THE Rockridge News

35th Anniversary Issue (see pages 8 & 9)

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Sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) • 4900 Shattuck Ave., PO Box 22504, Oakland 94609

RCPC

Annual Meeting & Board Election April 15; Balloting Continues on April 17

by Leonora Sea, Chair, Rockridge Community Planning Council

The Board of Directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) is pleased to announce the date of the 2021 Annual Meeting and Board Election. Mark your calendar for **Thursday, April 15**, with voting starting at **6:30pm**.

For those who cannot attend on the 15th, balloting will continue on **Saturday, April 17**, in the afternoon.

The meeting venue, at an outdoor location, will be announced in the April edition of *The Rockridge News* together with public health measures that will be in effect. Updates will be posted online at rockridge.org and on the RCPC Facebook page. ■

The Community Is Invited to An RCPC Town Hall on ADUs

by David Garcia, RCPC Board Member



Join us on **Thursday, March 18, at 7pm**, for a virtual town hall event on how building a home in your backyard could be right for you.

ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) — also known as granny flats or in-law units — are gaining popularity throughout the state as one strategy to combat California's persistent housing crisis by providing affordable and accessible housing options for family and community members. Rockridge is no exception, with many of our neighbors building ADUs of their own. Our town hall will focus on how you can build your very own second unit.

We'll be joined by representatives from Maxable, an organization that provides education and resources for building ADUs, as well as local homeowners who have gone through the process of designing, permitting, and constructing their own ADUs.

Please join us. For Zoom info, please email info@rockridge.org. ■

RCPC ELECTION: Virtual Candidates' Forum: April 8

by Leonora Sea, RCPC Chair

One week before RCPC's Annual Meeting and Board election *(see article at left)*, the Rockridge community will have an opportunity to hear from Board candidates and to pose questions in a Candidates' Forum.

This event will be held as a Zoom Webinar on **Thursday, April 8, at 7pm**. The event will also be streamed on various social media channels.

Information on how to participate will appear in next month's *Rockridge News,* and will be posted online at the RCPC Facebook page. A YouTube video of the forum will be posted at bit.ly/RCPCYouTube. ■

Take A Walk through Local History with Annalee Allen

by Judith Doner Berne

You might say **Annalee Allen** has come full circle. Allen, who has lived in Rockridge for more than 40 years, retired this past January from her long-held post as coordinator of walking tours for the City of Oakland. Now, Allen has returned to the Oakland Heritage Alliance (OHA) as a volunteer, where she once served as president, ready "to do whatever I can."

eyes on Rockridge

The OHA, known for its Oakland walking tours and advocacy for the

Allen, see page 13

More RCPC News:

RCPC Announces First Round of Grants

by Robin McDonnell, RCPC Grants Committee Chair

The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) is pleased to announce the results of the first round of the Kevin Faughnan Grants for 2021. Four applications were submitted, and the RCPC Board has approved a grant for **Buzz Garden at 24**.

This $750 grant allows for expansion of an existing project originally funded by the RCPC in 2016 when the project proponents applied for and received funds to create a garden on the Caltrans property located by the Highway 24 exit lane parallel to Keith Avenue and Broadway.

The Buzz Garden at 24 is seen by residents and commuters daily, and it will be gratifying to see this project continue to positively impact neighbors and the local ecosystem. The overall goal is to create a public amenity that will provide natural beauty and attract hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies.

Creating and supporting biodiversity in our urban setting is central to the purpose of the garden. Native and drought-resistant plants are primarily used, as well as milkweed, which feeds monarch butterflies. The work includes trash pickup, weeding, and pruning — at times hampered by shut-offs and problems with the watering system — and collaborating with Caltrans for green waste and garbage removal.

It is heartwarming and appreciated to hear people shout out their thanks as they drive by in a simple and meaningful gesture of support to the regular volunteers and a few informal consultants, in particular **Agnes Faughnan**, who often donates plants to the project.

The goal this year is to address the irrigation system issues with the help of a specialist to repair valves and water lines and to redesign the system overall to optimize usage. While this is the primary use of funding, some funds will be used to increase the volume of plantings as project proponents gain access to wholesale-priced plants and succulent cuttings.

Additional authorized grant funds remain available, and we expect to announce further grants in upcoming issues of *The Rockridge News*. If you have a project you are considering or didn't have time to fully develop for this round, please note that we anticipate announcing an additional round of funding later this year.

Want to donate time, expertise, or labor? Contact Robin McDonnell at info@rockridge.org to discuss your thoughts on these proposed projects. ■

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The Rockridge News

The Rockridge News was founded March 1986 by Don Kinkead, and is published monthly (except August). It 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.

Rockridge News Production

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Judith Doner Berne ..... Eyes on Rockridge

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For information: info@rockridge.org

Contacting The Rockridge News

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

Articles submitted for consideration should be emailed to the editor. All submissions are limited to 600 words max (300 words for letters), and must include the author's name, email address, and city or neighborhood of residence.

All submissions are subject to editing for clarity and brevity. To submit content, or for reprints of an article, contact: editor@rockridge.org.

Newsletter Subscriptions

To subscribe to *The Rockridge News*, send your check for $20, payable to *RCPC* with "Rockridge News" noted on the memo line.

Mail payment to:
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Display Advertising

Deadline for April 2021 issue: **March 18**

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. Email Susan Montauk at smontauk@gmail.com for information regarding classified ads.

The Rockridge News reserves the right to refuse any articles, display ads, or classified ads.

Views expressed in articles accepted for publication do not necessarily reflect those of The Rockridge News, its editor, or the board of directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council.

RCPC **Rockridge Community Planning Council — Land Use Committee**

The March Land Use Committee meeting will be held on **Monday, March 22, at 7:30pm**, via Zoom. Please check the RCPC Facebook page the week before for details. The meeting is open to the public. **Send an email to landuse@rockridge.org or call (510) 652-5373 to receive a link/phone number to attend.**

RCPC Land Use Committee Update — March 2021

by Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee Chair

The Land Use Committee held its February meeting on February 22, via Zoom, with a quorum of members present.

Rockridge Housing Study

The Committee continued its discussion of the Rockridge Housing Study. Thus far, the Committee has been unable to identify a source for analyzing the feasibility and effect of the additional incentives that have been identified.

The aim of the incentives would be to make constructing new larger housing projects, and particularly affordable housing, more attractive to potential developers. A subcommittee made up of committee members and interested residents was appointed to pursue avenues for analysis and report back at the upcoming meeting on March 22.

The Future of College Avenue Retail

The Committee continued with its discussion on whether it makes sense to continue College Avenue's current CN-1 zoning, which is intended to promote an attractive retail area. The Committee is seeking input from current College Avenue businesses, as well as from organizations representing other CN-1 zoned areas in Oakland. Rockridge residents are also encouraged to submit their thoughts via email to landuse@rockridge.org, or by regular mail to the RCPC, P.O. Box 22504, Oakland, 94609.

Current Legislation Affecting Rockridge

The State Legislature is back in session, and the deadline for submitting new pending bills has just passed. While some of the bills are still only "spot bills" whose details have not yet been specified, by the March meeting, the Committee expects to be in a position to begin discussing which bills might affect Rockridge, especially its housing situation. The results of that discussion will be presented in one or more *Rockridge News* articles to inform Rockridge residents about possible implications.

If you have comments on any of these items, or suggestions for the Committee, you can email them to landuse@rockridge.org. ■

NCPC MEETING

The Greater Rockridge NCPC will hold its next meeting on **Thursday, April 8, at 7pm**, via Zoom (no meeting in March). The link will be announced closer to the meeting date. See https://rockridgencpc.com for details.

The February 2021 minutes are now available on the NCPC website, at this link: https://tinyurl.com/y7r5qmbz

Although the February meeting was very short with minimal attendance, we met our new Community Resource Officers for Beats 12Y and 13X and discussed crime control issues. Neighbors are encouraged to attend and participate.





RCPC **SAVE THE DATE: MARCH 27**

Spring Cleaning for a Litter-Free Rockridge

by Eric Lombardo, RCPC Parks Committee Chair

The RCPC Board and Parks Committee is excited to announce a pandemic-safe community clean-up event to celebrate Cesar Chavez Day and the Spring Equinox on **Saturday, March 27**. Working collectively, we can keep our storm drains clear, our sidewalks accessible, and our park spaces beautiful.

Individuals, families and household units can come to one of three pick-up locations in the neighborhood to receive contractor bags, trash picker-uppers, safety vests (if desired), and rubberized gloves, and then visit spots in the community that have accumulated litter during these months of sheltering-in-place. To maintain protocols, only one household unit at a time will pick up materials, and distribution will be done in a distanced fashion, as much as possible.

We encourage you to join us as a way to give back to the community by beautifying our sidewalks and park spaces. Each pick-up spot will have a list of suggested locations to visit for litter pick-up as well as advice and recommendations regarding what to pick up and how to stay safe. Bag drop-off instructions at a central location will also be provided for those who do not want to fit bags in their own bins. Sealed snacks and drinks will be available for those interested.

The following locations will have materials available for pick-up on March 27, from 10am-3pm.

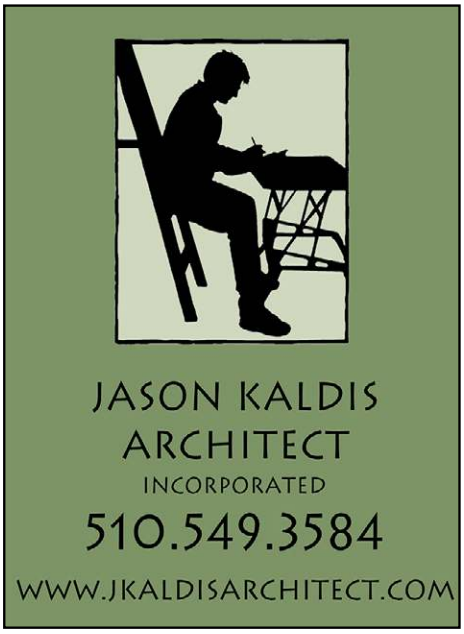
A – 5743 Hermann Street (between 58th & Ayala)

B – 5626 Ocean View Drive (between College & McMillan)

C – Hemphill Place, at the end of the cul-de-sac

You do not need to sign up to participate, but if you have questions or thoughts, please send them to Eric at eric@ericlombardo.com. Thank you for helping to keep our community litter-free… see you on March 27. ■





Update on Safeway Settlement Project

by Matt Levy, RCPC Transportation Chair

In late 2012, the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) reached a settlement agreement with Safeway to provide funding to address the traffic impacts on the neighborhood caused by their development at College and Claremont. In 2019, RCPC brought together concerned community members to propose key transportation priorities to Safeway for approval and funding.

As chair of the Transportation Committee, I plan to shepherd this project to completion, which will likely take 1-2 years, and has a number of hurdles to cross (from Safeway actually disbursing the funds, to Oakland's City Council approving the proposed project).

It is my goal to be transparent and communicative with our community as we make headway on what could eventually benefit us all. I'm hopeful we will move swiftly to secure the funds from Safeway and retain the services of a transportation design firm to help us cost out this work and better understand what is feasible.

Although funds are still pending, top priorities identified by community members include:

- Rectangular rapid-flashing beacons at Alcatraz/Colby & Alcatraz/Hillegass
- Extending the curb (a.k.a. bulb-outs) where Hillegass crosses Alcatraz
- Speed bumps on Hillegass between Alcatraz and Woolsey, Alcatraz and 63rd St, and 62nd St and 61st St.
- Speed bumps on Benvenue between Alcatraz and Woolsey
- New crosswalk across Alcatraz Ave at Benvenue, potentially with bulb-outs

For any residents who live around the proposed blocks mentioned above, it will be very helpful if you email me at mjmlevy@gmail.com. I will gather the contact information for those who would sign petitions/letters of support to submit to the Oakland City Council in the months ahead. ■

Oakland Police Walk Through Rockridge

by Karen Ivy, Secretary, Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council



Officers G. Lee, E. Macedo, and D. Fowler talked with an employee at Sukho Thai.

Angela Moore, under the City Administrator's office, coordinated the second phase of the OPD pilot project — walking through the community to meet business owners and residents. Myself, along with **Chris Jackson**, of the Rockridge District Association, and some neighbors, accompanied the OPD patrol officers.

During the three walks last month, the officers explained their duties as beat officers and listened to the community concerns and challenges. Some of these included slow OPD response times, and dispatch issues when police are not available to respond. All concerns will be shared with the local Community Resource Officer (CRO). As we walked, Chris Jackson pointed out the surveillance cameras on College from Manila to the BART station.

The biggest problem was the unsheltered population, an increasing number of individuals who present a danger to themselves or others due to signs of mental illness (in police parlance, "5150s"). Also noticeable was the lack of pedestrian traffic due to the pandemic and its effect on the local businesses.

To receive NCPC notifications, visit RockridgeNCPC@groups.io.

Peralta Elementary Online Auction & Magic Show

The annual community event, hosted by the Peralta Parents Teachers Group (PPTG), will be held online on Saturday, April 17, from 3:45 to 5:30pm. The Virtual Auction & Magic Show is open to the general public and free to attend with registration. The event will be hosted by Master Auctioneer Steve Godfryd and will include giveaways, a live auction, and a live magic show by Magic Evan.

"We are working hard to maintain a sense of community and support each other," said Kristel Weaver-Schoeneman, Co-President PPTG. "Fundraising helps us to nurture the grounds and gardens; sustain our vibrant art program; bring music to the students; and ultimately keep it all together in one of the hardest teaching years yet — so we're determined to keep our auction event alive and make every effort count."

For more information and to contribute auction items, visit https://www.peraltaschool.org/auction. ■

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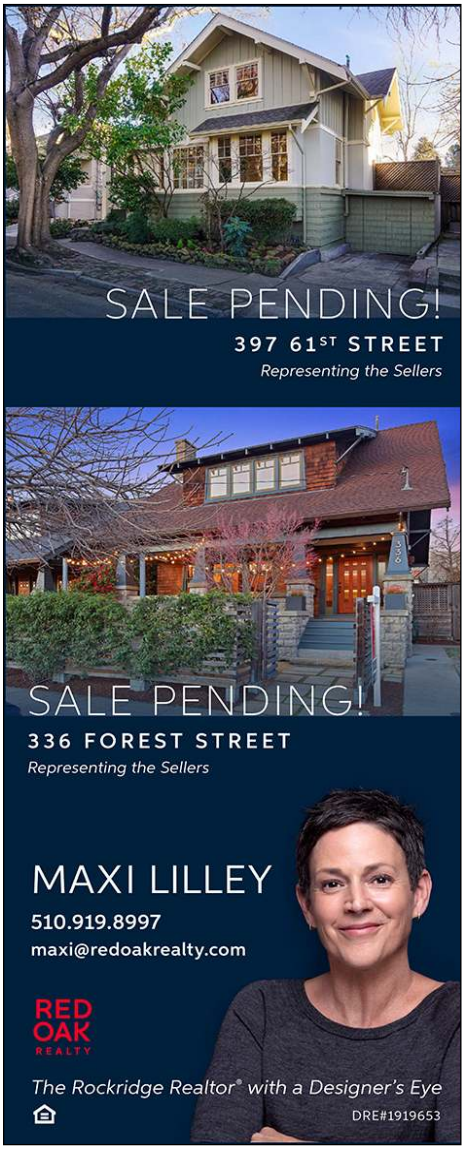
Competition Drives Price in January

Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
1/04/2021	4	4.5	355 63Rd St	$2,950,000	$2,950,000	13	$3,500,000
1/07/2021	3	2.5	6426 Benvenue Ave	$1,149,500	$1,149,500	15	$1,345,000
1/13/2021	4	2	5127 Lawton Ave	$1,495,000	$1,549,000	75	$1,549,000
1/14/2021	2	2	5405 Carlton St	$719,000	$719,000	35	$705,000

Homes sold in January closed 12% over the asking price on average.

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Exploring the Possibilities for Densification of Rockridge under Current Zoning

by Jennifer McElrath, Upper Broadway Advocates

What is the right balance of housing, commercial business, green space, and the other elements needed to have a thriving community? Long-term city plans should provide guidance, but with proposals by developers and legislators often conflicting with local plans, Rockridge residents need to understand how much additional housing, and what type, will contribute to the social and economic prosperity in our community, and benefit greater Oakland.

For starters, it helps to understand what could be accomplished under existing zoning. At Upper Broadway Advocates, **Diana Mitchell-Chavez**, **Kirk Peterson**, USF intern **Alex Libed**, and I have embarked on a survey with analytical and subjective components to do just that by subdividing the Rockridge boundary map into sections of comparable development. The plan is to evaluate these sections for growth potential based on zoning, including lot size, parcel taxes, commercial units, multi-unit buildings, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), garages, street parking, construction, and density.

We have started with sample blocks in several sections and will expand to a sample in each section, potentially, and over time, covering most blocks in Rockridge. As we conducted our survey, we met several seniors who commented on how ADUs have allowed them to stay in their homes economically, or to have room for caregivers to live on site.

We hope to find out what structures currently make up our neighborhood and the potential for adding additional units via single-family home conversions to duplexes; creation of attached and detached ADUs; re-conversion of office space back to apartments; development of opportunity lots; and/or in some cases, replacement construction of single-story commercial space.

Rockridge is no stranger to increasing density. We discovered one block with 29 units on 20 parcels, and the potential to add 6-10 units, especially with regulatory changes and/or resource assistance. Another block of 44 parcels holds 54 units including 5 detached secondary units, and 5 non-detached that were created via remodeling in recent years. As of mid-February, 60 planning permits and 37 building permits for ADUs were issued in Rockridge.

Find out more about ADUs in Oakland at https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/secondary-units. ■


CollegePrep
A private high school in Oakland
Tucked into a glen in the Rockridge neighborhood of Oakland, College Prep's informal and welcoming campus provides an educational home for a lively and talented community of students in grades 9-12. Guided by inspiring teachers and mentors, they create a vibrant community that is rooted in shared values of kindness, respect, and a willingness to learn from the perspectives of others. We invite you to visit us and experience College Prep first-hand.
6100 Broadway Oakland CA 94618 510.652.4364 college-prep.org

Room for Granny — ADUs Provide Additional Living Options for Rockridge Homeowners

by Myrna Walton

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) have recently come into favor as a result of loosening regulations for homeowners looking to expand their living space options. For some, it's to accommodate an aging family member or create additional space for guests. For others, it's to provide more income without having to sell and move.

These modern-looking backyard cottages can be relatively affordable and resonably quick to design and build. Several companies have stepped up to provide these services.

OBY (obyhouse.com)

OBY provides start-to-end management of the project, including financing, a standard simple design for a two-bedroom unit, permits, and construction using pre-built wood panels. OBY takes a long lease on the structure, selects tenants, collects rent, remits a portion (currently set at $500) to the owner, and maintains the ADU. Tenants use housing vouchers. The units come with a kitchen, bathroom, built-in furniture, and solar power. According to Declan Keefe, OBY's Co-Founder, "OBY makes use of modular prefabrication techniques to build as much as possible off-site as a way to minimize construction on site."

OBY analyzed all of Oakland except the hills and modeled their design to fit in 50 percent of backyards. They are currently trying out their product with a homeowner in Castlemont.

The biggest constraint to building ADUs is financing. Federal regulations do not allow mortgage providers to include the projected potential rental income of the ADU before it exists. Also, there are no clear guidelines for home appraisers to appraise ADUs, so their value on resale or "refi" is hard to know or plan for ahead of time.

In order to finance units, OBY has investors, at present at a very small scale. Very soon they will launch a community investment program. Their goal is to give a decent return to their investors and provide long-term income for the homeowner. They work with multiple fabricators offsite who deliver parts to the site. The construction is associated with Arizmendi (a local co-op with several businesses, including bakeries and landscape design). They are also hoping to work with community land trusts.

Rent the Backyard (rentthebackyard.com)

Rent The Backyard's model is 12x34 feet, a compact 418 sq. ft, that can be built in any backyard throughout the Bay Area that is relatively flat and has 20x43 feet of space. It takes 10 to 12 weeks to manufacture the unit, and two to four weeks to build a foundation and install the pre-built unit. The house is built at an Oakland factory using environmentally conscious materials, such as laminated wood.

The all-inclusive price of $185,000 includes project management, city permit, the backyard home, a permanent concrete foundation, installation of the backyard home, connecting the backyard home to utilities (water, sewer, and electric), and even some light landscaping to restore the backyard's condition. The kitchenette also includes a full oven and dishwasher.

Once the unit is built and installed, the company helps the owner select a pre-vetted property manager and find a tenant. Co-founder and CEO Brian Bakerman notes that the $185,000 purchase price can be paid for with a home equity loan and the payment can be less than $800/month — far less than what homeowners can get in rent from their unit.

Bay Modular (thebaymodular.com)

According to its website, Bay Modular's ADUs use recycled, refinished shipping containers. A shipping container not only reduces waste and repurposes scrap metal, but the container acts as an extremely durable, waterproof, fire-resistant, and earthquake-rated body/chassis for the rest of the build.

Having been previously certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development, these units do not require permits, except for site preparation, utility connections, and foundation.

Prices range from $110,500 for a 320 sq. ft. studio to a starting price of $198,500 for a 640 sq. ft. two-bedroom unit, not including site preparation, delivery, installation, and utilities (approximately $30,000 to 40,000).

These are just a few of the many companies offering their version of stand alone ADUs, as well as architects who can design a custom unit. They each have ingenious ways to minimize costs. More inexpensive ADUs can also be added to an existing house by converting garages or unused space. ■

Thinking of building an ADU?

Learn more about the fast-changing world of Accessory Dwelling Units at the

RCPC virtual Town Hall

Thursday, March 18, at 7pm

Register by email: info@rockridge.org



A Quick Retrospective — 35 Years of *The Rockridge News*

by Anna L. Marks, editor

In March of 1986, **Don Kinkead** (a Rockridge resident since 1970) published the first issue of *The Rockridge News* to inform his neighbors about the then current development issues surrounding the soon-to-be-built Dreyer's office complex, the expansion of parking and housing at Market Hall, and the local impact of the Yoshi's music venue. During Don's tenure, this newsletter went from a one-page xeroxed handout to a 16-page newsletter (now also available online in color with web hotlinks).

Over the years, this publication documented many local issues and events, including the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and the 1991 Hills Fire. Rockridge survived both of these, but the hillsides of our neighborhood were partially or completely destroyed in the fire — including Hiller Highlands, Broadway Terrace and Upper Rockridge — nearly reaching as far as the Claremont Hotel.

The News also covered events involving our schools, libraries, land use, and parks (to name a few), some of which are captured in this sampling of headlines that have graced these pages over the years. ■


The Rockridge News
March 13, 1986 Vol. 1 No. 1
WHEN IS THE NEXT MEETING?
Dreyer's Plans Final!
Ready for City Submission
Presentation to Neighborhood Scheduled
Shafter Avenue Housing

The first issue of *The Rockridge News* was printed in March 1986 as a xerox copy.

In the January 1989 issue, it was noted that the first phase of the Rockridge Area Plan had been completed with surveys filled out by hundreds of residents, merchants, and homeowners. Many of them spent long hours to support the integrity of our local zoning.


Grassroots Neighborhood Planning

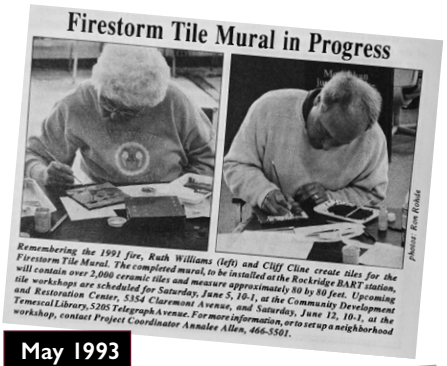
Rockridge Area Specific Plan: Now It's Up To Us!

Fifteen years ago, the Rockridge community, led by RCPC and the College Avenue Merchants Association (CAMA), created special zoning for College Avenue and the adjacent residential neighborhoods. We created the C-31 and R-35 zones then, and now we are the ones best suited to review them, improve them and add to them where necessary through the creation of a Rockidge Area Specific Plan (RASP).

"I believe Rockridge's secret ingredient is the extraordinary number of people who care enough about our community to become involved, to spend time and energy to work together to find solutions."

— Barbara Anderson, one-time RCPC Chair, said of the community's Rockridge Area Plan

In 1993, Rockridge residents Brooke Levin and Annalee Allen *(Allen is also featured in this issue)* helped organize the **Firestorm Community Mural** at the Rockridge BART station. The hand-painted tiles recognize the 3000+ homes that were destroyed in the Oakland Hills Fire, and remember the 25 people who were killed. More than 2,000 tiles were created and displayed as a way to help heal our community.


Firestorm Tile Mural in Progress

Remembering the 1991 fire, Ruth Williams (left) and Cliff Cline create tiles for the Firestorm Tile Mural. The completed mural, to be installed at the Rockridge BART station, will contain over 2,000 ceramic tiles and measure approximately 80 by 80 feet. Upcoming tile workshops are scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 10-1, at the Community Development and Restoration Center, 5354 Claremont Avenue, and Saturday, June 12, 10-1, at the Temescal Library, 5205 Telegraph Avenue. For more information, or to set up a neighborhood workshop, contact Project Coordinator Annalee Allen, 466-5501.

Photo: Ron Hicks

May 1993


Finally!

Photo: Ron Hicks

Following a moving dedication of the Firestorm Community Mural Project, October 16, 1994, participants gather for a close look at the wall. Two Rockridge residents are largely responsible for the Firestorm Mural and they deserve our heartfelt thanks: Brooke Levin, head of Oakland's "We Mean Clean" Program, who conceived the idea and initiated the involved process, and Annalee Allen, tile wall coordinator, whose diplomacy and tenacity steered the project to completion.

Nov 1994

Nov 1989


Oakland's Homes And Heritage At Stake In Quake Damage

by Annalee Allen
President, Oakland Heritage Alliance

Quake Damage Ripples – Volunteers Still Needed

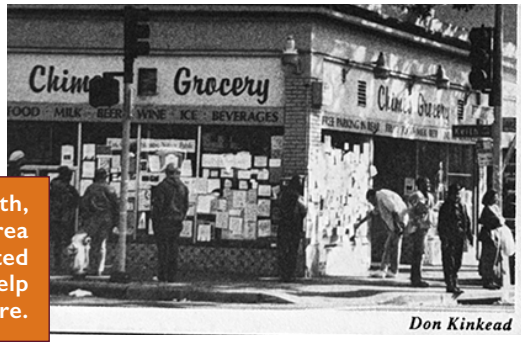
Red Cross Relief: Shelters & Meals

Mercy Manor

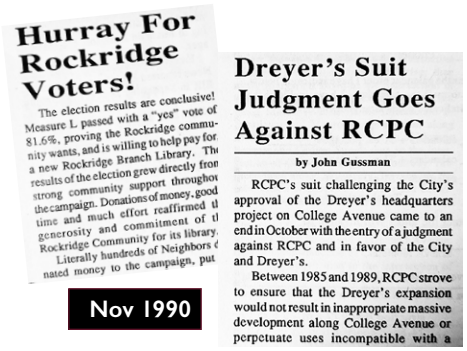
Some Rockridge homes were red-tagged as "unsafe" and those residents sheltered at Claremont Middle School (60 people) and Oakland Tech (300 people).

This cartoon by *Examiner* columnist, cartoonist and Rockridge resident Bradley Inman, ran in November 1987.




Chimes Grocery
FOOD · MILK · BEER · WINE · ICE · BEVERAGES
Don Kinkead

Chimes Grocery at College and Keith, (which opened in 1930 when the area was the "Chimes District") hosted a community bulletin board to help people connect after the Hills Fire.


Hurray For Rockridge Voters!

The election results are conclusive! Measure L passed with a "yes" vote of 81.6%, proving the Rockridge community wants, and is willing to help pay for a new Rockridge Branch Library.

Dreyer's Suit Judgment Goes Against RCPC

by John Gussman

RCPC's suit challenging the City's approval of the Dreyer's headquarters project on College Avenue came to an end in October with the entry of a judgment against RCPC and in favor of the City and Dreyer's.

Between 1985 and 1989, RCPC strove to ensure that the Dreyer's expansion would not result in inappropriate massive development along College Avenue or perpetuate uses incompatible with a

Nov 1990

Several editors have followed in Don Kinkead's footsteps after he retired on numerous occasions. These include ***Kathy Walsh, Trish West, Clair Issacs*** *and* ***Cy Gulassa****. I am honored to continue Don's legacy as of September 2019 when the torch was passed to me,* ***Anna Marks.***

May 1992



Movie-making brings hubbub to Lawton

Lawton Avenue Goes Hollywood

by Conor Allen

Ed. note: Lawton Avenue resident Conor Allen lives across the street from a home used in the recent filming of a movie and offers his perspective on the event. He is a 7th grader at Claremont Middle School.

Before the movie "Made in America" began filming on Lawton Avenue, a small street that runs from the Oakland hills down right through the heart of Rockridge, and eventually finishes in the Temescal district, things were as normal as any typical American street: almost every house with at least two or more kids, neighbors outside playing football, families



The Claremont Theatre (c. 1930), grand-daddy to the inglorious Pussycat Theatre.

Temescal & Rockridge Celebrate History of Pussycat Theater Site

May event includes slide show, music, prizes, and outdoor showing of a movie classic

by Jeff Norman

The artists, neighbors and merchants who produced the book and video about the Temescal neighborhood, and who organized the history exhibit in storefront windows on Telegraph a couple of years ago, are bringing another series of events to the neighborhood. "Beyond the Pussycat: Nine Lives of a Neighborhood Landmark" will feature in May an exhibit and two public events exploring the vicinity mer Pussycat Theater site — now lot — at 51st and Telegraph.

May 2000



Announced for RCPC's Fall Kitchen Tour

by Theresa Nelson, Kitchen Tour Promotion Volunteer

ned and d baker- 995 fall of Rock- rant will ture cui- ong the ns on the staurants Gaucho ng, Great Olive's staurant, in. ing event Planning y, Octo- p.m. The e best of gn. Many ave those nto their ful infor-

Kathy Garcia, left, whose kitchen is featured in the tour, gets pointers from Maggie Klein, owner of Oliveto. Photo by Elizabeth Opalenik.

The Rockridge Kitchen Tour has been the primary fundraiser for the RCPC since it began 1995.



Kitchen Tour visitors gleaned design ideas and solutions — and beat the heat — at Rockridge Tour homes, on Alcatraz (top left), Lawton (above), and Ocean View (left). PHOTOS: CHRIS AHLSTAND

RCPC Kitchen Tour Tops 900 Attendees

"If you can't stand the heat, get into the kitchen"

by Jo Ellis and Susan Montauk

offered a snack and beverage on the back deck. In the shade of decks and backyard gardens, visitors sampled hors d'oeuvres or fruit, wiped perspiration from their brows,



The Rockridge News

October 4, 1997

Deliveryperson of the Month

by Jamie Pearson

October's Deliveryperson of the Month is 27-year Rockridge resident Bobbie Kinkead. Though Bobbie does not currently deliver *The Rockridge News*, she made a contribution critical to the newsletter's continuing success.

Back in 1986, Bobbie collaborated with Rockridge resident Barbara Anderson to create a set of distribution maps which were the building blocks of the entire delivery system. Having mapped out approximately 150 zones in which 3,000 newsletters would be delivered, she recruited distribution captains and block captains for each of these zones, sometimes by going from door to door!

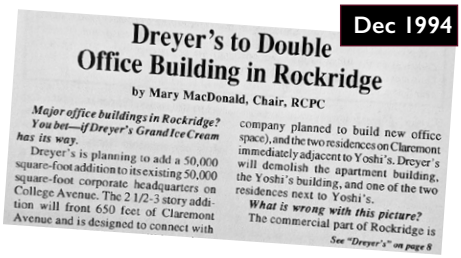
Going above and beyond the call of duty, she personally delivered *The News* to quite a few neighborhoods until permanent arrangements could be

Bobbie Kinkead Rockridge News Delivery Designer

Photo by Chris Ahlstrand Developed by AgPhoto, College Avenue

The success of this publication is due not only to Don Kinkead's vision, but also to his wife, **Bobbie Kinkead** (pictured above) along with **Barbara Anderson** and a vast number – 160 at last count – of neighborhood volunteers who bundle, box, and distribute to nearly 6,000 homes and businesses each month.

Dec 1994



Dreyer's to Double Office Building in Rockridge

by Mary MacDonald, Chair, RCPC

Major office buildings in Rockridge? You bet—if Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream has its way.

Dreyer's is planning to add a 50,000 square-foot addition to its existing 50,000 square-foot corporate headquarters on College Avenue. The 2 1/2-3 story addition will front 650 feet of Claremont Avenue and is designed to connect with

company planned to build new office space), and the two residences on Claremont immediately adjacent to Yoshi's. Dreyer's will demolish the apartment building, the Yoshi's building, and one of the two residences next to Yoshi's.

What is wrong with this picture? The commercial part of Rockridge is

See "Dreyer's" on page 8

Library breaks ground in March 1995.



Groundbreaking!

Digging in to create a new Rockridge library are, from left, State of California Librarian Kevin Starr, Library Director Martin Gomez, former Council member Marge Gibson Haskell, Councilmember Sheila Jordan, Neighbors for a Rockridge Library chair Nancy Dutcher, and RCPC chair Mary MacDonald.

Photo by Kathy Walsh, developed and printed courtesy of Ag Photo, College Avenue

Dec 1994



Latest Scoop on the Dog Area at Hardy Park

by Timothy Hoolihan and Lori Kopp

A neighborhood group is currently working on creating a dog area at Hardy Park under Highway 24 at Claremont

Market Hall Expansion Approved

Bill Penney, RCPC Zoning and Design Review Committee

At its November 20 meeting, Oakland's Planning Commission unanimously approved plans to expand the Wilson Associates' Market Hall and build a two-level parking deck to accommodate 76 cars on the Shafter Avenue frontage. The approved project scaled down from the first proposal last summer, which included an apartment house on the Shafter/Forest corner and replacement housing on Forest.

Dec 1996

The Rockridge Halloween Parade has been an annual tradition since 1992.



Annual Rockridge een Parade Planned

Dec 2000



Golden Shovels Herald Park Beginning

PHOTO: MARVIN COLLINS

Joyful Park Groundbreaking

Brunner wows crowd with giant check for park development

Above: FROG Park breaks ground in Oct 2001...



Lively FROG Finale Inaugurates Dual Parks

...and the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt opens in Dec 2001.

Many locals contributed monthly columns through the years.



Local Assisted-Living Residents Adjust to Challenging Times

— By Judith Doner Berne

eyes on Rockridge

Rockridge Cornucopia

by Barry R. Kaufman

Summer Time Fruit

THE NEIGHBORHOOD MERCHANT

BY THERESA NELSON

Elegant New Location

book corner by Gay Ducey Children's Librarian

It's About Time

Artist

The Rockridge Muse

by Ortrun Niesar



1989 RCPC Boardmembers (from left, in back): Barbara Anderson, Glen Jarvis, Bill Manley, Don Kinkead, (front) John Gussman, Beth Allen, Brooke Levin, Nancy Dutcher, Andréa Walkluf. *photo by Kinkead & Calkins*

The Rockridge News is sponsored by the RCPC (Board photo above from 1989), a membership organization that came together in the early 1970s and continues to represent Rockridge residents today.

(Don Kinkead is pictured above, top-right)

The Dish On Takeout Food in Rockridge

by Terre Beynart
(a.k.a. "The Green Celiac")

The Green Celiac reviews Rockridge eateries that offer takeout with a focus on ease of ordering, clarity of the menu for those on special diets, and a critique of the sustainability of takeout packaging.



Photo: Terre Beynart

Millennium offers take out, delivery, and limited seating on the outdoor patio.

When the award-winning restaurant **Millennium** moved across the Bay to **5912 College Avenue** in 2015, we licked our lips in anticipation. Its reputation had preceded it as a fine top-shelf vegan restaurant. While I never made it to the San Francisco location, I have been a frequent diner at Millennium College Avenue. The dish that keeps me coming back is the Coriander & Arborio Crusted Oyster Mushrooms ($15), which is listed as a starter. It is served with lovage (a root vegetable), sweet pepper remoulade, lime, and cabbage slaw. It is a generous portion for a starter, and in our house, there is a race to see who gets that last mushroom.

Our main course selections were the Enchiladas ($18), Mac N Cheese ($17), and the Little Gems Salad ($13). The butternut squash, cashew cheese, and plantains in the Enchiladas gave this dish a smoky sweetness which was balanced nicely with the sauce. The Mac N Cheese featured a sherry mushroom and sage-cashew cream, spinach, roasted broccoli, and almond gremolata. The dish was hearty and the cashew cream made it rich and slightly sweet… very nice. I must say that their Enchiladas and Mac N Cheese, although heavenly, are unlikely to taste like any other you have eaten. Do your palate a favor and give these thoughtful interpretations a try.

The food came in a paper bag. The Little Gems Salad and Crusted Oyster Mushrooms came in cardboard boxes. The Enchiladas and Mac N Cheese came in molded cardboard boxes with plastic-like lids which were labeled compostable. No cutlery, no napkins — way to go, Millennium.

Since this is a vegan restaurant, most food labeling issues are moot, with the exception of gluten-free. Their online ordering system (through Toasttab) seems well maintained. I checked it the day before Valentine's Day and it was clear what was, and was not, available for ordering. Gluten-free items are clearly labeled. The online ordering worked well, which is excellent because calls often aren't answered when the restaurant is busy.

Question: Why did the ghost decide to go vegan? Answer: Because it is super natural.

Kitchen Story

It's been interesting to watch the changes happening at **5422 College Avenue**. For 25 years in that location, Rockridge treasure Café Rustica operated a pizzeria and dining room, and, during later years,The Conga Room, a funky tiki bar upstairs.

***The Dish,* see next page**





Rockridge Dining Guide

Contact these local restaurants for pickup and delivery — and ask about outdoor dining options.

A Coté
A16
Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers
Becky's Chinese Restaurant
Beer Baron
Belotti Ristorante
Cactus Taqueria
Cole Coffee
Crepevine
Enoteca Molinari
Filippo's
Flavors of India
Great Wall Chinese
High Peaks Kitchen
Holy Basil Pho
Hudson Bay Cafe
Ike's Love & Sandwiches
Khana Peena
Kitchen Story
La Farine
Marica
Millennium
Mitama
Momo Ramen
Namastey Patio
Noodle Theory
Oliveto Restaurant
Philz Coffee
Ramen Shop
RareTea
Redfield Cider Bar & Bottle Shop
Rikyu Japanese Restaurant
Rockridge Cafe
Smitten Ice Cream
Soi 4 Bangkok Eatery
Southie
Sukho Thai
The Burrito Shop
The Chocolate Dragon
The Golden Squirrel
Uzen
Wood Tavern
Yimm
Zachary's Chicago Pizza



Photo: Terre Beynart

Kitchen Story serves up Asian-style California cuisine.

***The Dish,** from previous page*

I was a fan of both. The current occupant, Kitchen Story, serves contemporary Korean-American cuisine. The breakfasts and lunches are American dishes with a touch of Asian influence. The dinners are innovative Asian. We went for the breakfasts.

We each ordered an Egg Scramble that comes with crispy Yukon potatoes and toast. For an extra $2 you can substitute fruit for the potatoes.

I got the Big Hass Scramble ($16) that includes bacon, mushrooms, spinach, avocado, kimchi pico de gallo, and mild cheddar. The scramble was rich and hearty, the potatoes were crispy as advertised, and they have gluten-free toast, which delighted me.

The portions were gigantic and I am ashamed to admit that I ate it all. My husband got the Sailor's Scramble ($19) that had shrimp, smoked salmon, crab, bacon, garlic, cherry pepper, and cheddar. He loved it. This is a good place for big eaters.

On the packaging front, the takeout came in a paper bag but both breakfasts were delivered in plastic. They get a point for asking if we needed cutlery. The online menu does not provide the type of information those on special diets need. However, you can call and ask questions. You can also place order requests by phone.

Kitchen Story is a great addition to the neighborhood. I am happy for their success, and I look forward to sampling some of their lunch and dinner offerings.

For more details on these reviews and info about accessibility and sustainable takeout packaging, visit thegreenceliac.wordpress.com. ■

Fundraiser for Becky's Chinese Restaurant

Sometime around the Chinese New Year, **Becky's Chinese Restaurant,** located at **5620 College Avenue**, was vandalized and both front doors were shattered. Rockridge resident Suzanne Koga set up a GoFundMe page to help pay for their replacement. This act bore all the hallmarks of an anti-Asian crime, one of a rash that occurred around the holiday in Oakland and elsewhere, including here in Rockridge.

As a fixture of our Rockridge neighborhood since 2005, Becky's offers delicious, well-priced Chinese cuisine, and often donates food and gift certificates for schools, fundraisers, and local events. In a demonstration of strong and immediate community support, as of this printing, the fund has already surpassed its goal of raising $2,000.

Oakland Tech to Hold Online Annual Fundraiser and Virtual Gala

by Sara Drekmeier

The **Oakland Tech** Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) will be holding its annual fundraising event — and its first virtual gala, "Mask-erade," on **Saturday, March 13, at 5pm**, to bring the community together and raise much-needed funds for the school during this unprecedented time. The Virtual Gala will be preceded by an online auction beginning on **Saturday, March 6, at 9am**, and continuing through **Saturday, March 13, at 5pm**.

The online auction will feature over 300 items for bidding, including, but not limited to: gift cards to local restaurants, grocery stores, bookstores, shops; cookbooks; jewelry and accessories; eco-friendly products for home and garden; professional services; tutoring; and much more. Members of the community are invited to bid and compete for any of these terrific items.

Raffle tickets for an Instant Wine Cellar and a Public C7 bike will be for sale. Please contact auction@oaklandtech.com for how to purchase those tickets. Community members are also invited to the Virtual Gala featuring a Live Auction for vacation homes, wine club membership and a private movie screening for two, and other great prizes.

Registration is required but admission is free. Proceeds benefit the Oakland Technical High School PTSA, which funds a wide range of activities and support services for students and teachers through their regular budgetary process as well as special projects through their mini-grant program. A portion of overall proceeds will also be donated to the Equity Fund for Oakland Schools, which distributes financial support for Oakland public schools facing the greatest stresses and needs.

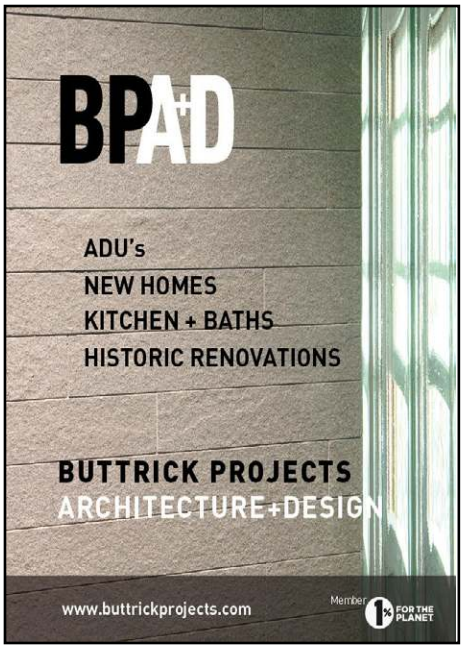
Link for online auction and virtual gala: Oakland Tech Auction 2021. ■

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Allen, from front page

preservation of the city's landmarks, welcomes her back, said Naomi Schiff, board member and past president.

"I first met Annalee when we were each managing young families. We brought our babies to board meetings, hoping they wouldn't make too many disturbing noises. A lot of OHA's activities were centered on Rockridge's Lawton Avenue — home to Annalee."

When Allen was president, Schiff said, she helped the organization's preservation efforts through the Loma Prieta earthquake ("yes, there were those who advocated for demolishing City Hall") and the Oakland firestorm after which she coordinated the Firestorm Tile Mural Project at the Rockridge BART station. As one of the leaders of OHA's summer walking tours, "she invented lively walks chock full of information and anecdote.

"Annalee built on all that experience, and expanded her reach, to run the city's Oakland Tours program for all these years," Schiff said. "She does the research, knows the stories, and has succeeded in highlighting the virtues of our spectacular built and human resources."

Allen, who has written three books and a regular column on local history that ran in the old *Oakland Tribune*, is quick to say she relies for much of her information "on other people who know more about the history than I do. I work a lot in the Oakland History Room. I'm not a trained writer.



Annalee Allen, who wrote a postcard history of Oakland, enjoys walking to U.S. Postal Service mailboxes scattered throughout Rockridge.

But I had myself a fun little time."

Her efforts as chair of Oakland's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, the first OHA member to serve, led to the Oakland Tours Coordinator job that she held beginning in 1996. She praised the corp of volunteers who lead the eight tours that normally span the summer months. But if someone is sick or on vacation, she admitted, "I can do any of them."

"My tours were always free," Allen said, and centered on the landmarks of downtown Oakland. In contrast, people pay for the OHA tours which focus on outlying neighborhoods. "It was an unwritten rule," she said. "I wouldn't encroach on them."

The only Oakland mayor to take one of the tours was **Jean Quan**, who was part of a group Allen led through the streets of Chinatown during Quan's 2011-2015 term. "I made sure I knew everything. But she knew all kinds of things that I then added to the tour. I ended up with a better understanding of the area."

Under various mayors, including current Mayor **Libby Schaaf**, Allen described her role as "sort of the hostess of city hall," and said that "Mayor Schaaf is a big one for the tours." "When she had guests to breakfast, I would take them through the City Council chambers, her

Allen, see next page

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COMPASS

Allen, from previous page

offices, and the gallery."

Indeed, in the Mayoral resolution that Allen received upon retirement, Schaaf framed her as "Ms. Oakland History" and lauded her for coordinating with "Oakland Schools third-grade classrooms for civic tours; the Mayor and City Council Offices on special tours and recruiting and training; and supporting a group of volunteer tour guides on public tours."

Allen's love of old buildings was honed at an early age and by local architecture. She told this writer for an earlier column, "It was so inspiring," to look out her bedroom window at the iconic Claremont Hotel as she was growing up. "I knew who Julia Morgan was as a young girl" because she roamed the Morgan-designed Berkeley City Club where her grandmother lived.

After majoring in art history with a focus on architecture at UCLA, Allen and her attorney husband Jim, who were high school sweethearts, returned to the Bay Area, raising their three sons in Rockridge. Now, they have a 6-year-old grandson and another on the way.

A month into her retirement, she is ready to sort and organize her past columns as well as help with the new grandchild. And walking will continue to be a big part of her life. She, together with a group of friends, regularly makes the loop around Lake Merritt. One of her books was devoted to picture postcards of old Oakland, and, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, a favorite walk to the U.S. Postal Service mailboxes scattered throughout Rockridge.

"She's a contributor to the culture of the neighborhood," said **Ron Yank**, a longtime friend and neighbor. "She's outside a lot. She takes care of stray cats. She's the kind of neighbor who's extremely helpful," said Yank, a retired attorney who led then-Gov. Jerry Brown's California Human Resources Department. "Annalee's one of the main fixtures on the block."

Allen's job was 20 hours per week, but that never stopped her from putting in whatever time was necessary. "I was a long-time pro-bono person, and the actual time did not matter so much." She and others are worried that her position, which is one of the city jobs that has been frozen due to the economic fallout from the pandemic, is in jeopardy.

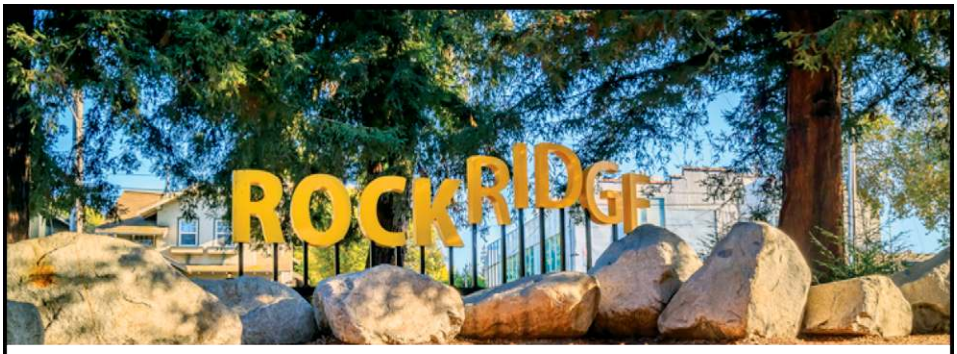
"The Oakland Tours Program has provided a window into Oakland history for many Oakland residents, visitors, and businesses considering Oakland as a home," said **Brooke Levin**, retired Oakland Public Works Director and fellow Rockridge resident. "Now is the time to expand the tours to be inclusive of many other aspects of Oakland, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the landscape of our community."

"I've tried to leave my office so whoever takes over will have all the resources they need," Allen seconded. "I want our city to shine."

To suggest topics for future columns, please email judyberne@att.net. ■

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Mail to: RCPC, 4900 Shattuck Ave., PO Box 22504, Oakland, 94609-20131. The deadline for the April 2021 issue is March 18 – available on April 3. For more information, email Susan Montauk at smontauk@gmail.com.

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Nominations Now Open for "Mother of the Year"

Oakland's Mother of the Year is a tradition dating back to 1954. Every year on the Saturday before Mother's Day, a new "Mother" is proclaimed, and her name is added to the walk of fame at the Morcom Rose Garden. Honorees will be recognized on **Saturday, May 8, at 10:30am** through a Zoom virtual event.

The individual must be nominated by a business, community group, professional association, government agency, or service-related organization. The call for nominations is open until **4pm on March 31**, and anyone can make a nomination of someone whose contributions to the community symbolize the finest traditions of "motherhood."

Past awards have gone to those who reflected the best of humanity through leadership and perseverance against all odds to make a positive impact for families or community life.

Do you have a nominee? If so, email your request for a nomination form with quantifications for the 2021 Mother of the Year to: oprydmotheroftheyear@gmail.com. Visit www.oaklandwiki.org to learn the history and names of past "mothers." ■

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