to give seemed endless. She fostered her niece's three boys for several years and acted as an unofficial ambassador to Oakland, hosting foreign exchange students. She welcomed them into our city and her home, providing meals, companionship, mentoring and guidance as needed.

She was always certain to take time for herself. Naps especially. She treasured family and friends and her vacations. She loved being out in nature and took time to do the things she loved, like travel, camping and dance, her favorite activity of all time.

So, when you pass by 5304 Bryant at the corner of College, pause and look at the sidewalk in front of the house. There you will see Beccarae's handprints and her name inscribed in the sidewalk cement. Think about her and all of her good deeds. I hope they stay there forever as a reminder of all that she built here in this community, with her own two hands.

Beccarae Calato's children will host a West Coast Celebration of Life at a later date. They look forward to celebrating with the hundreds of Duck Soup families, friends, neighbors and those who knew her. Contact Jamie Longbine at 510/390-4334 or jrlongbine@gmail.com for information.

Land Use Committee

from page 3

primarily market-rate residential units while providing on-site parking at a rate of only about 0.6-0.7 parking spaces per unit. ***Would dedication of some of the units as senior housing, or increasing the amount of below-market-rate units, decrease the parking demand?***

4) ***Will there be adequate connections between the project and nearby shopping areas, including Shops at the Ridge and College & Piedmont Avenue shopping areas, to provide a positive stimulus to area retail?***

5) ***Is the location, not within easy walking distance of any transit hub, an appropriate place to put the type of high-density housing project being proposed?***

6) ***Does providing some publicly accessible private open space; preserving three historically significant buildings; and providing approximately 5 percent below-market-rate residential units for artists; constitute sufficient community benefit to justify the impacts the project seems likely to cause?***

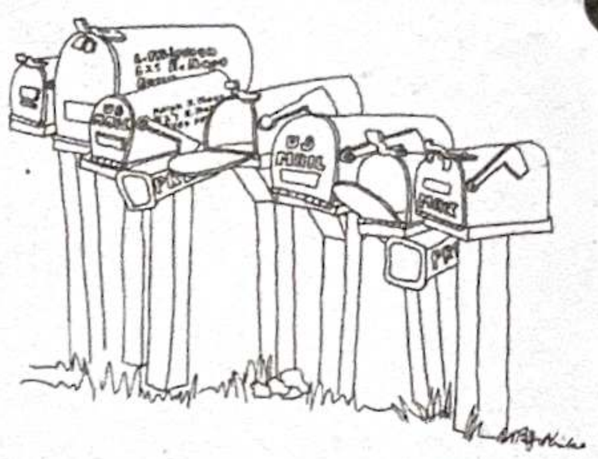
RCPC plans to devote its January Town Hall meeting, in part, to a presentation of the project for the Rockridge community, followed by analysis and discussion. The input should help inform the RCPC Board in deciding what position to take on the project.

Yesteryear

from page 12

I can almost remove the buildings and roads from the view. There I stand, one foot in the present and one in the past, gawking at the massive Claremont Ridge extending into the redwood-strewn lowlands below. For me, it's easy to imagine the telegraph line snaking out of the wilderness and penetrating an undeveloped home-less Rockridge, portending the growth of California.

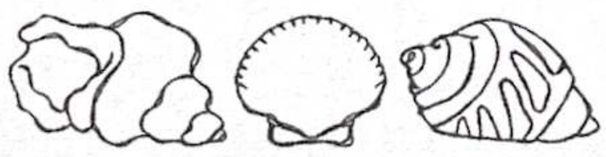
I enjoy thinking of myself here in this historical context, a pioneer who has left the East in favor of the wilds of California. I moved to Rockridge from Washington D.C, last year in part because I wanted to feel closer to nature, and specifically closer to the massive scale that defines western landscapes. Though Mount Diablo, the Sierra Nevada, and the coast are all within reach, I feel the most gratitude for the connection to nature that we have right here in Rockridge. Even in the routine of daily life in our neighborhood, scurrying across that big intersection, one need only look up to find nature.



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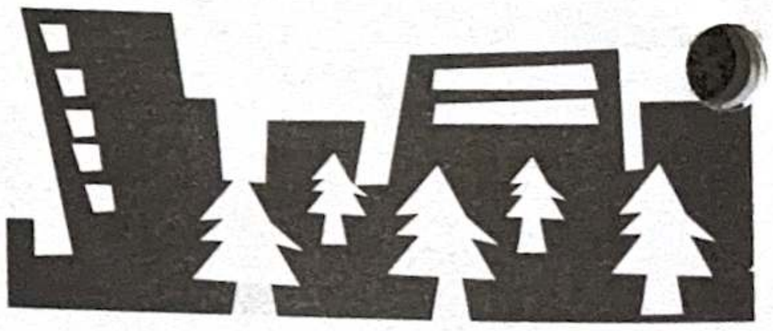
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Email Rockridge News Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), or mail to: Rockridge News Community Calendar, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, 4611. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month. **Compiled by Jo Ellis**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

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

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

- **SPECIAL EVENTS: all ages welcome.**
- **Stretching for Caregivers:** bring your children to **free** basic stretching session for adults. Wednesdays 12/12, & 12/19, 10:10am.
- **Chess Club:** learn the basics; play against a worthy opponent. **Instruction and chess sets provided. Best for ages 8 to 12**. Wed., 12/12, 3:30-4:30pm.
- **Mix It Up Family Game Night:** Bring your favorite game or try one of ours. Every Tues 6:30-7:45pm.
- **Family Craft Night: Every 2nd Tues**, 6:30-7:45pm. /11: Textile Stamps.
- **Pen Pal Card Exchange:** Write to kids at libraries across the United States. Info at Children's Reference Desk.
- **Winter BINGO:** For kids up to 12. Pick up BINGO card in December; fill a row to win book of your choice. Collect prize at the library between Dec 26 and Jan 19.

FOR TEENS

- **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.
- **Teen 'Scape Program**: Play video games and make craft; every Tues, Thurs, and Fri, 3:30 - 5pm; Wed, 1:30 - 5pm (during school days).
- **Study Room Hours**: High school tutor available for homework help. Tues, and Thurs 4 - 5pm; Wed, 2:45 - 4pm (during school days)
- **Lip Balm Making Workshop** presented by **Rock Paper Scissor:** Mix favorite oils and fragrances. 12/12, 2pm.
- **Make Felt Banners**: with your message. 1/9, 2pm.

FOR ADULTS

*** **eBook Help**: Work one-on-one with a librarian to download eBooks. Fridays, 2 -3:30pm. Make appt. online or call 597-5017.

- **Second Saturday Book Club:** 2nd Sat each month, 3 -4pm. Phone for details and book selection: 597-5017.
- **Writers Support/Critique Group**: Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. 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.
- **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. **NOTE: not in Jan. (New Year's Day).**
- **Knitting Meet-Up**: Third Sat. each month, 3pm. Bring your knit and crochet project; **all levels**
- **Practicing Mindfulness:** to relax, renew, and set positive goals for the new year. Sat, 1/5, 10:30am – 12pm.

Upstairs Gallery

Dec: Judy Shelton, paintings; **Tina Nelson**, sketches. *People and Places.*

Library Hours
Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed, Thurs & Sat: 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri, 12 to 5:30pm.
Closed: Sun and Mon.
Also, Tuesdays, 12/25 and 1/1,2019.

Art Exhibition

"Generations": Art show by **Marsha Balian, Jacquie Cole, Nicole Laby** and **Alise Anderson.** From now through end of year.

SOBU, 5451 College Ave., 817-4787 Info: www.marshabalian.com or www.sobusobu.com.

North Oakland Senior Center

5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way

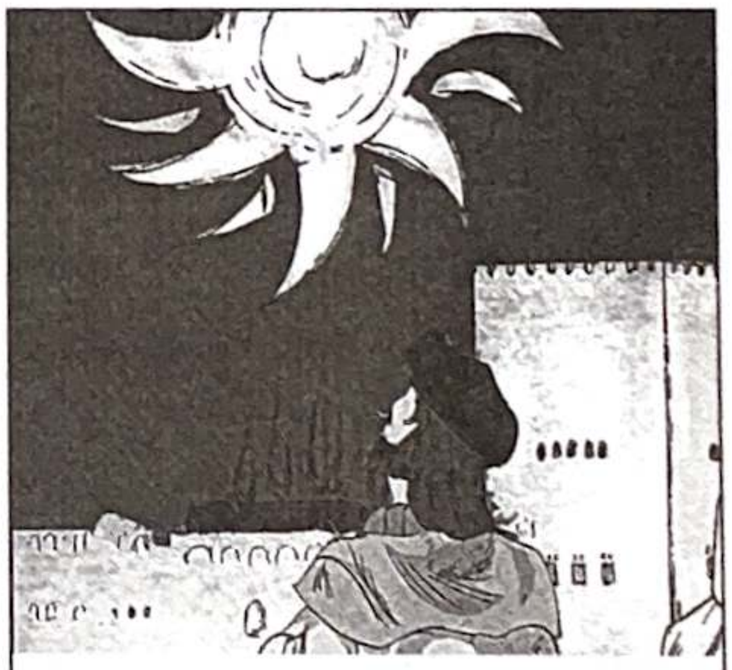
Mon. – Fri., 9am to 4:30pm. **Programs include:** Arts/ crafts; health counseling, dancing and exercise; trips, tours and theater outings; Alzheimer's support groups, computer classes/more.

- **Mini-Craft Faire:** Handcrafted gifts and Sr. Center T-shirts. **Dec 13, 10am - 1pm.**
- **Annual Very Merry Holiday Party:** DJ and dancing; Hoover School carolers; buffet; door prizes and performances. Advance Tickets: $10/ members; $15/non-members. **Dec 13, 1 -3pm.**

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.



Ancient Mysteries of Andalusian Spain

Our Revels story begins in 1600 in Spain's Andalusia. Three individuals a young Moorish woman, a Sephardic Jew, and a Castilian scullery maid - happen to meet, each armed with a mysterious clue guiding them on a quest.

December 8 through 16,
Oakland's Scottish Rite Theater
1547 Lakeside Dr, Oakland
Box Office *510/452-9334*
Open Mondays - Thursdays
office@californiarevels.org

Library Changes

from page 3

Additionally, Stretching for Caregivers has become a regular event for adults with children. This popular program is taught by a professional yoga instructor, and is made possible by financial support from the Friends of the Rockridge Library (FORL).

"The Friends of the Rockridge Library board of directors is really excited about the new year. Over the course of 2018, we worked closely with the branch librarians to support the ideas they had for new programs," said FORL President Elizabeth Falkner.

"With the expanded hours and days of service coming in 2019, FORL is looking forward to our continued partnership with library staff to explore more ways we can get creative and provide materials and programs that are meaningful to our community," she said.

Even with Measure D funds, not all aspirations for the branch can be met under the City budget. **Tax-deductible donations to the Friends of the Rockridge Library help branch staff deliver quality services to patrons of all ages.** Readers may make a gift in support of the library by using the green form included in this edition of The Rockridge News, or by visiting www.rockridgefriends.org to make a secure online donation.

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