THE Rockridge News
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1951 Coffee Supports Local Refugees One Cup At A Time

— by Jorja Siemons

Last June, 1951 Coffee's Rockridge location opened its doors to become its third cafe working to contribute more than just specialty coffees. In addition to serving customers, 1951 Coffee (6023 College Ave.) promotes the wellbeing of refugees, asylum seekers, and special immigrant visa holders by providing employment and social networking opportunities.

When Doug Hewitt and Rachel Taber founded 1951 Coffee in 2015, there were few outlets for refugee employment. Through their work at the International Rescue Committee (IRC), one of nine refugee resettlement organizations in the U.S., Hewitt and Taber became witnesses to a national system struggling with, as Hewitt puts it, the "herculean" task of helping refugees. Limited budget allocations prevent refugee agencies like the

See Coffee, page 12

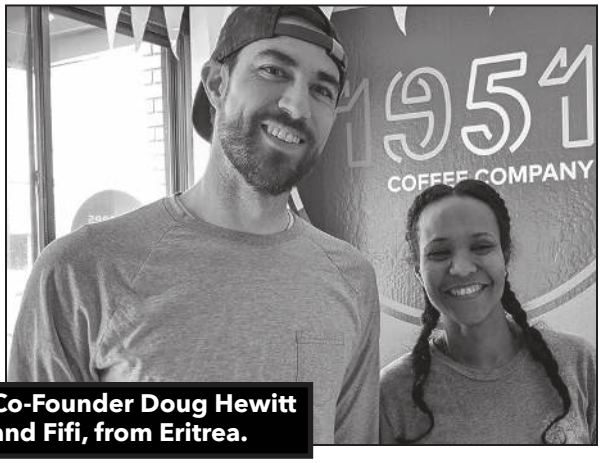


Photo: Anna L. Marks

Co-Founder Doug Hewitt and Fifi, from Eritrea.

Frog Park: New Equipment Unveiled February 9

— by Carol Behr, Chair FROG Committee

Opening is finally here. Join us this Sunday, February 9, 10:30am, to unveil the long-awaited new swings and play equipment at Big Frog (Hardy Park). Friends of the Rockridge Park (FROG) Committee will host City staff, elected officials, and FROG Committee announcements, kid-friendly activities, coffee and goodies.

Bring family and friends to celebrate our local community donors and grantors, The 4th Bore Coalition, and the City of Oakland for helping raise more than $235K for upgrades and improvements. Please check frogpark.org for more info. ■

Elections for RCPC Board Scheduled for April

— by Leonora Sea, RCPC Chair

The Rockridge Community Planning Council's annual election of board members will be held at the April 16, 2020 Town Hall. The RCPC Board supports local community projects; represents Rockridge to the City; strengthens the neighborhood through its leadership; and keeps the community informed on issues of importance to Rockridge.

The upcoming election offers an annual opportunity for Rockridge residents who love the neighborhood and want to become more engaged to declare their candidacy for a board position. Candidates must be 18 years or older at the time of the election

See Elections, page 10

Masons Open Their Doors For Annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser

— by Shona Armstrong

You have passed it many times. The Masonic Lodge at 5449 College Avenue (between Forest and Hudson) is normally closed to the public. But, once a year, the members of the Oakland-Durant-Rockridge Masonic Lodge open their doors, don aprons, and serve breakfast to the neighborhood as part of a fundraiser for Claremont Middle School. This year, the 11th Annual Claremont Middle School Pancake Breakfast is being held on Leap Day — Saturday, Feb. 29th, and all are welcome.

Ed Stevenson, a former lodge master, came up with the idea of the pancake breakfast to support Claremont, the local middle school. He remembered how the brothers were nervous the first time they held the pancake breakfast because someone had to run

See Masons, page 10



Photo: Claremont Dad's Club

Students in the Claremont Middle School Jazz Band perform live sets during the pancake breakfast at the Rockridge Masonic Hall.

Concerned About Disasters? Learn How to Prepare

— by Doug Mosher, Oakland Firesafe Council

Although wildfires and public safety power shutoffs may not be foremost on your mind, we know another dry season is just around the corner. And earthquakes, of course, are a year-round possibility. In light of devastating wildfire and earthquake disaster threats to our city, the Oakland Firesafe Council is launching a new program called Oakland Community Preparedness and Response (OCP&R).

This program will provide an awareness and educational workshop (about 90 minutes in length), hand-out materials (printed and available from a new website soon) and ongoing support to help increase the overall community preparedness level and to improve disaster response capabilities. This program is planned to begin at the end of this month.

Please note that the OCP&R workshop is not a substitute for CORE/CERT training, but instead is an overview of the important steps folks should take to prepare — starting with organizing their neighborhood. Oakland Fire Dept/Emergency Management Services is working on re-starting CORE/CERT training and hopefully this will be available soon.

The OCP&R program is focusing on the Oakland Hills and foothill areas of our city first, as these are at the highest risk of a wildfire or Hayward Fault earthquake disaster. OCP&R will eventually cover the entire City of Oakland.

If you are the leader of an organized neighborhood group, please email ocpr@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org with your contact information to receive additional information and to understand how the OCP&R workshop and materials would benefit your neighborhood. If you are not yet in an organized neighborhood group but would like to help build one and receive the OCP&R workshop and support, please contact us to get started.

Additional information can be found at https://oaklandfiresafecouncil.org/oakland-cpr/. ■

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Articles and letters submitted for publication may be emailed to the editor or sent to the address 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 for clarity and brevity at the editor's discretion and without notice to the submitter.

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Newsletter advertising deadline for the March issue is February 20.

Advertising rates are $28/column inch. Six-month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at (510) 653-3210 (after noon), or email joellis1@hotmail.com. RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad it deems inappropriate. (Classified ad contact: page 14.)

Rockridge Community Planning Council Land Use Committee

The February Land Use Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, February 26th at 7:30 PM at the Rockridge Branch Library. Agenda may include further updates on the use of Safeway settlement funds, Shops at the Ridge Phase 2, and the Rockridge Housing Study. Please check on https://rockridge.org the previous week to confirm meeting's date, time, and place.

RCPC Land Use Committee Update — February 2020

—by Stuart Flashman, Land Use Committee Chair

Shops at the Ridge Shopping Center (5100 Broadway)

RCPC notified the City of Oakland about the blighted condition in the "Phase 2" area of the "Shops At the Ridge" project, which has rubble, trash, and weeds over most of the area. The City did an initial inspection, however, no further action has apparently been taken. RCPC will write a follow-up letter to the City asking that further steps be taken to remedy the blighted situation.

Rockridge Housing Study

The Committee discussed what further work needs to be done on the Housing Study to have it ready for presentation at RCPC's April 16th Annual Meeting. Some additional "example" parcels need to be examined to determine what size parcels would likely be developed under the different scenarios. Also, work needs to be done on specifying the additional incentives that would be proposed to promote building affordable housing. Darin Smith's work on analyzing the scenarios will be built upon, perhaps using help from graduate students or other volunteers.

College Avenue Safeway Settlement Funds

The Committee is continuing to try to nail down the expected cost of the various identified improvements intended to mitigate the new Safeway's adverse effects on pedestrians and bicyclists on the streets near the store. Thus far, RCPC has not been able to arrange a meeting with the Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT) staff to discuss the improvements and their costs — a necessary step before a request is sent to Safeway to fund those improvements. A follow-up letter will be sent to OakDOT (with copies to other Oakland officials and Council Member Dan Kalb) to try to get a meeting set up.

SB 50 (Wiener/Skinner/Wicks)

SB 50 was revived in early January, but was ultimately voted down by the Senate on January 30th. The bill, which would have resulted in up-zoning areas around transit stations and along major bus routes, was held in committee last year. The bill was further amended before re-introduction to somewhat increase flexibility at the local level, but remained highly controversial. Senator Wiener has already introduced two "spot bills" with the specific intent of making another try at a housing densification bill in this legislative session. For these reasons, the fight over what to do about California's affordable housing problem is far from over this year. ■



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Letters to the Editor

A Better Solution to High-Rise Living

Dear Editor,

The proposed development for the California College of the Arts (CCA) Campus site that includes a 19-story tower apparently tries to sweeten the deal with promises of historic preservation and "green space."

It's a bad tradeoff. If the developer requires a certain number of units to make a profit, better to preserve less and make full use of the site. Skip the 19-story execrable panopticon that would glare on the neighborhood for decades to come.

The attractive five- and six-story new buildings on Broadway (Baxter and Merrill Gardens) are models of adequate density, proportion and good design. Let's follow them.

— Julio Ozores, Fairview Park

"Thorny Dilemmas" Around CCA Sale

Dear Editor,

The three January 2020 letters to the editor regarding the planned development of the California College of the Arts (CCA) property were well-written and thought-provoking, but all failed to the address the two questions that concern me most: The fiscal obligations of historic nonprofit educational institutions; and the thorny questions of deciding who is an artist.

The CCA land has been a nonprofit since its inception 113 years ago (founded 1907), and therefore has most likely not paid market-rate property taxes for more than a century. And, whether or not the Prop 13 revision for corporations and businesses passes in 2020, it will undoubtedly not impact the transfer or sale of the CCA property.

It is not right for CCA to sell itself to the highest bidder so it can build affordable housing for its students in San Francisco. CCA has an unpaid historic moral and ethical debt to Oakland. The development of for-profit housing is appropriate for the large empty parcel/s at the Rockridge Shopping Center (Broadway and Pleasant Valley). CCA should be required to develop only affordable and low-income properties and housing on its site in keeping with its past history.

The conversion of 35 student dorms into 24 artist-occupied low-income apartment-studios is equally problematic. Ninety-nine percent of all artists are low-income. Who will decide who is eligible? And once eligible, how will future eligibility be decided? Should visual artists have priority over recording artists? What about artists who change their media, make it to the big time, or switch careers?

These thorny dilemmas can and should be decided, but by whom? CCA has effectively reneged on its right to nonprofit status.

— Maryly Snow, Chabot Canyon

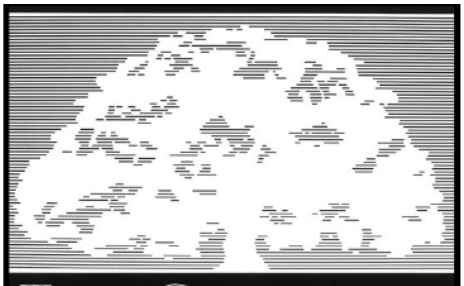
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Accessory Dwellings Expand Existing Livable Spaces

— by Loni Gray

(This is the second article in a two-part series.)

To continue our discussion about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), several amendments took effect in January 2019. They take grand strides to further empower homeowners to build accessory units. And as strange as it sounds, the State has given local control at the most intimate level — the family home. The new law (§ 65852.150(b)) states that local ordinances shall not be "arbitrary, excessive or burdensome so as to unreasonably restrict the ability of homeowners to create accessory dwelling units." The intent is to spur appropriately scaled infill housing.

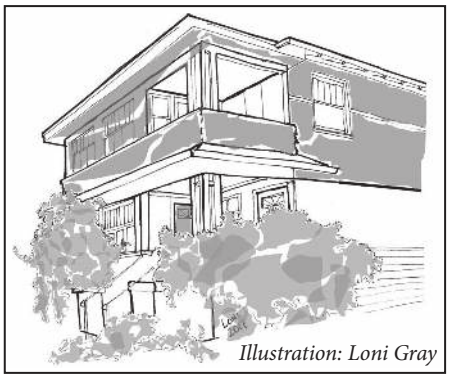


Illustration: Loni Gray

The amendments go on to clarify: Short-term rentals are residencies that are less than 30 days. Next, they standardize more of the design and development criteria while also limiting when cities can apply certain land use tools, such as percentage of main dwelling; lot coverage; or floor area ratio. The law now requires all ADU heights to be at least 16 feet. Lastly, there can be no minimum lot size restriction, a boon to homeowners with modest lots.

In simplest terms, the amended ADU law gives owners of residential property the right to build a detached ADU that's up to 800 square feet and does not exceed 16 feet in height if they can situate the ADU at least four feet from both the back and side boundaries. Plus, as mentioned in last month's article, the law now permits two ADUs on residential properties — one in an existing building and one free-standing.

As before, if you wish to build within the footprint of an existing garage that's at least 150 square feet, then it can be closer to or even on the lot line. Understand, however, that you will be required to use one-hour fire-rated materials on walls closer than five feet from the lot line you share, and there can be specific limits to window placement to afford privacy.

Another new element this year is the maximum sizes that cities can establish: A studio or one-bedroom size limit must be at least 850 square feet; a two-bedroom unit must be 1,000 square feet. We're not required to build more than we need of course, but cities cannot restrict these dimensions to less than these parameters. In all, it's making ADU regulations more consistent.

Also, these small homes invite in new neighbors with diverse talents that keep a healthy mix in our local area. It makes us more resilient as a community. Parking is another issue. Rockridge is a busy place. And the new law holds that no new parking can be required if the new ADU is created inside an existing building; within one-half mile from a bus stop or public transit or one block from a rideshare; is located in an architecturally significant or historic district; or if street parking permits are required but not offered to the ADU occupant.

That pretty much means Oakland can't require off-street ADU parking in Rockridge. However, when required, the law explains that homeowners may use tandem driveway parking and add off-street parking anywhere on their property, including the setbacks. Rockridge homeowners building ADUs could use these places for parking as well if they chose.

In my first article, I said that the new ADU law is a gift that allows us to put down long-term roots and invest in our neighborhoods. The question is: How do we wish to live intentionally as a part of this community? Would it be politic to try to help with parking as one way we keep Rockridge a thriving neigh-

ADUs, page 9

School/Community Events

Treasures for Book Lovers at College Prep Annual Sale

— by Laurie Dornbrand

For one weekend in February, the 22nd and 23rd, the Buttner Auditorium on the College Preparatory School campus is transformed into a fabulous used book store offering thousands of quality books at amazingly low prices.

This sale, the 26th annual, is a favorite of local book lovers (and book dealers) who are attracted by the vast selection and great bargains. Most books are $1 to $2, with some even lower and a few slightly higher. And this year, for the first time, the entire Sunday sale will be a $5 bargain bag sale.



Photo: College Preparatory School Parents Association

Books are donated by members and friends of the school community and reflect diverse interests: books to entertain and books to inspire, fiction ranging from literary treasures to casual reading, nonfiction of many types, and a huge selection of children's books for toddlers to teens. Many are recent works in excellent condition, including best sellers, and some media.

There are buried treasures and unique finds, with occasional special collections. One dealer speaks fondly of the year a trove of plays and theatre literature from the 1920s-30s appeared, donated from the estate of a former drama critic. Last year there was a selection of books on Buddhism, another year an extensive collection of classical CDs by outstanding artists.

You never know what you will find at the book sale, but you are certain to find something — there is truly a book (or several) for everyone. Sale hours are Saturday, February 22, from 10am to 4pm and Sunday Feb 23, from 10am to 2pm, with the bargain bag sale going on all day on Sunday.

The College Preparatory School campus is located at 6100 Broadway, with ample free parking in the school lot. Cash or checks accepted. For questions, contact bookfair@college-prep.org. ■

Peralta's "Totally 80s Prom" and Spring Auction Seeks Community Donations

— by Erin Lenhert

On Saturday, March 21, look out for ruffles and big hair. Peralta Elementary is holding its spring auction and the theme is "Totally 80s Prom." Parent volunteers are seeking donations of items and services from local businesses. This is a great way to get your business's name out to hundreds of parents and community members, and support a local school all at the same time.

Oakland public schools thrive with the support of their communities. Your donations will help provide music and art classes, Physical Education, mental health services, and teachers' aides to more than 300 Peralta students.

Donations will be accepted through March 1. To make a donation, please contact Erin Lenhert at auctiondonations@peraltaschool.org. ■

Glam Gala Raises Money for Chabot Elementary

— by Roxanne Azpiroz & Meera Chary

New Year's Eve is over but don't put away the sequins and glitter. Chabot Elementary is holding its annual Auction & Gala on March 14 at The Bridge Yard Oakland where we will teleport to the glam 1970s.

This year, Chabot will face district-wide budget cuts, which makes the generosity of the local community essential. The Auction & Gala is Chabot's biggest spring fundraiser, with a goal of $200,000 so we may continue to fund science, art, music, media, library, Physical Education and Spanish.

How can you help? Do you have a talent or trade like sewing or woodworking that you're willing to offer up in our Auction? Do you have access to a vacation home or Airbnb that could be donated for a weekend getaway? It's donations big and small from the Chabot community that make the Auction & Gala special every year.

Many local merchants have already contributed, as it's a great way to promote your business to the Chabot community. Are you a business owner who can donate a special item or service? Would you like to see your company's name highlighted as an official sponsor of the auction?

The online auction begins the first week of March. For more information, visit www.chabotelementary.org/pta/auction or email auction@chabotelementary.org. ■

Vote Yes on Q: Improve Our Parks — Care for Our People

— by Brooke Levin, former Director of Public Works, City of Oakland

Oakland desperately needs new revenue for both parks and homeless services. To address this, the City of Oakland has placed Measure Q on the March 3, 2020 ballot. Measure Q is a Parcel Tax that will raise $21 million dollars annually for parks maintenance, homeless services and water quality improvements.

While use of our parks and recreation centers has grown tremendously, the investment required to keep these areas clean and protect our water supply has not increased. Parks have been living off a funding stream that was put in place in 1989 and has had no increase since then. This deficit in funding has resulted in major reductions in services to Oakland parks. Measure Q will bring specific deliverables to improve park maintenance.

Oakland's parks and recreation centers are critical to our community: they host after-school programs, arts instruction, community meetings, senior events, and a variety of sports and other activities valued by residents. Additionally, our homeless population has increased to an all-time high and city services are stretched thin.

Our park system is not equipped to provide the necessary services for our unsheltered communities. Our neighbors struggling with the high cost of housing in the Bay Area need assistance to avoid homelessness, and those who've become homeless need pathways into housing.

Oakland's services for the homeless are in high demand as the homeless population surged to over 4,000 in the last count — a 47 percent increase in two years. Oakland is completing the "Permanent Access to Housing Strategy" (PATH) with housing and homeless policies, because steady, new funding is critical to assuring that these services can expand along with the increasing demands. Many encampments are in the parks, and the combination of increased funding for parks and homelessness, will assist with providing support to both.

Measure Q contains strong accountability, Annual Financial Audits, City Auditor's Audits, citizen oversight, clear deliverables and a special fund.

The official ballot argument for Measure Q notes that passage will clean up our local parks, waterways and recreation areas while also addressing Oakland's homeless crisis. It will provide our most vulnerable populations with access to support services that help them find shelters and housing, and help to ensure that all Oakland parks, estuaries, and recreation centers are clean, safe, and well maintained.

Specifically, Measure Q will:

- **P**rovide programs to help homeless individuals, including those living in or near parks, move into shelters and obtain housing and support services.
- Increase removal of trash and debris from city parks and recreation areas.
- Increase restroom cleaning at parks and recreation centers.
- Mow playing fields more frequently.
- Protect the water quality in Oakland's creeks, streams, Lake Merritt and the Estuary.

Please read Measure Q (available at www.yesforoakland.com) to see specific projects and services that will result from its passage. Independent community oversight of Measure Q is required. Measure Q also allows a parcel tax exemption for single-family residential units whose owner-occupants are very low-income or are low-income seniors. Join civic leaders, park users, homeless advocates, and residents from every Oakland neighborhood who've come together to show that Oaklanders value our parks and all our residents. Vote Yes on Q.

Endorsed by:

1. Chris Jackson, Sierra Club, SF Bay Chapter
2. Deborah Shefler, President, League of Women Voters of Oakland
3. Rue Mapp, Founder and CEO, Outdoor Afro
4. James Vann, Oakland Tenants Union
5. Barbara Leslie, CEO, Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce ■



Rockridge Community Planning Council Endorses Measure Q

— Submitted by the RCPC Board

At the January Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) Board of Directors meeting, the board voted unanimously to endorse Measure Q, the measure designed to provide funds for park maintenance and homeless services citywide.

Measure Q funds will bring back regular maintenance to our beloved Frog and Colby parks, and will fund some of the services needed to house the homeless neighbors currently living in our parks. It's a win-win for the Rockridge neighborhood and beyond. Please read Brooke Levin's article on this page for more details on the measure.

The RCPC Board rarely endorses ballot measures, however, the sense of the board is that this one will be of massive benefit to Rockridge and the City of Oakland. We voted to actively support it — and recommend a vote "yes" on Q on March 3rd. ■

Rug Expert Sets Out To Revitalize Iconic College Avenue Store

— by Judith Doner Berne

eyes on Rockridge

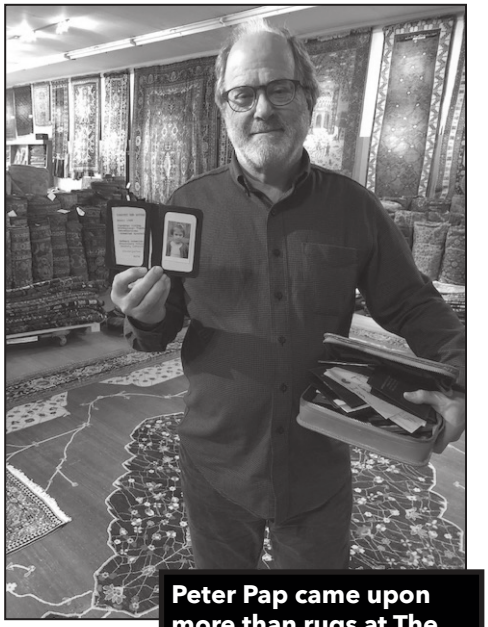
Peter Pap, whom you might have seen as a guest appraiser of antique oriental rugs on PBS's Antiques Roadshow, hopes to revitalize a building that has been mostly closed over the past decade. The 6,275 square foot building and its adjoining parking lot, was once our neighborhood Safeway. Since 1964, it has been home to The Levant Oriental Rug Company.

Chris Hudson, one of three new owners, said plans for 5450 College Avenue (built in 1920) are up in the air. They are weighing whether to lease it "As-Is" to a long-term retail tenant, or convert it to a mixed-use building with retail on the bottom and living units above.

Meanwhile, Pap, a rug dealer himself for 45 years, is temporarily leasing the space. He wants to continue the legacy of The Levant and the Keshishian family who sold, restored and cleaned Oriental rugs, and were students of the the ancient lands they had left behind.

Begun in 1927 by Haji Keshishian, a survivor of the Armenian genocide, the business first opened on Broadway, then moved to Telegraph. It was Haji's son, Albert, who relocated it to Rockridge where he grew up and attended public school.

According to a tribute published in the May 2018 issue of *The Rockridge News*, Albert Keshishian was a poet, singer of opera, horse owner, traveler and philanthropist as well as an Oriental rug historian. He often could be seen playing on his vintage pinball machine as he awaited customers. But during his last years, the store was open just two days a week, so passers-by mostly saw a set of barred windows. He died in 2018 at the age of 91.



Peter Pap came upon more than rugs at The Levant. A box filled with the names of the many Armenian children his predecessors had helped were among his discoveries.

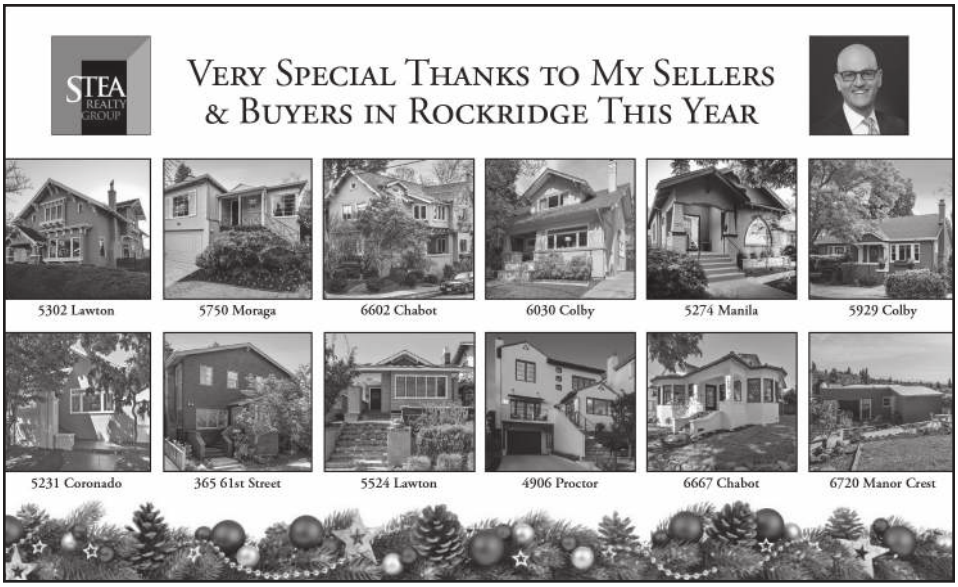
Pap, 65, who guest lectures at museums, antique shows and rug society events throughout the country, is, according to his PBS capsule bio, "recognized internationally by collectors and decorators as one of the country's foremost experts in antique oriental rugs, carpets and tribal weavings." He owns a gallery, located in an 1830s Greek Revival farmhouse in Dublin, New Hampshire, and recently closed his San Francisco operation in Jackson Square after 25 years.

"I was actually downsizing," he said, and calls it "serendipity" when he was approached by Albert's nephew to evaluate and make an offer on The Levant Collection. That turned out to be approximately 1,300 rugs and carpets… including 300 or so "of serious interest."

His first visit "was like walking into a time capsule from the 1970s." He described racks hung with rugs that had long since fallen out of fashion. "The more I delved into the business's history, the deeper my connection felt and what arose in me was an intense desire

Continued next page

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to carry on this tradition," he said.

Exploring the back rooms, Pap found the most treasured rugs jam-packed into what had been the meat locker of the old Safeway. "That's where he basically kept any rug in any style if it was the best he had gotten so far."

Other findings from Albert's office include a weathered leather box filled with photo ID cards of the many Armenian children in Lebanon, Syria, and Iran whom the Keshishians aided during the '50s and '60s. One of many photos on hand shows friends gathered for lunch at a table set up in the store. Over a vintage stove, "on Friday afternoons he would cook for them," Pap learned. "I think, especially in his later years, he valued friendship rather than business."

He is currently displaying some of that memorabilia on bookshelves at the front of the store, highlighted by a dozen or so samovars and a carved Indian camel with riders. Black and white photos of the father and son are set against the backdrop of another store fixture, an old player piano.

"It's like I have come full circle," said Pap, because "I started in a space much like this in Boston in 1974." At age 20, with no formal education, but married and a father-to-be, he got a job as a stock boy at a rug and carpet company started by an Armenian family in 1926. "That began my love affair with rugs," Pap said, particularly antique rugs. He also developed a deep respect for the many Armenian rug dealers he learned from along the way.

He's delighted about being in "a real neighborhood" since his other galleries were primarily destination stores. "I've met more people just stopping by in my first month in Rockridge than over many years in my other galleries." That prompted him to think about the possibility of presenting events and keeping the building open for community meetings after business hours. "It's such a great space. I'd like to share it."

A classical music recital, a jazz jam session and a comedy night have been featured so far. He hopes to host the jazz jam sessions "at least one evening per month" And music from Janam, a band that blends Balkan, Near Eastern and American roots music, is slated for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 17. What he's calling a "Dog Romp" will be held from 9-10 a.m. the first Sunday of the month, beginning in March in the building's fenced in parking lot. "This is a dog-friendly business," he said, speaking as the owner of Renny, a standard poodle.

Pap and his wife, Teresa, who works at The Levant two days a week, divide their time between the Bay Area and New Hampshire. "What I'm trying to do here," he said, "goes beyond just commerce." ■

To comment on this column or suggest ideas for future columns please contact judyberne@att.net.

ADUs

from page 5

borhood? The City cannot require it, so it falls to us to choose. How can we do our part in return? I also ask, might it be useful for the district or the City to find ways to reward ADU applicants for creating off-street parking? What might that look like?

So where to begin? As I do in my consulting work, I suggest you first discuss current and longer-term potential uses. These goals inform design, scale, and how the unit interiors will be finished. Second, assess budget and sources for funding. Third, do a property assessment. What are the property assets and issues in meeting both building and policy requirements?

Taken together, these three legs give a truer sense of the scope of the job that the budget must address. Only then can you make informed choices about whether to move forward and which option is best for your needs. It's a tantalizing opportunity, and time to fully explore what ADUs fully allow us to create. ■

Loni Gray is an East Bay ADU Advisor and Project Catalyst with a background in home rehabilitation, small home and collaborative living design, finance, and housing policy. Email her at loni@LoniGray.com to receive her two-page summary, or visit Lonigray.com.



MOTLEY TEAM

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Fall Market Competition Drives Price

Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
12/3/2019	3	1	6667 Chabot Rd	$1,395,000	$1,395,000	24	$1,475,000
12/6/2019	2	2	5714 Broadway	$995,000	$995,000	26	$1,285,000
12/6/2019	3	2	5761 Ayala Ave	$1,182,000	$1,182,000	19	$1,400,000
12/15/2019	4	2.5	5868 Chabot Ct	$2,500,000	$2,500,000	0	$2,500,000

Homes sold in December closed 9.7% over the asking price on average.

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COMPASS



Masons

from page 1

the kitchen and organize the event. Stevenson stepped in. Now after ten years, the Masons have the pancake breakfast down to a science. They buy, cook, serve and clean — all with good cheer.

Thanks to the Masons and community support, the pancake breakfast has been an incredible fundraiser for Claremont, raising $4,000 annually for the school. "We usually start cooking on Friday night. I do the chopping of all the oranges. I cut up the onions," said Stevenson, who also said this year would be his last as the organizer.

The breakfast gives the public a rare look into this historical site — a beautiful, multi-story building with Art Deco decor — including a temple and recreation room. In the 1950s, "if you wanted to get a hold of the mayor, the fire chief, or the police chief, you had to come up to the lodge and join their poker game," said Stevenson, who has been a member of the lodge since the 1970s.

The menu offers a traditional breakfast of pancakes, sausages, bacon, soufflé, orange slices and coffee. Tickets are $12 ($13 at the door, on a space available basis) and there are three seatings: 8am, 9:15am and 10:30am. There will be a raffle and the Claremont's jazz band will perform — transporting attendees to an earlier era.

To buy tickets in advance: www.claremontms.org or www.tickettailor.com/events/claremontmiddleschoolpta/335640. ■

Elections

from page 1

and live within RCPC boundaries (see www.rockridge.org/boundaries).

To be considered as a candidate, email info@rockridge.org no later than close of business Wednesday, February 26, 2020, to express your interest and receive an informational packet.

More information is available at www.rockridge.org. ■

Volunteers Needed to Adopt-A-Drain



The City will provide volunteers with tools to help clear the drains.

All too often, storm debris will block street drains from functioning properly. Leaves, grass, and even trash can build up at the grates, preventing the water from flowing into them. Oakland Public Works maintains more than 12,000 storm drains in an effort to reduce street flooding and prevent debris and pollution from entering the bay.

Volunteers can help in this effort by adopting a drain in their neighborhood as a way to better prepare for rainstorms. It doesn't take much to keep a storm drain clear, and a little effort goes a long way. When you sign up to Adopt-a-Drain, you become eligible to borrow city tools and supplies, and receive the city's rain alert notifications.

Find a drain near your home or work that needs attention. Encourage your neighbors, friends and family to help. Pick a drain on this map: https://adoptadrainoakland.com and call (510) 238-7630, or email adoptaspot@oaklandnet.com to adopt your drain today. ■



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February is the month for Wetlands Preservation, Woman and Girls in Science & Social Justice!



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COMPASS

Whole Foods Market Coming to Rad Urban Development Project in 2021

— by Dwane Kennedy, CITYshapers

Whole Foods Market is planning to open a new store on the ground floor of the Rad Urban Development located at 51st and Telegraph. The new store will offer high-quality foods, beverages, beauty supplies, household products, as well as beer, wine, and distilled spirits for consumption off-premises. The store is also proposing to provide instructional tastings of wine, beer, and spirits in the main shopping area so customers can learn more about these products directly from growers and producers.

In 2016, the Oakland Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the mixed-use development project to include 204 residential units, 33,800 square feet of ground-floor retail space, and 144 automobile parking spaces reserved for retail use — and the project is nearing completion.

Whole Foods Market customer parking will be located on the first level of a two-level below-grade parking structure. Bicycle parking will be available for use by Whole Foods Market customers and employees, with a total of 86 spaces available.

The loading area will run parallel along 51st Street, conveniently located close to the store's receiving area. Merchandise will be delivered to the store in delivery vehicles that range in size from wheeled-based trucks measuring 67 feet in length down to smaller UPS and USPS delivery vehicles.

Merchandise will be moved from the trucks to the receiving area using hydraulic forklifts, pallet jacks, and hand trucks. Staff will receive specialized training to operate the equipment and ensure the safety of pedestrians crossing the sidewalk between the delivery truck and the receiving door. Whole Foods Market will prohibit deliveries on Clarke Street.

The market plans to reduce potential noise impacts associated with delivery truck activities by implementing the following noise mitigation measures:

1. Stagger delivery times between the hours of 7am to 10pm.
2. Limit delivery activity noise levels standards to 60 decibels for a cumulative number of 20 minutes in a one-hour period, 65 decibels for ten minutes in a one-hour period, 75 decibels for one minute in a one-hour period.
3. Monitor and document all noise complaints and record actions that were taken to avoid future noise impacts.
4. Train delivery staff on best practices to avoid unnecessary noise.

They expect to hire approximately 150 full-time and part-time employees at this location. The store will be open daily from 8am to 10pm. ■

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Coffee

from page 1

IRC from spending more than $1,000 per person, and a six-month period of assistance makes financial help not only minimal, but also short-lived.

According to Hewitt, refugees also encounter significant obstacles in employment as they exit government assistance. Many American companies don't accept educational degrees, professional licensees, and work experience from outside the U.S. "It is really hard to get American companies to just believe in the idea of hiring someone who is new to the country," Hewitt says.

Recognizing the need for external sources of employment, Hewitt and Taber were motivated to create their own business that would truly understand the refugee resettlement process and cater to individual needs.

The idea to employ refugees through nonprofit cafes arose in part from Taber and Hewitt's experience in the coffee industry. Prior to their work at the IRC, Taber and Hewitt worked as baristas, and Hewitt spent a year as a coffee roaster on a project at Marin County's Boot Coffee Consulting.

"I always thought that coffee would be a great way for refugees to get involved," Hewitt says. "Both tea and coffee, pretty much all around the world, are the beverages of welcome."

By hiring refugees to work in a communal, hospitable environment, the cafes would create, in Hewitt's words, a "convergence point" where community members could meet refugees and vice versa. These experiences would foster language acquisition, cultural adaptation, and community building.

Taking its name from the year the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees first set forth guidelines protecting refugees, 1951 Coffee opened its first location on Channing Way in Berkeley in January 2017. As President Donald Trump pursued a travel ban suspending the entry of individuals from seven Middle Eastern countries, the shop hung inspirational graphics meant to, as Hewitt states, "remind people of the message of freedom that America is intended to embody." In a time of political turmoil, purchasing a cup of coffee proved to be an act of solidarity.

Since then, two additional cafes have opened: one in the ASUC Student Union Cafe at U.C. Berkeley, and, most recently, one in Rockridge on College Avenue. These three locations provide only 24 job positions, but 1951 Coffee also hosts barista training programs in Oakland and Seattle that train about 100 new baristas every year. Alumni can go on to work with one of the nonprofit's employment partners, a consortium that includes over 30 coffee companies to date.

"Working in tandem with the larger coffee community has enabled us to not just provide a single job, but a career path for our trainees," Hewitt says, using a specific 2016 training program graduate as an example. Now working as a cafe manager at a San Francisco tech company, the graduate went from having limited experience to holding a senior position.

In terms of the new Rockridge location, Hewitt stresses the importance of community support. Fueled by the sole motivation of helping refugees,1951 Coffee locations are fully funded by customer purchases, and the barista training program relies on donor support. This means customer contributions not only promote 1951 Coffee's mission, but also sustain the business model itself. As Hewitt simply puts it, "this is work we cannot do alone." ■

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Laptop Thefts in Rockridge?

— by Karen Ivy, Greater Rockridge NCPC Secretary

Ever wonder how many laptop thefts take place in Rockridge? The monthly crime stats do not include that data, so we had our new Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Angela Moore, and our new Community Resource Officer, Josiah Ladd, look into it.

OPD doesn't use a specific crime code to identify laptop thefts. That information gets included in the department's internal data, but exact numbers for laptop thefts within a specific beat would require extensive data analysis.

Currently, crime reports are classified according to the California Penal Code. Officer Ladd finds that most laptop thefts are classified as Grand Theft (California Penal Code § 487), which is theft of $400 or more from a person; or $950 or more from a store. This code also means that the suspect ran in, grabbed the item, and ran out, without using force. If force or threat is used, the crime becomes classified as "Robbery" (CPC § 211).

Officer Ladd conducted a manual data search of 2019 in Area 2 beats 12Y and 13X, specifically for laptop thefts. The search revealed approximately 50 laptop thefts — particularly occurring in commercial businesses.

To reduce property crime, and to improve community safety and quality of life, the OPD is transitioning to new reporting systems and customizing those reports to reveal rising trends≠ in crime. Captain Bolton of Area 2 has several projects under way, including planned awareness; education; deterrence and enforcement strategies.

The real statement here is, yes, laptop thefts do happen in Rockridge. Those who insist on bringing a laptop into a cafe should consider investing in a laptop lock for security. And, if your laptop should be stolen, please report it to the police. Reporting crimes to the police, even if they don't show up to investigate, gives them data on where crimes occur, which they then use to schedule officer coverage. ■

JANUARY TOWN HALL

Residents Learn About Three Significant Topics of Interest

Nearly 100 residents attended the January Town Hall meeting to hear from speakers regarding Measure Q, Census 2020, and local transportation.

Measure Q

Measure Q will appear on the March 3rd ballot. It addresses various issues of concern to Oakland residents, ranging from increased park maintenance to homeless services.

Brooke Levin, former Director of Public Works, provided a comprehensive overview of the measure. Funding will come through a $149 annual parcel tax — raising $21 million dollars.

For a full discussion of the Measure provisions, see article on page 7 of this issue.

Census2020

District 5 Supervisor Keith Carson talked about the upcoming census and explained how political representation and Federal funds are allocated as a result of the data collected. Under-counting residents by even a small margin would have a large impact on federal monies received by the city, potentially costing millions of dollars. City services like education, transportation and housing could be impacted—making full participation vital.

The Census questionnaire will be available online for the first time, over the phone using toll-free numbers for responses, and on paper. For those who do not respond by April, enumerators will go door to door to collect responses directly from residents.

For more information, go to www.acgov.org/Census2020.

Oakland Department of Transportation

Director of the Department of Transportation, Ryan Russo, spoke to Rockridge residents about the challenges and goals of transportation equity, safety, and trust. By investing money in all of Oakland's communities, transportation costs can be reduced while also increasing access for the most vulnerable. Oakland is now a leader in shared-use mobility, and with bike share, car share, electronic scooters and mopeds ensuring dependable and inexpensive travel options. He noted that the areas of highest injuries on streets and intersections are often in low-income neighborhoods, and pointed to objective ranking and programs like Safe Routes to School as successes.

Mr. Russo discussed recently completed projects including the Lawton/Broadway HAWK signal for safer pedestrian crossing; previewed the remaining Caldecott projects along College Ave.; confirmed the re-installation of Shafter Ave. stop signs; and conveyed the City will increase enforcement of residential parking permits with new license plate readers. Rockridge streets scheduled for paving include several streets north of Alcatraz, College and Miles Ave.

In answer to a question on updating the circulation element of the Oakland General Plan, the audience learned the City is starting to scope and eventually update the Plan. Mr. Russo will work on the transportation element.

Oaklanders can now use the OAK 311 service to report problems such as potholes or make an infrastructure request, in addition to SeeClickFix. There are four ways to reach the service: 1) call 3-1-1, 2) email OAK311@oaklandnet.com, 3) report on the web at 311.oaklandca.gov, or 4) use the OAK 311 app. ■



RN Classifieds

List your 36-word message here for only $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 next deadline is **February 20**. The March issue will be available March 6, 2020. For information: Email Susan Montauk at smontauk@gmail.com.

The Festivities Continue with my Valentine's Day Special!
Penelope's Aesthetics is offering a full European facial for $64 for the month of February! Gift certificates available. (510) 594-1552 www.penelopecalef.com

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Applicants Needed for Redistricting Commission

Every 10 years, after the official U.S. Census has been taken, the City of Oakland and Oakland Unified School District must re-establish boundaries for City Council and Board of Education districts.

Beginning in 2020, a 15-member independent Redistricting Commission made up entirely of community members, will set those boundaries in a process that is free from special interests, politics, and political influence.

The City of Oakland is seeking applicants that reflect the geographic, racial, ethnic, and economic diversity of Oakland, and who have the relevant analytical skills, ability to be impartial, and apparent ability to work together well with other potential commissioners.

You can apply to serve on the Redistricting Commission if you:

- Have been an Oakland resident for at least the past three years.
- Are not registered to vote in a polling place outside of Oakland city limits.
- Are not a current City of Oakland or Oakland Unified School District employee, and do not sit on a current Board or Commission of either entity.
- Do not have a conflict of interest.

If you are passionate about your community and believe in the work tasked to the Redistricting Commission, we want to hear from you. For full eligibility requirements and application, visit: www.oaklandca.gov/redistricting. ***The application period is now open and closes on April 1, 2020.*** ■

When A Crime Occurs

If you see a crime in progress, call the police. **Do not call 9-1-1 from a cell phone. Call (510) 777-3211 which routes directly to OPD dispatch.** To report a crime that has already happened, call the non-emergency number at (510) 777-3333, or fill in OPD's Online Crime Reporting form at www.oaklandca.gov/services/report-a-crime-online. If you do need to call 9-1-1, be sure to only use a landline.

Use these numbers to send OPD an Anonymous Tip:

Crime Stoppers of Oakland: (510) 777-8572

Homicide / Robbery Tip line: (510) 238-7950

OPD Sexual Assault Hotline: (510) 637-0298

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Community Calendar

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

N'hood Crime Prevention Council

The next regular bimonthly meeting of the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council will take place at 7:00 PM on Thursday, February 13, at the Rockridge Library. We will have a speaker from GoRevel.com, the firm behind the Revel electric mopeds which appeared in the neighborhood in January. We will have a second speaker, Daryl Dunston from the city's Human Services department, who will address homeless issues in the Rockridge area. We will also have our usual presentations from Oakland PD and discussion of neighborhood crime and public safety issues.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

Library Hours:
Mon, Thurs & Sat: 10am–5:30pm
Tues, Wed: 10am–8pm.
Fri, 12–5:30pm
Closed: Sunday: also Wed, 2/12 and Mon, 2/17.

FOR CHILDREN

*****Stretching for Caregivers:** Every Wed,10:15am. **Exercise class for adults who take care of infants & toddlers.** Bring your children, get a good stretch, and visit with other caregivers.

- **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.

- **Chess Club Is on a break: Check back in mid-March.** Chess board available at the desk if you want to practice.
- **Paws to Read:** Sandy's dog Scout loves to listen when kids practice reading aloud. You pick the book. All ages welcome. Every Thurs, 3:30-4:30pm.
- **Mix-It-Up Family Game Nights:** All ages; bring your favorite game or try one of ours. Get to know other families. Tuesdays, 6:30-7:45pm.
- **Valentines Making Workshop:** Show someone you care with a lovely, hand-made card. Collage supplies & envelopes provided. All ages welcome but best for ages 5 to 10. Tues, 2/11, 3:30-4:45pm.
- **Storyteller Kirk Waller:** Both well-known & unknown stories in Kirk's engaging, musical style. For the whole family. Sat, 2/15, 10:30am.

FOR TEENS (AGES 12 TO 18)

- **TeenScape:** play video games, table top games, crafts, and general after-school fun. Weekdays from 3:30 -5pm (enhanced programming on Wednesdays: 1:30 - 5pm).
- **Make Slider Cards:** All materials provided. For ages 12 to 18. Wed, 2/19, xxxxx
- **Poetry Reading and Workshop with local teen author Greer Nakadegawa-Lee:** Sat, 2/22, 3 - 5pm.
- **Make Art Inspired by Alma Thomas and Odili Donald Odita:** All materials provided. For ages 12 to 18. Wed,2/26, xxxx
- **Make Felt Ear Bud Holders:** All materials provided. For ages 12 to 18. Wed, 3/4, xxxx

FOR ADULTS

- **eBook Help:** Work one-on-one with a librarian to download eBooks. Fridays, 2 - 3:30pm. Book appt. online or call 510-597-5017.
- **Sing at the Library:** Join the Rockridge Library's community choir. For all ages and skill levels. No auditions necessary. Selections will include folk songs and freedom songs. Second Wed. each month: 6:30 - 7:45pm.
- **Second Saturday Book Club:** Call 510-597-5017 for details and book selection. 2nd Sat each month, 3 - 4pm.
- **Writers Support/Critique Group - All Welcome:** Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. of any prose for reading/discussion (OK to come empty-handed). 3rd Sat. each month,1pm; wheelchair-accessible. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.
- **Art Talk - Soul of a Nation:** Art in the Age of Black Power 1963–1983: Multimedia presentation from the de Young museum will delve into highlights of the exhibition which celebrates art made by Black artists during two pivotal decades when issues of race and identity dominated and defined both public and private discourse. Wed,2/5, 6:30pm.
- **What's New in Breast Cancer Research:** Presented by Alta Bates Summit Medical Center. Updates on major advances in research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. To register call: 510-204-5656. Tues, 2/25, 6pm.

Upstairs Art Gallery:
February: Photography by **Lynn Lazarus**; *The Work of Their Hands.*

East Bay Booksellers Book/Poetry Readings

FREE and open to the public.

- Sun,2/9, 3pm. **Poetry Flash: David Alpaugh's:** *Spooky Action at a Distance* and **Connie Post:** *Prime Meridian.*
- Wed, 2/12, 7pm. **Meng Jin:** *Little Gods.*
- Mon, 2/17, 7pm. **Conor Dougherty: Golden Gates:** *Fighting for Housing in America.*
- Tues, 2/18, 7pm. **Lewis Watts: Harlem of the West:** *The San Francisco Fillmore Jazz Era.*

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

Wisteria Ways House Concerts

Saturday Feb 29, 7:30pm. Solstice: Female a cappella ensemble; technically precise and passionate treatment of music for women's voices. From Bartok to Bjork, from Palestrina to Paul Simon, their repertoire includes music in many genres spanning 10 centuries and in no fewer than 14 languages. Hear samples at http://www.solstic-esings.com/listen. **Inside venue: not wheelchair accessible.** $20-25 donations for musicians (cash only, at the door); simple refreshments included. 383 61st Street. More info and **reservations (highly recommended)**: RSVP to info@WisteriaWays.org or 510-698-2456.

Family-Friendly Mardi Gras Pancake Dinner

Tues, Feb 25, 6-7pm. Bring your favorite frying pan for traditional pancake games. Donations welcome to benefit the weekly Friday Night Free Hot Meal. College Avenue Presbyterian Church, 5951 College Avenue.
More info at www.capcoakland.org.

First and Third Friday Neighborhood Square Dance

First and third Fridays of every month, 8-10 pm. Always with live music and calling. All levels welcome; all dances taught on the spot. $5-10 sliding scale donation. The Niebyl-Proctor Marxist Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave.
More info: https://squirrellystringband.com/north-oakland-square-dance/ or https://www.facebook.com/NorthOaklandSquareDance/.

White Elephant Sale 2020

Annual fundraiser for the Oakland Museum.
Save the dates: Sat. and Sun., March 7 and 8, 10am to 4pm. The biggest rummage sale in Northern Calif. features an extensive array of quality used clothing for all, jewelry, books, tools, furniture, household goods, sporting equipment and more. Organized and presented by the Oakland Museum Women's Board and made possible by donations from the public. The Oakland Museum warehouse, on the Oakland Estuary at 333 Lancaster St. More information at https://museumca.org/events/white-elephant-sale.

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.

- **Drug Collection Bin available in the Center.** Put your old medications in a plastic baggie to dispose safely. Do not flush or pour down the drain. Sponsored by EBMUD.

Seniors age 55+ join for $12 annual dues. Provides discounts, other benefits, and a subscription to "The North Oakland Senior Times" with full schedule of classes/events, lunch menus, and volunteer opportunities. More info: 597-5085.

Temescal Farmers' Market

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

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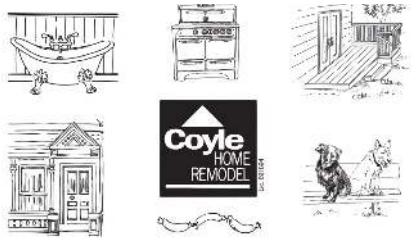
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