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

Community Celebrates Frog Park's 20th Year At Creek-to-Bay Day

by Theresa Nelson

Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal Greenbelt (FROG) sends a hearty thank you to everyone who showed up to clean the park and celebrate its 20th anniversary on Saturday, the 17th of September.

Beautiful weather encouraged dozens of community members — adults and children — to come out to groom and tidy the park. Volunteers picked up trash, swept the walkways, trimmed ivy and large branches hanging over the play structures, and cleared redwood needles and other debris from the pond so the winter rains would not block the drains.

FROG is grateful for this continued community support to augment the maintenance of our park. Creek-to-Bay Day is our neighborhood's

Frog Park, see page 4



Term-limited, Mayor Schaaf Plans To Continue a Life of Public Service

by Judith Doner Berne



Mayor Schaaf encourages Rockridge to fight for appropriate development.
(Photo by Judy Berne)

"I know I will spend the rest of my life in public service." No, Mayor Libby Schaaf isn't saying what's next once her two terms as Oakland's top elected official are up on January 2, 2023. "I want to take six months to do some processing of the incredible lessons I've learned. Oakland deserves a 1,000-percent mayor 'til then."

As she did seven years ago during her first year in office, Schaaf sat for our *Rockridge News* interview at a corner table at the Rockridge Café. "The idea of neighborhood news is at the core of democracy," she said.

An Oakland native, Schaaf deplores the city's current upsurge in violent crime. Before the pandemic, "We did create sustained periods of fewer killings and shootings."

Mayor Schaaf, see page 8

What's on the Ballot This November?

Compiled by Anna L. Marks

Election season is underway, and this November, Oakland residents will elect a new mayor. While Rockridgers won't be voting for Councilmember or school board directors, all voters will be invited to approve ten local ballot measures — four introduced by our own District 1 representative, Dan Kalb. The following is a synopsis of the ballot measures that are up for consideration. *The Rockridge News* takes no positions for or against any of these measures.

Watch October 3rd's Oakland Mayor CANDIDATE FORUM (hosted by LWV) at https://www.lwvoakland.org.

To verify your voter status, or get a complete list of voting and drop box locations, visit www.oaklandca.gov/resources/voter-information-day.

For complete ballot descriptions, the reasons to support or oppose each measure, and links to two-minute videos, visit the LWV website at www.lwvoakland.org; or visit www.lwvoakland.org/decide-nov22.

Additional information about California's ballot measures will be mailed to all registered voters early this month.

Measure H, Parcel Tax Extension

This School District measure seeks to extend the parcel tax supporting the College and Career Readiness Act for 14 years through June 2037. The parcel tax pays for programs that "link learning" between school and career, including internships and innovative academy programs. Since the existing measure began in 2015, the graduation rate for black students increased by 17.5 percent.

Measure Q: Affordable Housing Authorizations [Companion to Measure U]

This ballot measure would authorize the development, construction, acquisition, or development of an additional 13,000 low-income units of "social housing" projects in Oakland. Social housing is defined as "housing units that would accommodate extremely low-income, very low-income, and low-income residents (per State and Federal standards)."

Measure R: Gender Neutral Language in the Charter

This measure would amend the City Charter to avoid gender stereotyping by replacing gender-specific language with gender-neutral or gender-inclusive language, and, in particular, would require City officers and staff to use gender neutral pronouns to support the City's commitment to inclusivity and representation.

Ballot Measures, see page 14

COMMUNITY SHRED DAY!
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3560 Grand Ave, Oakland, Ca 94611
9am-3pm
Shred & Recycle your outdated personal documents - prevent identity theft!

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The Rockridge News

The Rockridge News was founded in 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.

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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? We'd love to hear from you.

All letters must be limited to 350 words and are published at the discretion of the Editor. Send them to: editor@rockridge.org. Please be sure to include your name, email address, and city and street of residence. **All submissions accepted for publication are subject to editing for clarity and brevity.**

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

The Rockridge Halloween Parade Returns this Month

by Jody Colley, Rockridge District Association



The time-honored tradition of "trick-or-treating" along College Avenue will be kicked off with kids' activities at the Rockridge Library parking lot (5366 College Avenue) on **Sunday, October 30th**.

During the event, organized by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), our neighborhood librarians will lead story time for the kids along with music and crafts from 11am to 2pm. At the same time, the courtyard at College Avenue Presbyterian Church, at 5366 College Avenue, will feature a Halloween dance party with DJ Groovesome.

Throughout the day, College Avenue merchants from Alcatraz to Broadway will pass out candy while offering Halloween-themed menus, pop-ups, sales, costume contests, and fun activities for all ages.

For the full schedule and list of participating merchants, visit www.RockridgeDistrict.com. ■



This is Willie. He's a 17-month-old Bernese mountain dog, and is very gentle, smart, and friendly. His owner Deb, a Rockridge resident for 79 years, says Willie likes his evening walks up the avenue to visit with people eating outside.





Rockridge parent Katie Taylor and her son, Toby Taylor Bielak, with Councilmember Treva Reid.



Frog Park co-chairs Will Sheldon and Alison Drury.



Kids enjoyed decorating wood frogs at the celebration.

Frog Park, from front page

valuable contribution to International Coastal Cleanup Day, a global event (https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/icc/).

This cleanup was particularly special because it also marked the 20th anniversary of the park's creation (the celebration was delayed a year due to Covid). In October 2001, more than 1,300 volunteers came together over ten days for the "Big Build," to construct the Big Frog and Little Frog wooden play structures — the central elements of this community park.

Since then, new paths, new swings and play equipment, lily pad seating tables at Big Frog, and renovated basketball courts have been added. Community volunteers led these efforts, working closely with City, County, and State officials for permits, funding, and collaborative workdays.

Mayor Libby Schaaf joined the cleanup and presented a Mayoral Proclamation to FROG leaders in acknowledgement of the two-decade anniversary. Former FROG Chairs Steve Costa and Jennifer Cooper attended the cleanup and the ceremonies, along with other volunteers who were part of the Big Build. Councilmember Dan Kalb and Councilmember Treva Reid attended the event, as did Acting Parks Services Manager Clinton Pugh, longtime Frog Park maintenance manager, and Parks Supervisor Henry Zavala who handles frontline projects.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary, FROG unveiled a new video about how Frog Park came to be, and the work of volunteers to build and maintain it. It was written and directed by Rockridge neighbor and film student Lily Shannon-Sutter, who herself grew up going to the park. You can see this inspiring video on the Frog Park website: https://www.frogpark.org/2022/09/09/frog-park-community-built-video/.

Thanks to another community volunteer, Frog Park also now has an official Wikipedia page: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frog_Park_(Rockridge-Temescal_Greenbelt.

FROG is grateful to Bakesale Betty and Ain't Normal Café for their continued support and donated refreshments for the clean-up crew. We also greatly appreciate the volunteers who managed the frog-themed crafts and games for children during the celebration.

If you're interested in getting more involved in FROG projects that keep the creek flowing year-round, please contact chair@frogpark.org. ■

Rockridge Artists at East Bay Open Studios

The Annual East Bay Open Studios continues a 40-year tradition next month, November 5-6 and November 12-13, from 11am to 5pm. These free, self-guided tours of art studios include several Rockridge artists. Neighbors are encouraged to visit them to learn more about what inspires their passion and creativity.

Marsha Balian: Mixed Media

"The risks of failure are perhaps no different than any other pursuit, even with the benefit of instruction. But stubbornness trumps failure and I try until something works, at least to my own satisfaction."

5495 Kales Ave.
Price range: $50 – $500
http://www.marshabalian.com/
Open Nov. 5 & 6

Katie McCann: Mixed Media

"My need to obsessively cut sometimes outweighs the composition of the piece, so I am often left with piles of abandoned cuttings — lost bones, moths, fungi, feathers, coral, shells and butterfly wings. Eventually these too find a place to reside."

5495 Kales Ave.
Price range: $50 – $500
https://www.beetleblossom.com/
Open Nov. 5 & 6

Sally Weare: Painting / Drawing

"I am trying to stay tuned to the inside of my head in the midst of the roar on the outside."

6449 Harwood Ave.
Price range: $500 – $5,000; Wheelchair accessible; https://sallyweare.com/
Open Nov. 5 & 6; Nov. 12 & 13

Trina Anderson: Painting, Printmaking

"While I like working with oil paint, using acrylic allows me to be more free in exploring compositions, thoughts and feelings, sizes and colors. It is faster drying so I can push ideas while they are fresh in my mind. In my paintings, I explore human built structures/design and the stories that they hold; what exists and what is hidden; the patterns found within. I paint the feeling/emotion of the history there."

5240 Shafter Avenue
Price range: $25 – $1,200
Wheelchair accessible
Open Nov. 5 & 6; Nov. 12 & 13 ■

RCPC Land Use Update
— by Ken Rich, Chair

As usual, the Rockridge Community Council's Land Use Committee is tracking the key proposed new development projects making their way through the approval process. The only such project that had official activity this month was the proposed housing development project at the California College of the Arts (CCA) site. The project's design guidelines were considered on September 12 by the City's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB).

The LPAB is required to weigh in because the Oakland CCA campus is designated as a City of Oakland "Area of Primary Importance" (API). The term API refers to the highest of three historical and architectural ratings used by the City for a district (in contrast to a single building).

Members of the Board indicated discomfort with the project's proposal to remove most (not all) of the existing historic buildings on the CCA campus to make room for 510 units of new housing. The proposal retains the Treadwell Estate, Macky Hall and the Carriage Hall, in addition to the historic wall along Broadway, while demolishing the other existing buildings. According to the Project's developer, Emerald Fund, the LPAB will meet again on October 10 to continue its discussion of the project.

The LPAB is an advisory body; actual approval authority for the project is vested in the Planning Commission and City Council. In their comments at the hearing, LPAB Board members pointed out that they are charged with the single purpose of advising on protection of historic resources, while the Planning Commission and City Council are charged with balancing the whole range of important goals for the City, when deciding to approve or disapprove a project such as this.

While no firm decision was made, and the item was continued, the majority of the LPAB members made it clear in their comments that given their specific mandate, they could not support the project as currently proposed. Stay tuned to see whether the Planning Commission and City Council value the production of 510 units of housing on the site more than the retention of historic buildings, and whether they believe the developer's current compromise proposal strikes the right balance. ■

Land Use Committee Meeting

Rockridge Community Planning Council's LUC Meeting will be held:
Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 7:30pm, via Zoom.
The meeting is open to the public.
Use Zoom link: bit.ly/3c0r6X0
or email: landuse@rockridge.org.



3,141 signatures to date!
MANY MORE NEEDED!



Say NO to Home Depot & YES to housing!
Sponsored by Rockridge Community Planning Council, PANIL (Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League), and UBA (Upper Broadway Advocates)

Home Depot wants to open a huge store (130,000 sq. feet of retail, a 4-story parking structure, and 449 parking spaces) at the corner of Broadway and Pleasant Valley.



Sign the petition & share with your neighbors!
https://www.change.org/nohomedepot

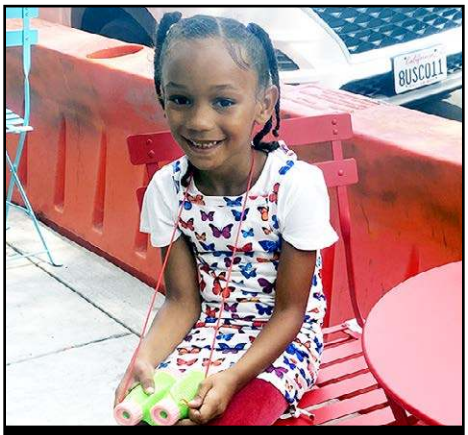
Come rally with us on Friday, October 21 at 5:30pm
Vacant lot @ Pleasant Valley / Broadway

Rock-N-Hunt Draws Hundreds of Participants

by Jody Colley, Rockridge District Association

Last month, the Rockridge District Association held its second annual Rock-N-Hunt — an-all ages scavenger hunt in the commercial district along College Avenue. Held during the September Rock-N-Stroll event, the hunt challenged people from around the Bay Area to come to Rockridge to solve a hundred clues during an eight-hour time period.

Clues ranged from easy to difficult and consisted of objects to find, riddles to solve, and Rockridge trivia to answer. Every correctly solved clue was an automatic entry in a raffle for three prize packages. Congratulations to this year's top winner, Harmony and her team (see photo above), who took home $400 in gift cards to spend at Rockridge businesses. ■



Harmony (above) and her team took first prize at Rock-N-Hunt.

Claremont Middle School Auction Is Happening

by Sharon Flor, Claremont PTA Auction Chair; and Carol Treadwell, Auction Volunteer

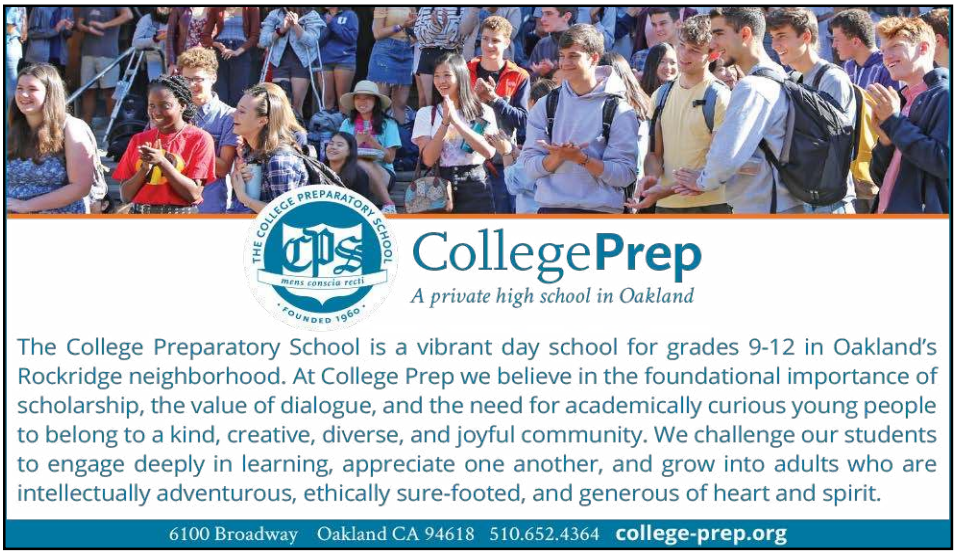
Claremont Middle School's annual auction is taking place online from **October 10 through 20,** and we'd like to welcome the entire Rockridge community to join in the bidding. Available prizes include products, food, gifts, and services provided by neighborhood businesses and by our partners all over the Bay. Have a look at what's available and register to bid online at https://www.claremontms.org/pta/auction/.

Claremont Middle School has been a part of Rockridge since 1913 and serves hundreds of students from all over Oakland. Many of our young scholars live in the neighborhood and many more travel to Claremont from other parts of town. Approximately 42 percent of our student body is categorized as socioeconomically disadvantaged, and Claremont is one of the most diverse schools in the city.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has widened economic disparities across all communities, Oakland included. Claremont teachers and staff have worked tirelessly to maintain the high level of academic and social/emotional support that is vital for middle school students, and that helps elevate our whole city. Your participation as an auction bidder will advance these efforts.

When you bid on an item, you are helping the PTA support our students with funding for athletics, music, art, library, technology/media, and restorative justice. The PTA also provides funds that supplement Claremont's educational departments so that teachers may improve the class experience without dipping into their own wallets. Additionally, the PTA funds community-building field trips and celebrations.

We invite all Rockridge neighbors to be a part of Claremont by joining us in bidding at our online auction on October 10 through 20. ■



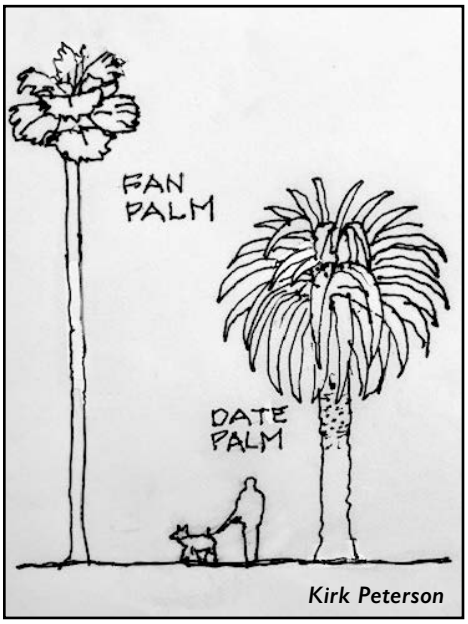


LOOK AROUND

Washingtonia robusta

by Kirk Peterson

Palm trees: you like them or you don't. Birds love them. Among the oldest trees in Rockridge is a very tall *Washingtonia robusta* (Mexican fan palm, c.1875) on the CCA campus, where there is also a Canary Island date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*, with "feather" fronds). These two species are the most common in the Bay Area, but we also see wine, king, queen, shaving bush, windmill palms, and others.



If you think palm trees are too "LA," consider expanding that to include Cairo, Buenos Aires, Bangkok, or Lagos. Most of us have ancestors from places with palm trees, which is most of the world. They were mainstays of California's Victorian parks and estate gardens, and were later featured in Mid-Century design — and we keep planting them.

The species that like it here in Oakland are drought-tolerant, low maintenance, and easily transplanted. Rows of mature fan palms on 9th Avenue here or Alameda's Gold Coast are landmarks. Solo or grouped palms also look good mingled with conifers and broad-leafed trees. Five grow in my garden. ■

Oakland Tech Launches Phase 2 of Student Center

by Shelly Cox, Oakland Tech PTSA



A special thank you goes out to all the volunteers and donors that helped complete Phase 1 of the Oakland Tech Student Center and Staff Lounge. Creating these two spaces has elevated the experience for students and faculty, which is so very welcome after the last few years of disruption.

We are now starting our work on Student Center Phase 2, which includes finishing a functional little library; adding new lounge furniture and small group seating, new signage (including a donor wall) and a new projection system; and adding art and design elements, all of which will combine to give the Student Center its personality.

We are not there yet, so if you want to sponsor or donate, visit https://www.ousd.org/Page/21888. For volunteer opportunities, contact Shelly Cox at oaklandshellycox@icloud.com. ■

Authors Book Signings at Market Hall

Saturday, Oct. 22, 1pm–3pm
Rose Levy Beranbaum
with her newest book, *The Cookie Bible*
Book Signing, Conversations, Tastings

Saturday, Nov. 5, 12pm–2pm
Vicky Bennison
Pasta Grannies Comfort Cooking: Traditional Recipes from Italy's Best Home Cooks
Book Signing, Conversations, Tastings

Saturday, Dec. 3, 12:30pm–2pm
Tanya Holland
Tanya Holland's California Soul
Book Signing, Conversations, Tastings

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eyes on Rockridge

Mayor Schaaf, from front page

Earlier this year, "We did get the Oakland Police Department (OPD) in compliance with the court-ordered reforms." If the OPD stays in compliance through next April, it could regain its independence after 20 years of federal oversight.

Schaaf is dismayed by the level of trash and increased dumping, and "our elders sleeping on our sidewalks. We are being recognized for our efforts to house the homeless, but I still see what I see and feel what I feel. It's just not enough."

Recently, Gov. Gavin Newsom threatened to withhold State money from the City for not doing its part to alleviate conditions in the Wood Street encampment, despite it is primarily located on Caltrans property. Caltrans is now in the process of clearing it. And the City's own audit, released after our interview, cites serious deficiencies in Oakland's response to its homelessness crisis.

"The key to ending homelessness, poverty and violence is ending systemic racism," Schaaf said. "It will continue if we don't remove the barriers."

Despite this backdrop, she's upbeat about the longer-term projects she's set in motion and hopes the next mayor "will have the humility to continue them." These include:

Fixing the roads: Founding Oakland's first Department of Transportation and initiating a bond program (Measure KK, passed in 2016) to ensure a continued funding source to improve our roads. Although the work is well underway, including major street paving within Rockridge, "I'm not sure Oakland will feel the full impact for a few years," she said.

Establishing Partnerships: Tackling homelessness, reducing violence, and implementing police reform. Much of this was done through Oakland Thrives, a leadership council that brings together city, county, school district, philanthropic and business leaders who work to advance well-being and equity for Oakland children, families, and communities.

Creating Oakland Undivided: Establishing the initiative that distributed more than 35,000 laptops and created 17,000 hotspots for Oakland students over the past two years, propelled by a $10 million donation from Twitter founder and former CEO Jack Dorsey. Its mission is to ensure every Oakland public school student has a computer, Internet connection, and culturally competent technology support in their home.

Launching Oakland Promise: First begun as a mayoral project and now a full-fledged nonprofit with the goal that every Oakland child graduates high school having the expectations, resources, and skills to complete college and be successful in his or her chosen career. In 2018, Oakland voters approved a Schaaf-promoted special parcel tax on single-family homes (Proposal AA) to help fund it.

"I personally raised $50 million for Oakland Promise from hundreds of donors, big and small," Schaaf said, with pride. "It has been a labor of love for me to leave a legacy that every Oakland child is supported from birth until they walk across that stage."

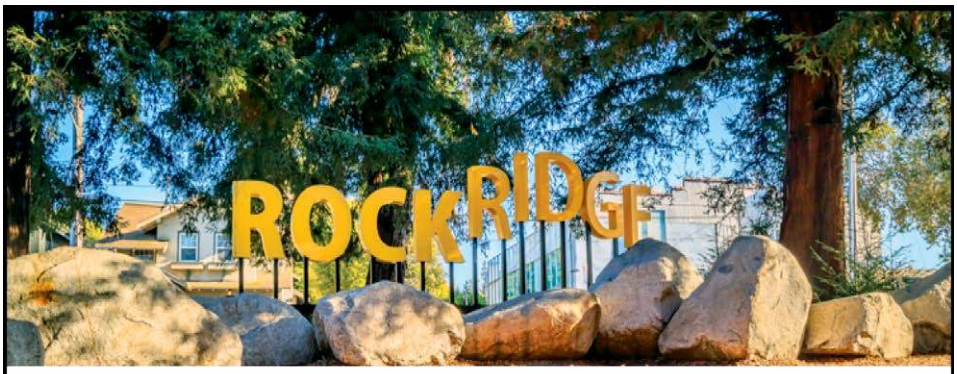
She's aware of Rockridge's immediate concerns: the need to balance market-rate and affordable housing; the scale of the planned develpment at the California College of the Arts location; and the desire for housing rather than the proposed Home Depot at Rockridge's southern end.

"The intersection of 51st and Broadway is one of the major intersections in the city," Schaaf said in our 2015 interview. "Now," she added, "the neighbors shouldn't underestimate their power. Rockridge has always done that (used that power) well."

"I've seen Rockridge transition from NIMBY to YIMBY," Schaaf said. "I'm excited that the neighbors are calling for new housing. They used to think that 'we can't densify without losing community character.'"

Mayor Schaaf, see next page

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Mayor Schaaf, from previous page

Wearing a jacket from FIT over a top from Lesley Evers, Schaaf knows College Avenue well. She has her hair done at Right Angle and shops at Evers' boutique for its youthful styles and FIT for business attire "with a kick." She posted a recent photo of herself in a FIT leather jacket alongside rapper Too $hort (Todd Shaw), an Oakland native "who has some exciting things planned for the Town. When you're the mayor of Oakland," she said, "you want the outfits for when you need to be a bad-ass mayor."

ambassador, its "Hustler in Chief" going after private funding and philanthropy, and working for changes in the law at the State and national level.

The mayor is also the CEO, she said, overseeing 5,000 employees and a $1.7 billion budget. And the mayor is Oakland's "Chief Belonging Officer," who needs to instill a sense in every resident that "their dreams matter." Above all, "The mayor must make hard, time-pressured decisions and have a moral compass guided by their deeply-rooted love for our town."

"The job is exhausting," Schaaf acknowledges. Still, "I think my husband (Sal Fahey, a particle physicist) is skeptical that I can stay home for any extended length of time. He always knew when he married me that Oakland was part of the deal."

"More people deserve to live in this fantastic community. Share your awesomeness, Rockridge."

During her mayoral stint, it became easier to convert single-family homes into duplexes and to create accessory dwelling units (ADUs) — smaller, independent residential units located on the same lot as a single-family home. "More people deserve to live in this fantastic community. Share your awesomeness, Rockridge."

As many already know, Schaaf has endorsed District 6 City Councilman Loren Taylor to become her successor. The mayor's job, she said, requires someone with "experience in city government and the real world." She views the job of mayor as Oakland's

Their two children, who chose Bishop O'Dowd for high school after attending OUSD elementary and middle schools, may have somewhat prepared her for the time when "Mayor" won't precede her name. According to Schaaf: "Even the mayor can be reduced to a parental irritant in the eyes of a teenager."

Questions or suggestion? Please email judyberne@att.net. ■

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It's Demographics, Not Gentrification

Dear Editor: I'm writing in response to Beverly Burch's Letter to the Editor about School Closures (May 2022). While I share her concerns, I want to address some key drivers of closures, as well as the penalty all families are paying for half-empty schools.

While gentrification is a factor, families fleeing OUSD for better schools, whether charter or private, is another. As OUSD has seen enrollment fall, charter schools have gained ground. Charter school enrollment rose by 1,200 since 2014/15 to 12,163 according to OUSD's website.

Another trend that cannot be blamed on gentrification is the phenomenon of families opting out of OUSD. As a family with children in Chabot Elementary, we lost count of how many classmates left for private schools, or Lamorinda public schools that were quicker to reopen during the pandemic. And while I sympathize with Ms. Burch's very valid concerns about under-resourcing black and brown communities, the continued maintenance of so many schools steals precious and ultimately finite resources from those very same communities. San Jose, a similar-sized school district to Oakland, has 40 schools. Oakland has double that amount. So how can we afford to run double the number of school sites, with around the same number of students, when State funding is linked to enrollment? The answer of course is that we can't, if we want to offer every child a well-resourced and well-maintained school site.

To quote a recently departed school board member, Shanti Gonzales, "Twenty years ago, OUSD served about 52,000 students. This year we have about 35,000 students. In California, school funding is based on enrollment. Yet we have a higher number of schools today than we had 20 years ago. If we had fewer sites, our maintenance dollars and bond dollars would go a lot further and our schools would be in better condition."

Unfortunately, school closures are a necessary evil. Evil because they rob communities of beloved neighborhood schools, but necessary because well-resourced and well-maintained schools should serve ALL children. This is why I believe OUSD owes all families impacted by school closures access to transportation services to minimize the impact such closures will have on working parents.

Having attended many school board meetings during the pandemic, I have nothing but respect for the school board members that are doing their best to represent families. We are especially fortunate in Rockridge to be represented by Sam Davis, a parent, and former educator. For a window into the incredible opposition the School Board faces in making any positive changes, I encourage your readers to attend a school board meeting.

Maryann Kongovi
Harwood Avenue ■

SOME FOLKS LOOK FORWARD TO LAUNDRY DAY

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Verizon Rooftop Cell Antennas Will Block Views

Dear Editor: In June 2022, the Oakland Planning Commission approved a permit to allow Verizon Wireless to place six cell antennas on a Rockridge apartment building (5319 Broadway Terrace) that will block the views of an adjacent penthouse condominium. These shrouded cell antennas, once installed, will mar the panoramic view of Bay Area bridges.

Verizon Wireless argued that homeowners are not entitled to their views, and the Planning Commission said the right to maintain existing views was not applicable with this permit. Yet it is these stellar bay views, the vibrant shopping, and top-notch restaurants that support Rockridge home prices. Additionally, the 1996 Telecommunications Act, and Federal courts, have ruled that adverse aesthetic impacts are a valid legal ground for authorities to deny applications for wireless facilities.

However, the owners of the condominium filed an appeal of the decision. The grounds were that the commission misapplied the intent and violated the direct language of the Telecommunications Ordinance. Other key points are the inaccurate reasoning for alternate site selection and incomplete/inaccurate application information, including the building's ownership.

To learn more about this project, visit Planning Commission meetings or project links, visit https://www.oaklandca.gov/meeting/planning-commission-meeting-6; or contact Councilmember Dan Kalb at DKalb@oaklandca.gov with the subject line "Appeal of Project PLN20080" immediately as the appeal will be scheduled soon and heard by the City Council.

The Planning Commission said the right to maintain existing views was not applicable with this permit.

Alexis Schroeder
Founding Member of Californians for Safe Technology ■

Thanks to **Kathleen Winzeler** for her service as Block Captain and delivering *The Rockridge News* to businesses along College Avenue.

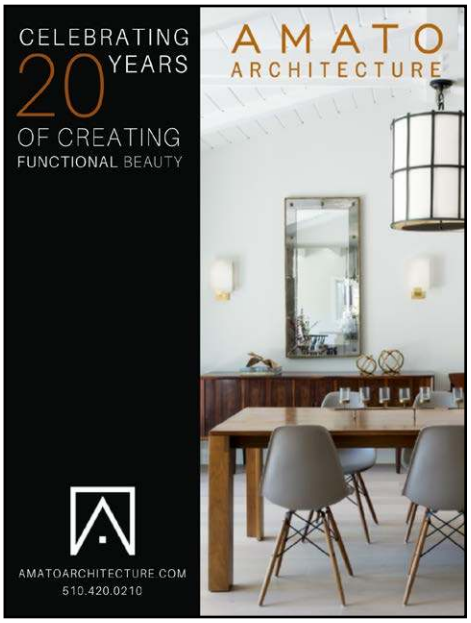


Winzeler has to give up her route, but it should be easy to fill as it offers the opportunity to window shop while you walk the route. Please let us know if you will be able to sign up to be Block Captain for the route below.

Route CAv1: Businesses and apartments along College Avenue, from Claremont Avenue to BART.

Block Captains deliver newsletters door-to-door. The bundles are delivered to their front porch the first weekend of each month (except August).

To volunteer, call (510) 547-3855, or send an email to Susan at smontauk@gmail. ■





An Activist Among Us

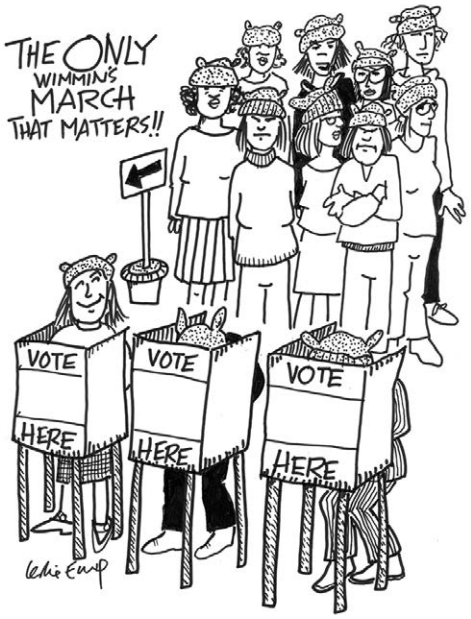
by Carol Kasparek

By the time you've ordered your ricotta pancakes at the Rockridge Café this month, you've probably noticed the new art exhibit on the wall by your table. Instead of landscapes and landmarks, encircling the café are a series of cartoons. A cast of characters is commenting, cajoling, and fantasizing above you.

The more you look, the more likely you are to be drawn into the vignettes of these strange times, queer life, and intimate challenges. **Leslie Ewing** has chronicled her decades of political activism in her cartoons — always with a swing into her life surrounding that activism.

Her Orange County upbringing was followed by art design studies at Occidental College and UCLA. Ewing explored her desire to give life to her drawings with a series of short films with the only anime professor at UCLA. "They were awful … are there copies existing? I hope not." Cinematic quality aside, Ewing did learn to collaborate with few resources. Sorority membership at UCLA involved a bit of political opening. "We were against the war, smoked marijuana, and wore beads."

Her job throughout school was at Disneyland. Moving up through the retail venues in Fantasy Land shaped the next several years of her professional life. "Only thing I saw with art was teaching art, and I wasn't going to do that." Ewing found her design experience helped with merchandising, product selection, and opening locations. She went on to consult with other theme parks, eventually representing various manufacturers while based in Las Vegas.



Ewing's cartoons will be on display at the Rockridge Café through October 25th.

Ewing canvassed in Nevada to promote the passage of the ERA. Threats to her during that process, an unsafe domestic situation, and the growing sense that she needed to come out as gay led her to accept a friend's invitation to visit Northern California. Later, at a women's music festival, she fell in love with Rebecca Le Pere, the woman who would be her partner for almost 20 years. They bought a home in Rockridge, just as the HIV/AIDS crisis (then referred to as gay-related-immune-deficiency, or GRID) was becoming a pivotal part of life in the Bay Area.

As they heard more about AIDS, Ewing and her partner realized they didn't know anyone with the disease. "Whose fault is that?" asked Le Pere. With the government "turning a blind eye, we need to stop waiting for an invitation and show up" Show up, they did.

Civil disobedience training at the Pacific Center led them to Washington D.C. for a march through the city to the steps of the Supreme Court. On the cross-country flight, they discovered a party in the back of the plane. The staff of the Names Project for the AIDS Quilt had so much fun on their way to being arrested in the capital that this group and their project remain a cause for Ewing to this day.

Ewing "kept showing up for things." Volunteering for the Names Project, she helped with data entry, because

Ewing, see next page

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Ewing, from previous page

"I don't like sewing." As part of her data entry tasks, she read notes about those who had died and wrote thank you notes to contributors. Friends would gather around the quilt panels, using the activity as an opportunity for reconciliation. Some "were dragged" into the gathering; all were moved by the mementos and remembrance. Panels for the quilt grew from 2,500 to 55,000 today.

For seven years, Ewing helped the quilt travel to D.C. for display on the Mall, but she realized that a massive statement needed to be made beyond that display. Attendance at marches had dwindled; several states were passing anti-gay legislation. These were "really dark times." She began working to "build consensus among gay rights leaders." Two-and-a-half years of collaboration and persistence led to the 1993 March on Washington with an attendance of 800,000. "The proudest thing I'll ever do," she reflected.

Retail and activism led to nonprofit leadership for Ewing. She became the buyer for Under One Roof, a gift shop that raised money for AIDS organizations. Through that network, she became director of the Lyon Martin Clinic, offering health care to women, transmen, and transwomen. Twenty years after attending civil disobedience training at the Pacific Center, Ewing became the Executive Director for the Bay Area institution. Since retiring in 2019, she has served on the Board that oversees the AIDS Quilt and AIDS Memorial Grove.

Cartooning was a constant after she moved to Rockridge. Ewing's cartoons touch upon sexuality, gender, race, social justice, and the quirks of being human in all these dimensions. Her work has appeared on Names Project literature and in local publications, including the *SF Bay Times*, *The Sentinel*, and *Lesbian News*.

Ewing kept artistically capturing moments even through Le Pere's illness and death, and then her own cancer diagnosis and successful treatment several years later. At gatherings throughout the country, Ewing has been approached often by young women who have revealed how her cartoons have helped them get through dark times. She now uses her home for installations — a venture into visions of her own history.

Ewing's most recent accolade came through Le Pere. A former associate of her partner was friendly with "the Sainting Sister" of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. After a Memorial Grove ceremony last year, Ewing was led up a nearby hill for her induction into the order as Saint Activista Cartoonicus Lesbatron (litany available upon request).

What sayeth our local luminary? "Just keep saying yes until you have a reason to say no. Get in a position to make decisions. Play the long game, have some humility, and help free up others to think clearly. You don't have to buy everything you like or keep it because it follows you home." ■

Yay! Rock-N-Stroll Is Here to Stay

by Jody Colley, RDA

For over a year now, the second Saturday live music series has rocked and rolled our Rockridge neighborhood with bands sprinkled along College Avenue — from Broadway to Alcatraz. The event is a program of the Rockridge District Association (RDA), a nonprofit that serves to bolster commercial activity for Rockridge's predominantly independently owned businesses.

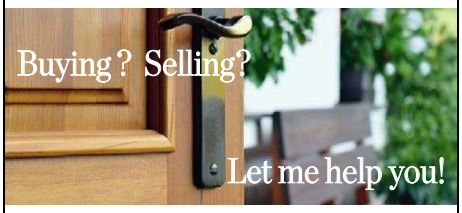
Due to tremendous community response, the RDA board voted to fund the series for another year, which means Rock-N-Stroll is here to stay. Bands may pop into local shops for short sets should rain appear on any particular day of the series. ■



Artist and activist Brooke Levin displayed her artwork at last month's Rock-N-Stroll.

Don't miss the next Rock-N-Stroll
Saturday, October 8th
Featuring Las Brujas, Calle Ocho, Sej Miles, Aiden Alexa, Parts & Labor, among others.
For more info, visit
www.RockridgeDistrict.com.

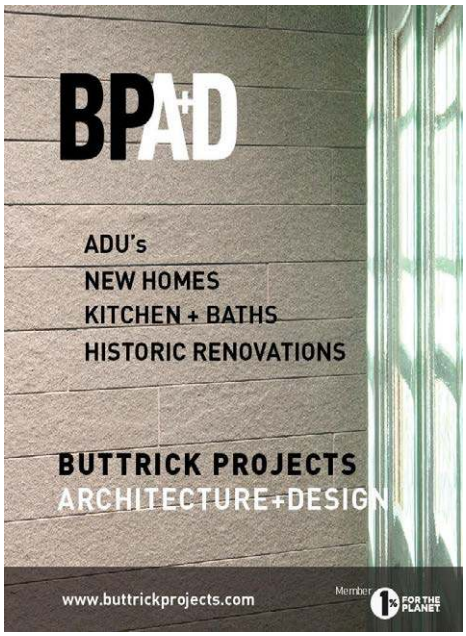
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NCPC MEETING

The Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council
meets on the 2nd Thursday of even numbered months.

The next Zoom meeting will be held on:
October 13, 2022, at 7pm,
(pending further notice)

For Zoom link, visit:
https://rockridgencpc.com

To suggest meeting topics, send an email to:
chair@rockridgencpc.com.

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Ballot Measures, from page 2

Measure S: Non-Citizen Voting

This ballot measure would amend the City Charter to allow the City Council to authorize non-citizens, who are the parents, or legal guardians, or certain caregivers of qualified minors, to vote for the OUSD directors. if they are otherwise eligible under State and local law. This would potentially enable all such individuals to influence the direction of school board policies. A nearly identical law in San Francisco was ruled unconstitutional.

Measure T: Progressive Business Tax

This measure would amend the City's business tax by adopting a progressive rate structure in place of the current system, which imposes a flat tax on gross receipts (varying by type of business).

Measure U: Housing & Infrastructure Bond

This bond measure would authorize $850 million in general obligation bonds for a variety of projects including street paving, upgrading or purchasing facilities, and the acquisition, rehabilitation, or construction of housing. The measure continues to fund the work begun under Measure KK in 2016, but increases the percentage allotted for housing. This will renew an existing tax at the same level.

Measure V: Just Cause Amendment

This measure would amend the Just Cause Ordinance chiefly by extending eviction protections to mobile homes and newly constructed residential rental units within the first ten years, and by prohibiting most no-fault terminations of residential tenancies during the school year where a school-child or an onsite employee of a school, community college, or childcare facility resides in the rental unit.

Measure W: Campaign Reform

This measure would make changes to the financing of City and school board elections in Oakland. Every eligible adult resident would receive four $25 vouchers, which the resident may assign to their chosen candidates in City and school board elections. Candidates who receive the vouchers must limit total spending and provide regular reports. The measure is meant to help level the election playing field. Costs include startup and administrative expenses, and at least $4 million during each two-year budget cycle for the vouchers, subject to increase for inflation.

Measure X: Government Reform Charter Amendments

This measure would revise the City Charter to address a number of governance issues ranging from the setting of salaries for public officials to procedural rules for the City Council. Councilmembers could no longer serve more than three consecutive terms.

Measure Y: Oakland Zoo

This measure would establish a 20-year parcel tax to support Oakland Zoo operations, staffing, maintenance, and capital improvements. The parcel tax would raise about $12 million annually. ■

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The deadline for November's issue is Oct. 20, 2022 (available Nov. 5). Mail to: RCPC, 4900 Shattuck Ave., PO Box 22504, Oakland, 94609-20131.

For more details, email Susan Montauk at smontauk@gmail.com.

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Competition Drives Price in September

Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
9/8/2022	3	1	35 Armanino Court	$1,495,000	$1,495,000	13	$2,110,000
9/13/2022	2	1	5439 Claremont Ave	$675,000	$599,000	63	$617,000
9/15/2022	3	2.5	5808 Presley Way	$1,599,000	$1,599,000	12	$2,050,000

Homes sold in September closed 26.7% over the asking price on average.

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