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Home Depot Drops Proposal for Shops at the Ridge

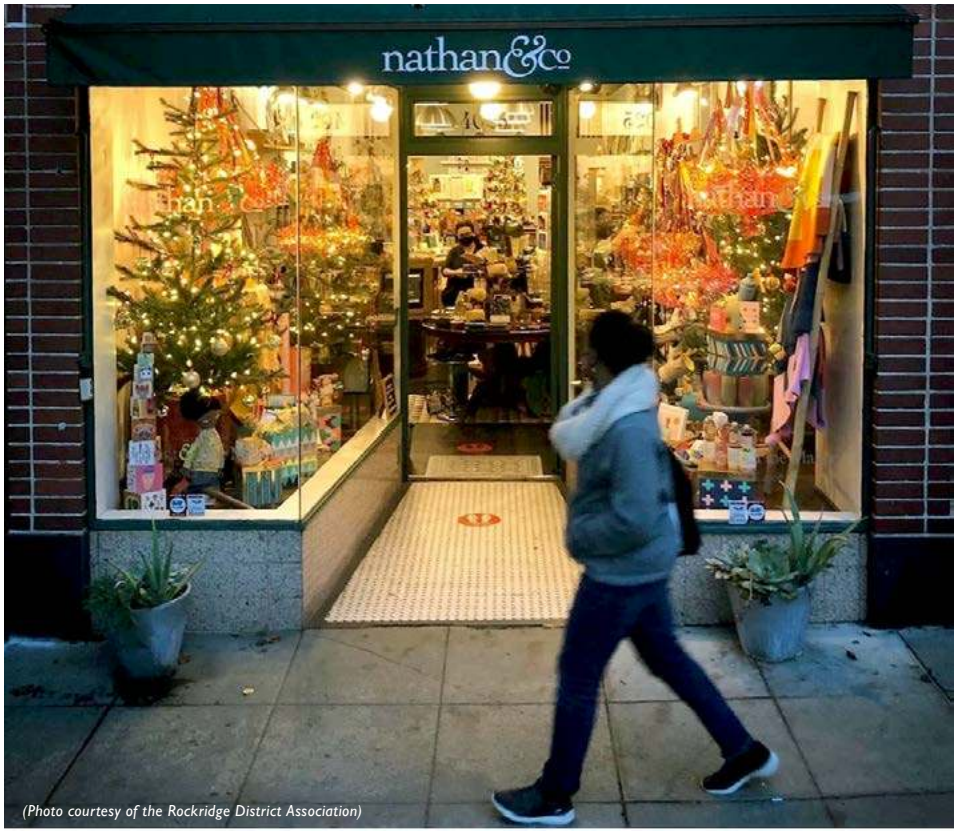
Home Depot has pulled its proposal for the Shops at the Ridge project as a direct result of community action that included a rally and petition drive that garnered more than 4,400 signatures. Several neighborhood groups came together to help make this happen, including the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), Upper Broadway Advocates (UBA), Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League (PANIL), and the Housing Action Coalition (HAC).

What happens next is unknown as the landowner has not expressed interest in having any housing built on the site. However, our local representative Dan Kalb believes that can happen. "We had a shopping center approved back in 2013 for Phase Two. We are talking about making a few modifications to include housing on top of the shopping center — maybe four, five stories — while still having a retail feel to it."

The Rockridge News will continue to report on the project.

Holiday Shopping and Festivities Come to Rockridge

by Jody Colley, Rockridge District Association



(Photo courtesy of the Rockridge District Association)

Holiday lights adorn street poles along College Avenue and signal the beginning of the holiday season. Once again, Rockridge is poised to shine by offering the Bay Area the perfect destination for holiday shopping, dining, pampering, and entertaining. Defying the odds, Rockridge is bursting at the seams with retail shops — established, new, and recently expanded — offering exceptional gifts for everyone in the family, especially the kids. Foodies have seemingly endless choices in dining options for their holiday meals with loved ones, whether eating out or taking it home to share. It's a bustling time for College Avenue, which invites visitors to enjoy the holiday lights amidst award-winning window decorations.

The Rockridge District Association (RDA) is providing live music and caroling to enhance the holiday shopping experience each Saturday and Sunday in December leading up to Christmas. Performers will dot College Avenue from Broadway to Alcatraz, providing daytime entertainment for shoppers. In addition to street performances, The GRAMMY

Holidays, see page 3

RCPC

Housing is a Hot Topic: Let's Dig in Together

by Casey Farmer, Chair RCPC

My fellow RCPC Board Member Kirk Peterson wrote an article, "A Place Called Rockridge," in last month's *Rockridge News* about our beloved neighborhood in which he stated, "Change is coming. There will be more of us here, and there's room." I couldn't agree more.

As I hear Rockridgers talk about housing, I've contemplated a number of questions:

• What are the various types of housing we can incorporate into our neighborhood?

• What will be the real impacts of new housing versus fears on traffic, parking, community safety, and support of the local economy on College Avenue?

• How many ADUs have been built in Rockridge and are they helping to address the housing crisis?

• Can housing be built on vacant lots like the triangular-shaped corner at College and Claremont?

• What is upzoning — as some have proposed along College Avenue — and what changes would it bring to the neighborhood?

One major element of the housing conversation regards affordability. Nearly 100 residents gathered in October for our rally against Home Depot and for housing. The signs people held and the cheers they shouted varied — some urging "only affordable housing," and some with signs inferring "Build Housing!" From this powerful gathering of neighbors, I've added more questions to my list:

• What are the economics of affordability? How does affordable housing get financed and built? What role can we as a neighborhood play in that process?

• Will "all affordable or nothing" projects work in our neighborhood?

• Should we focus on advocating for more units that are affordable to middle-income people, or should we focus on creating units at greater affordability to house lower-income people? What level is financially affordable to middle-income people? Should we advocate for greater affordability to house lower-income people?

• Without California Redevelopment resources, what are the funds available to subsidize affordable housing and how is Oakland accessing them? Are our local voter-approved tax dollars for affordable housing working (specifically Alameda County Measure A1 and Oakland Measure KK / recently renewed as Measure U)?

• What are other high-need cities like Oakland or high-resource neighborhoods like Rockridge doing to build affordable housing?

• In previous cycles, Oakland has built many market-rate units surpassing our regional housing goals in that category while vastly underbuilding affordable units. Does this mean we should have a moratorium against market-rate units?

• What questions do you have about housing?

My colleague Kirk Peterson asked, "How can we shape change for the best?" As Chair of our neighborhood association, I see our greatest role as advocacy for what the neighborhood wants and needs. While we've collectively and successfully fended off Home Depot, and remain hopeful that The Ridge site will become housing, there are a few other sites in Rockridge where housing could be built to ensure more people can afford to live in our neighborhood.

I think it's time to come together (in person or online!) to learn more about this issue. Starting early next year, RCPC will focus its Town Halls on the topic of housing. We'll bring in experts to share data and trends, open the conversation to your questions, and gather feedback from Rockridge residents so that the RCPC Board can best represent the residents we serve.

Please continue to read the *Rockridge News* for Town Hall Announcements and drop me a line with your thoughts or questions at Chair@Rockridge.org. ■

THE RockridgeNews

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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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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Display Ad Deadline for JANUARY 2023: December 22, 2022

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.

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Holidays, from front page

award-winning Pacific Boychoir Academy, carolers, and acoustic musicians will pop into shops for short sets at each place they visit. The December 10th Rockridge Rock-N-Stroll — a monthly live music series that includes sales, pop-up vendors, art shows, and more — will include a Silly Sweater Contest for people and pups.

Throughout the season, information on holiday events and sales will be posted on the RDA's website along with an expansive Gift Guide to help inspire your shopping lists. The guide will include links to buy from a selection of hundreds of curated gifts and gift cards, including local delivery options when available, making it easier than ever to shop from home and "buy local."

Taking advantage of the increased foot traffic during December, the Rockridge District Association is distributing thousands of Rockridge Pocket Guides. Found at shops all along College Avenue, the Pocket Guide introduces people to the many shops and offerings in the neighborhood. A digital edition can be found at RockridgeDistrict.com.

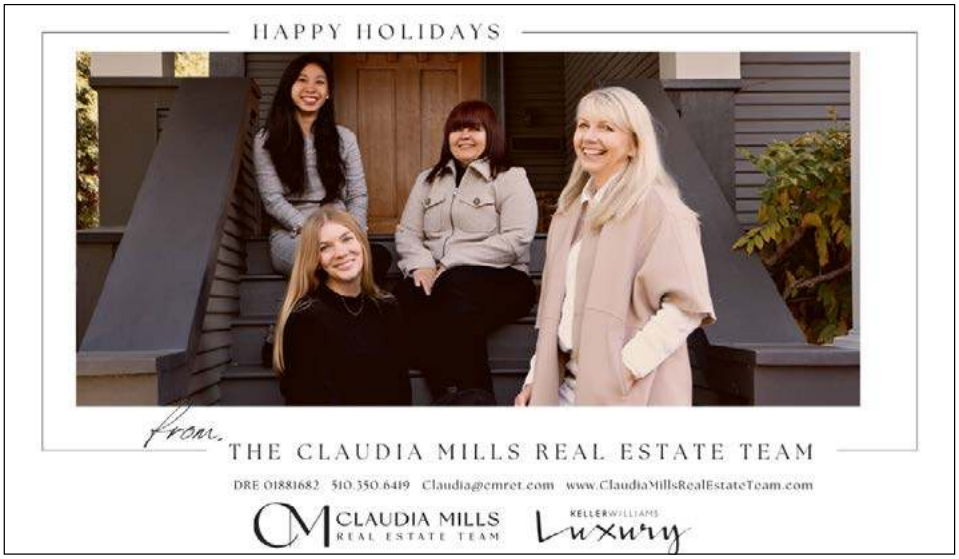
The small business community relies on the support of residents in order to succeed, to hire and develop employees, and to serve Rockridge by providing goods, services, expertise, and a unique sense of place. Opportunities to give back this holiday season will be abundant. Rockridge merchants have a generous spirit throughout the year, and the season of giving will be on full display with coat, toy, food drives, and fundraisers for local causes.

For more information about holiday events, sales, and gift guides, visit RockridgeDistrict.com. ■



Magic, a Portuguese Water Dog, has lived in Rockridge for all of her 10 years. Her dog friends Paula and David have been in the same house in Rockridge for 46 years. Magic has many titles, the most fun being Trick Dog. Here she is practicing in the neighborhood.





Land Use Committee Meeting

Rockridge Community Planning Council's LUC Meeting will be held: Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at 7:30pm, via Zoom.

(there is no meeting in December)

Use Zoom link: bit.ly/3c0r6X0
or email: landuse@rockridge.org.

Interview: Naomi Schiff Opines on Draft Design Guidelines at CCA Development

by Anna L. Marks

The need for new housing in the Bay Area cannot be overstated. Oaklanders in general agree, and voters approved Measure U (Affordable Housing and Infrastructure Bond initiative) last month, which will eventually have a positive impact on current housing stock.

Until then, neighborhood organizations hope to work with the developer of the California College of the Arts (CCA) site, currently in the design phase, to preserve its historical value to the community and provide much-needed affordable housing to the area. CCA left Rockridge this past spring when they consolidated the campus in San Francisco.

The Rockridge News sat down with **Naomi Schiff** to discuss her views on the proposed project and how it fits into the current landscape.

Schiff is not new to the scene. She was an affordable housing advocate during the Lionel Wilson mayoral administration and served on the Chinatown/Central Redevelopment Advisory Board for 12 years. She helped save a 100-unit building from demolition after the 1989 earthquake. Recently, she helped lobby Alameda County Supervisors to sell two blocks at Broadway and 4th Street for new housing — with one site affordable and one market-rate.

Currently, Schiff is a board member of the Oakland Heritage Alliance (OHA), whose mission is to "advocate for the protection, preservation, and revitalization of Oakland's architectural, historic, cultural, and natural resources through publications, education, and direct action." They also have a newsletter, offer guided walking tours, and work directly with the City on various policy matters including zoning.

OHA has written many letters to the Planning Commission regarding CCA because the site is considered an Area of Primary Importance (API), meaning that it is likely eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

…any proposed demolition of structures with such designations must be replaced by design that is of equal or higher value.

The Oakland General Plan includes a Historic Preservation Element that addresses Areas of Primary Importance and Areas of Secondary Importance, among other categories. It states that any proposed demolition of structures with such designations must be replaced by design that is of equal or higher value.

"The design guidelines should yield a project that meets the General Plan, including the 'equal or higher' standard for demolitions in an API. Once the EIR is released, the Planning Commission will make recommendations and the City Council would act on approvals such as EIR certification, a General Plan amendement, zoning changes, and General Plan conformity."

An updated draft set of guidelines has been submitted by Emerald Fund, the site developer, and Schiff questions "whether the current set succeeds in contributing to a 'special sense of place or diversity of architectural expression.'"

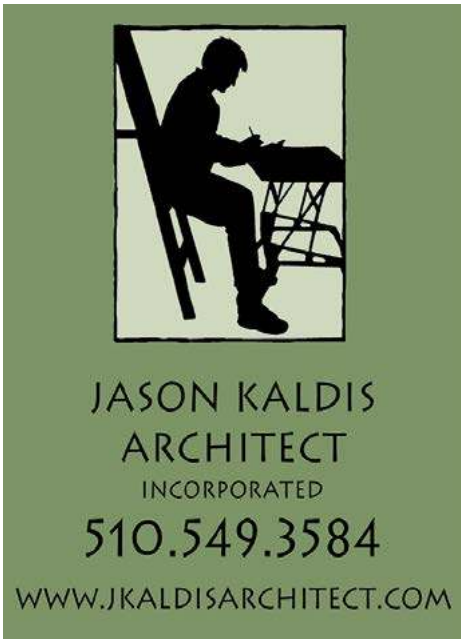
The CCA campus API has had two "periods of significance." One, including the 1874 Victorian mansion, Macky Hall, predates the college; the second is since the school opened in 1920. The current proposal calls for demolishing all ten buildings from the later CCA period. OHA would like to see some of them preserved in acknowledgment of this long period of significance, including those determined to be eligible for the California Register.

An article from the *San Francisco Chronicle* dated February 28, 2022, noted, "the State asked Oakland to issue permits for 6,949 low-income and moderate units by 2023, but the City has met only 22 percent of that goal so far, issuing permits for 1,506 affordable units." Under the current design guidelines, 65 percent of the units will be studios or one-bedroom apartments, and very few, if any, will have three or four bedrooms to accommodate families.

"It would be an affront to the citizens of Oakland to demolish 83 percent of the API's buildings, 100 percent of those constructed during the second CCA period, including all of those determined eligible for the California Register, for the primary purpose of building predominantly market-rate units — particularly since there is a vacant lot next door. It is wonderful to preserve historic landscaped open spaces and the Broadway wall, but it is not sufficient. Signage is not adequate to mitigate losing the API's integrity."

Overall, Schiff believes that the

OHA, see next page



OHA, from previous page

newest set of design guidelines are too weak, and points to the record number of trees that are slated for removal — 97 in total. She emphasized that she wants this issue to be addressed in more detail and would like to see enough trees preserved, or replaced with native species, to help mitigate the impact of additional traffic pollution and increased density. She also expressed that too little has been done to address the enormous traffic burden that will be created by the new units, and notes that Clifton Street cannot currently sustain any increase in traffic that would be introduced by the size of the new development.

Schiff would like to see a plan that feels welcoming, and expressed concern specifically about the proposed width and setback of Building B — 450 feet wide by 8 or 9 stories tall. However, she noted that, "The proposed setback of new buildings from old buildings doesn't seem to help. It is only relevant if some CCA-era buildings which are not currently in the plans are retained — but all structures are proposed for demolition."

The developers have promised to make sure there is public access, but to what degree? How will it be monitored long term? The current suggested setback of the new buildings will do little to maintain or encourage public access to an otherwise private space. Ideally, Schiff would like to see an area plan that also incorporates the adjacent vacant lot at 5050 Broadway, and she believes creative planning could have a huge positive impact and make the neighborhood even better.

"For those who can't afford a $2 million bungalow, I get it, I'm sorry, and there are a lot of those in Rockridge, and I agree that we should build more housing. But I think that it is not true that the housing supply has a trickle-down effect in which if you build a whole bunch of high-end units, this benefits people who are living on the street. It does not. We need some more accessible, and more affordable housing for the people who need it the most. And, if you look at the statistics, we know where the gap is. It's in very affordable housing. And I'm not talking about 110 percent of the median income. I'm talking about people who make much less than that."

The project might go forward more quickly with the approval of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB), which is advisory to the Planning Commission and City Council on historic projects, but currently does not support the project as it stands. The LPAB does not independently approve projects; however, their recommendations have considerable weight. The task at hand is to see how the design guidelines can not only be strengthened, but made better all around.

"Something's going to have to happen there, but we really want a good design. And I think it's not too much to ask of a developer doing such a major project that they do a good design." ■



Joe DeVries, Oakland Deputy City Administrator (above), will join the Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council at its December meeting. He will outline the direction he expects the Neighborhood Services Division to take in 2023 and describe any specific plans that are in the works.

Please join the NCPC to hear what's in store for next year.

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

The next Zoom meeting will be held on:
December 8, 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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A Bold Vision for Rockridge

Dear Editor: As your neighbors to the south, we wanted to write in appreciation and support of the efforts to transform 51st/Broadway into much-needed housing. As Temescal and Mosswood residents, we share the Broadway corridor and the need for new housing in the community.

Inspired by work happening in other neighborhoods, we've begun organizing ourselves, in part so that we can join Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) and others in pushing for a community-driven, housing-centric vision for that site and others nearby. We are excited to see new housing at the California College of the Arts (CCA) site as well, part of what we hope can become an integrated vision for both sites.

We also hope to start developing a true planning vision for the Broadway corridor between Kaiser and CCA. There are numerous vacant sites or underutilized commercial buildings, and we have a historic opportunity to provide new homes to an incredibly diverse group of Oaklanders.

Thank you to all RCPC members who have led the charge at 51st and Broadway, and who are paving a path forward in housing conversations. Affordability, ownership, density, design, open space, and public access are all critical components, and we are committed to finding common ground and building a bold and more inclusive vision for our community. The question is no longer whether to build, but how.

We look forward to being your partners as we work to transform Broadway into a street worthy of its name — and of the inclusive values of this great city.

Alex Schafran, Manila Avenue, Oakland
Anna de Anguera, 37th Street, Oakland
Brian Pearson, 37th Street, Oakland
George Spies, Webster St, Oakland

The opinions represented in the ***Letters to the Editor*** *do not necessarily reflect the views of the* Rockridge News*, the Rockridge Community Planning Council, or the RCPC Board of Directors.*

Happy Holidays to You
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Rockridge Designers Cut from the Same Cloth

by Susie Wyshak

Did you know that Technical Designers turn artistic concepts by fashion illustrators into practical sewing patterns for clothing and apparel production? Rockridge is blessed to have three such local design veterans and entrepreneurs. Each of these artists expresses a strong passion and vision for beautiful clothing and accessories that are built to last — and each has the fortitude to stand alongside fashion's mainstream purveyors.



Desiree Salas

With a degree from the College of Alameda fashion design program, Salas became a technical designer for Baby Gap (making baby dresses) and Women's Gap and taught at the Academy of Art. While operating Cole Coffee with her husband Mike, her inspiration to start a clothing line struck. Salas' line of all-cotton, retro-inspired dresses, skirts, and tops embody her fond memories of thrift shopping.

"Vintage dresses are great, but they're old and fall apart," she explained. Her line features playful patterns, constructed for daily wear. "You can live in them," she says, meaning her cotton creations can be layered with shirts and sweaters, over leggings, with boots or sneakers.

Where: Explore Desiree's creations at Bella Vita, 5511 College Ave; Cole Coffee at College Avenue's Rock-N-Stroll; and Etsy.com/shop/desireesalas.

Elaine Hamblin

Temescal Farmers Market goers may have spotted a booth filled with natural-toned hoodies and smartly tailored denim jackets. That's Kosa Arts, a line reflecting Elaine Hamblin's history as a seasoned designer with a commitment to sustainable design.

Hamblin's degree in fine arts from California College of the Arts (CCA) led to many years as a technical designer with iconic Bay Area brands including Esprit, Levi's, Gap (where she and Salas were co-workers), Everlane, and StitchFix.

The revenue from her clothing and home goods supports the Northern California Fibershed, an organization that promotes the use and production of regionally grown materials and supports the enhancement and restoration of soil, water, and the health of the biosphere. French terry cotton fabric features Sally Fox's naturally colorful, organic Foxfibre® cotton, grown and woven in America.

Other pieces use Climate Beneficial Wool whose regenerative practices have been verified. Dip-dye and eco-print pieces get their color from mainly Hamblin's homegrown and foraged plants. Hefty denim fabric is "mill-end," meaning it includes remnants from large manufacturer production runs.

Where: Visit Kosa Arts at the Temescal Farmers Market. To shop online and find open workshop hours, visit KosaArts.com.

Natalie Loftus

During the pandemic, Oaklanders and Etsy shoppers scooped up Natalie Loftus' designer-quality masks in Japanese printed fabric. Little did they know that each mask was handcrafted by a seasoned creative whose global design experience includes work for Levi's, Stitchfix, and Old Navy.

The mask-making progressed into a line of beautiful, practical accessories featuring Japanese prints and heavy, ten-ounce denim. Hallmarks of the line include snap-close eyeglass cases; a reversible tote engineered to last; and a cleverly designed wristlet that unzips into a single-foot-long flat piece.

Where: etsy.com/shop/MasquerAide and locally at Mimi Manning's vintage pop-ups, at 51st and Lawton.

Susie Wyshak is a local real estate agent, food maven, and resident who adores artisan-made clothing. ■

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He Knows Rockridge Streets "Like the Back of My Hand"

by Judith Doner Berne

Greg Brennan has come full circle. In 2006, the now 67-year-old Rockridge resident moved back to the house in which he grew up. The neighborhood "paper boy" from the age of 10 to 16 years of age, he now delivers the Rockridge News on his Shafter Avenue block.

Brennan was born with detached retinas in both eyes. His right eye repaired itself, but surgery on his left eye was unsuccessful, leaving him blind in that eye. Now, he is losing sight in his good eye.

"I've had a pretty good run," Brennan said, as we sat in his backyard flanked by the lemon tree he climbed as a kid, and an avocado tree he recently planted. He ran a successful hauling and salvage company until his retirement in 2005. "I helped clean up after the (1989) earthquake and (1991) Oakland Hills fire."

Brennan gave up driving at age 50, but proudly independent, says he "can still deliver the paper" and walk to Trader Joe's for groceries. He frequents Soi Four, Barney's, Crepevine, McNally's, and Ben 'n Nicks. Although he sometimes relies on a white cane and/or his dog, Lucy, for support, "I know the streets like the back of my hand, and every bump and crack in the sidewalk."



Photo by Judy Berne

Greg Brennan, pictured with his dog Lucy, feels "very fortunate" to be back in his childhood home.

He found Lucy, his third Dalmatian, on the Internet. He saw her photo (think online dating) and realized, "She's the one. I had her put on a plane and shipped out from Missouri." He trained the then-nine-week-old puppy in English as well as Spanish, in which he is fluent. "She's bilingual. It took a long time."

Brennan's love for the dog involved re-purposing his garage as a living space, including adding a tiny kitchen and bathroom. He wanted to live there as she recuperated from two knee replacements and couldn't maneuver the steps to his century-old Queen Anne/Craftsman home. "She has titanium knees," he said.

Eyes on Rockridge, see next page

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eyes on Rockridge

Continued from previous page

He grew up alongside his two brothers at a time when Rockridge "was kind of run down." That's when houses were being physically moved to make way for the new freeway and BART, and College Avenue had lots of empty storefronts. "We rummaged through all those old houses."

When he was about eight years old, "I watched the old Chimes Theatre burn down," on the corner that is now Market Hall. At that time, it had been turned into a second-floor roller rink above a bowling alley, he remembered. He attended Chabot Elementary, Claremont Middle School, and Oakland Tech.

The three brothers had the run of the town, including the construction sites. His parents told them: "Go outside and come back when the streetlights come on." A neighbor, Gus Rodeen, now in his nineties, still lives on the block, and Brennan says he remembers him saying: "Those Brennan boys, they're trouble." But his wife Marion countered when we walked across the street to talk to her: "I think you were good kids." For Brennan, "Rockridge was a great place to grow up. Today, kids have to be so guarded."

His grandfather, Jack Brennan, opened Brennan's Hofbrau in Berkeley, in 1959. Greg's dad was part of the second generation to run it. He was there for 30 years before opening the Hotel Brennan in Baja, Mexico, which Greg's stepmother still operates. The iconic Hofbrau, under Jack Brennan's granddaughters, closed in 2018. "I went there many times in its last three weeks," Greg said.

Greg's house is full of antiques, some that he brought home during his years in the salvaging business. That includes a set of hand-painted dishes with a pinecone motif from a Tahoe cabin; a marble-topped walnut console with an attached mirror; and an oak side-by-side secretary desk and attached glassed-in cabinet.



(Photos by Stuart Swiedler)

The Sacramento Northern rail line ran in front of Brennan's house along Shafter (pictured above at Forest heading west). The photo below was taken on Shafter just east of Hudson.



"I remember these freight trains going by and they had livestock on them," said Brennan, who was about age 4 at the time.

He is particularly fond of a wooden ship's wheel from an old schooner that a customer abandoned. It's now mounted on his former garage alongside a wooden sign, designating "The Boat House."

"I ran whale-watching tours" out of the Baha hotel after retiring from his salvage business, Greg said. An avid angler, he still fishes in Baha and Alaska, although now he needs someone to travel there with him. He has photographs of the 46-pound halibut he caught in Alaskan waters. "We saw that she had a dozen or two eggs, so we threw her back. Let her make babies," he said.

He keeps active by walking Lucy and working out on a stationary bike and a full-body weight machine. "I do all my own gardening and I enjoy cooking. My dad was a good cook and I picked it up from him." He uses both a gas grill and a smoker in which he uses real mesquite. "I smoke my own salmon and make big pots of soup."

The holidays, which he often celebrates with his nieces, usually find him smoking a turkey and making garlic mashed potatoes. He is also more than ready for a disaster. "I'm a prepper," he said. "I have my own desalination machine, two freezers, and several water barrels."

"He's everything a neighbor should be," said Bernard Fox, who has lived in the house next door for 47 years. "He likes to barbecue and last week he gave me a brisket half the size of a loaf of bread. He's always giving me lemons off his tree."

Divorced after 34 years of marriage, "I'm looking," Greg said. "But I can't really see anymore. So how am I going to find anybody?"

If you have questions or suggestions for future columns, please email judyberne@att.net. ■

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Oakland Tech Auction Gala Returns in 2023

After missing the annual auction gala for way too long, the Oakland Tech auction committee is looking forward to the return of an in-person party so Tech parents and caregivers can gather for food, drinks, dancing and live auction bidding to raise money for the Parent/Teacher/Student Association (PTSA).

The PTSA supports Tech teachers and students by funding many enrichment activities beyond the school budget, including sports, the arts, field trips, and improving campus life for everyone. As always, community members are invited to participate in the online auction Feb. 24 through March 8, 2023.

The gala is set for Friday, March 10, 2023, at the Humanist Hall. For info or to donate, visit oaklandtech.schoolauction.net/auction2023. ■

Jewish Community Campus Wants To Hear from You

by Melissa Chapman

The Jewish Community Center (JCC) East Bay is very excited to be a part of the Rockridge community. We will continue to work closely with RCPC so we can be thoughtful and intentional about incorporating community feedback — and we want to hear more from you.

We have posted a brief survey online (see boxed item) to learn more about what excites you, what concerns you, and everything in between. We also plan to host a Town Hall in late January, jointly with RCPC, that will be open to all Rockridge residents. ■

Possibilities for Community Services and Use of Space:

- **Preschool, afterschool for K-5 students, summer camp, teen center**
- **Adult education, social services, and activities for older adults**
- **Health and wellness center**
- **Maker's space and gallery space**
- **Café with indoor and outdoor space**
- **Arts and culture events and holiday celebrations**
- **Outdoor play and recreation spaces**
- **Flexible co-working, meeting, and event spaces**

To share your thoughts, take the survey at www.jcceastbay.org/communitycampus.

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December is awareness month for: Human Rights, Learn a Foreign Language, Safe Toys, Read a New Book
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Rockridge Branch Library — December Events For All Ages

FOR CHILDREN:

Storytime:
Every Thursday and Saturday at 10:30am; best for ages 0 to 5.

Chess Club:
Wednesday at 4pm; 12/7 and 12/14; best for ages 8 to 14.

Read to a Dog:
Thursdays at 4pm; 12/1, 12/8, 12/15; best for ages 3 to 9.

Intergenerational Origami:
Tuesday, 12/6 at 4pm and Tuesday, 12/20 at 6:30pm; all ages.

Winter Bingo:
Stop by to pick up a bingo card on 12/17 or after, complete activities, fill in bingo squares, and get a prize book! Continues until mid-January. Best for youngsters up to 12 years old.

Other fun activities related to Winter Bingo will be scheduled between 12/17 and 12/31, including Paper Snowflakes, PomPom SnowFriends, and Gingerbread Houses.

FOR TEENS:

The Rockridge Teen Advisory Board (TAB) invites people ages 13 to 18 to join us on Saturday, December 7, from 4pm-5pm, for a Winter Fest with pizza, crafts, and chats about what TAB does.

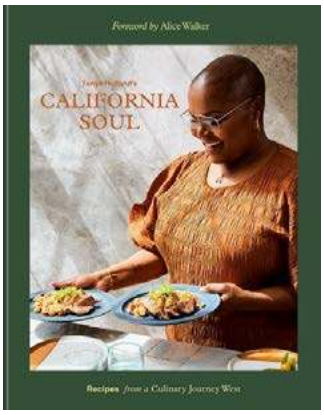
FOR ALL AGES:

Intergenerational Origami (See item on left for details)

For information on all libray programs, please visit: oaklandlibrary.org. The library will be closed Saturday 12/24/22, Monday 12/26/22, and Monday 1/2/2023. ■

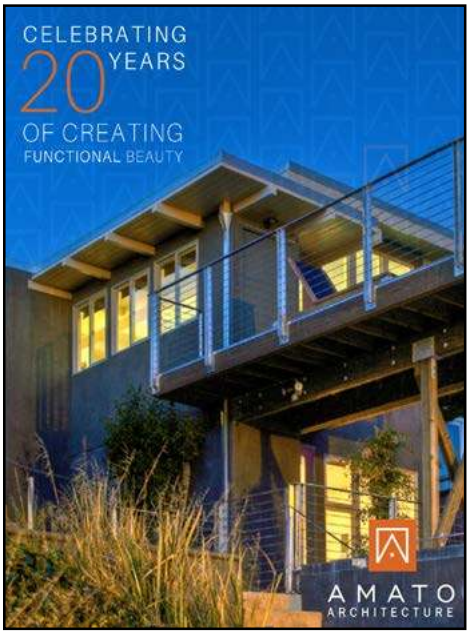
Author Book Signing at Market Hall

Saturday, Dec. 3, 12:30pm–2pm
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Emerging Artist, Satya

by Carol Kasparek

"When I was little, I always knew I wanted to stand on any stage I wanted, with people I want to be with," says Oakland-based artist, Satya. Satya's mother and grandparents nurtured that vision of freedom and community as she grew up in Rockridge, and, where she currently resides, on Ocean View Drive.

Her mother is a dancer, father is a visual artist. Satya describes being surrounded by an array of siblings and chosen families involved in the arts. "There was always music in the house." Attending Oakland School for the Arts "taught me so much." "I became so engaged with my music due to their love and care," she says. "I was able to work on my art while going to school."

India Arie, Lenny Kravitz, and Oakland artist Goapele were part of the soundtrack to Satya's upbringing. Soul, Ella Fitzgerald, and Curtis Mayfield also formed the "core" of her inspirations. The "raw, stripped back" quality of these artists influenced the "authentic" focus of her work. In describing her creative process, collaboration is a significant factor. "The outdoor music festivals and art markets of the East Bay influenced me," by people working together, in community.

"I've always liked to write." She has "millions of journals" and a multitude of notes on her phone. Satya will often compose on the guitar or piano, and then find poems or free-writing in her journals to integrate into the music. That music weaves her deeply personal lyrics with a fusion of folk, soul, and R&B. She "reaches out to friends who fit" a particular composition to build on and produce the song. She has a trusted team, which includes musician-producers like herself, and her manager.

With more opportunities for women now than in the past, they are still too often "not taken seriously or respected" in the music industry. Satya finds the current state "interesting because of DIY." Technology and social media allow her to compose,

Satya, see next page







Satya, from previous page

mix and distribute from her living room. "I love the way it's changed... you don't have to be signed or connected to a company" to produce and distribute.

Major changes in Satya's life will affect her future projects. She received a MusicForward/LiveNationLGBTQ+ grant this year. She can now "compensate the people who do so much" in her music and plan a national tour. Working with new partners, she opened for Smokey Robinson in his recent gig at Mountain Winery. He was "sweet and humble," hugged her band, and "hit every note and made every move from the 1960s. He was the soundtrack for my Mom and uncle… so happy they were there to hear him."

She had her own stage at the Hardly, Strictly Blue Grass Festival this past summer — her first festival. Satya dreams of performing at Red Rocks in Colorado, and at the iconic Fox Theater right here in her own hometown. A dream-come-true is her upcoming performance at SF Jazz in February. She will also be performing at the Oaklandside Culturemakers event on December 15. She is currently completing a variety of projects, including a full album.

Satya recently returned from living in New Orleans for four years. She found many similarities between Oakland and New Orleans. The Bay Area has "elders with southern roots" so her stay in the south had a familiar feel. New Orleans is busier, with live music down any street. However, Satya missed the people and community of Oakland and her extended family with whom she creates her music.

Satya treasures intimate settings where she can share space with artists, and where the audience and performers can "see each other up close." With her music, her joy, and her family of collaborators, Satya will be in venues everywhere.

Look for opportunities at https//satsatmusic.com to see Satya nearby before she takes off again. ■



22 year-old singer-songwriter Satya Hawley will be performing at the Oaklandside Culturemakers event December 15th.
(Photo: Rayno Malone)

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Where Has All the Trash Gone?

by Robert Firehock

Not that you asked, but if you have driven up the Hwy 24/Claremont on-ramp at Hudson early on a Wednesday afternoon, you may have noticed it was virtually trash-free. Our small, loyal band of neighbors assembled under the rubric "Scenic Streets of Oakland," has been picking it up every Wednesday morning for years — coupled with the companion mission of maintaining the landscaping.

As exasperated as we may become each Wednesday morning as we start the clean-up from a week's worth of littering, we actually have fun. And we take great pride in providing our community with a little bit of attractive local space; maybe it brings you a smile or just the secret pleasure of experiencing a clean, green vista as you rocket onto the freeway. We are certain that some drivers notice us, as we get the occasional beep-beep and friendly wave, which, by the way, is very much appreciated.



Lee Patterson attacks the wild grasses on the Highway 24 off-ramp with a weed wacker. *Photo by Robert Firehock*

We didn't track the metrics strictly but based on years of ramp work, the following is a rough measure of what trash the team removes weekly:

- One to two pounds of plastic waste, from clamshells to straws to tiny plastic multicolored residue of who knows what products, Styrofoam in all shapes and sizes, and from tiny clusters to complete ice chests.
- Three to five pounds of paper and paper products, from utility bills and shopping lists to random cardboard boxes.
- Half a shopping bag of bottles and cans, usually including several beer or liquor bottles.
- 50-100 cigarette butts, depending only on how many pickers we have and how much patience they have for picking up butts (attention smokers)!
- A handful of masks and rubber gloves — pretty much a Covid-happening that, like the virus, has not yet fully abated.
- And, a variety of unique items, from a .38 caliber bullet to a 12-foot aluminum ladder. Backpacks occasionally show up too, as do various items of clothing from shoes to hats to jackets and a few "mystery" items.

Getting these materials out of the natural environment, including the storm drain system, and into the proper recycling and garbage streams is a great source of motivation and pride for your Scenic Streets team. And every Wednesday when we're done, the on-ramp looks great.

We can always use more hands to help, Wednesdays at 10am, for an hour or so. If you have time to contribute to your community, please get in touch with Lee Patterson on his landline at (510) 923-1084; or email lee.scenicstreetsoakland@gmail.com. Advance notice will allow us to give you a safety orientation and assemble gear and equipment for you to use. We have tools, gloves, goggles, vests, and construction hats. Wear your own sturdy, closed-toe shoes and dress for the weather.

And we could still use some help getting our website back up. You can find our evolving efforts at https://www.scenicstreetsoakland.org/. ■

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RN Classifieds

List your 36-word message here for only $22 (phone number counts as one word). Make check payable to RCPC, and write "Rockridge News Classifieds" in the memo line. **The deadline for January's issue is Dec 22** (available Jan 7). Mail to: RCPC, 4900 Shattuck Ave., PO Box 22504, Oakland, 94609-20131. For 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	5608 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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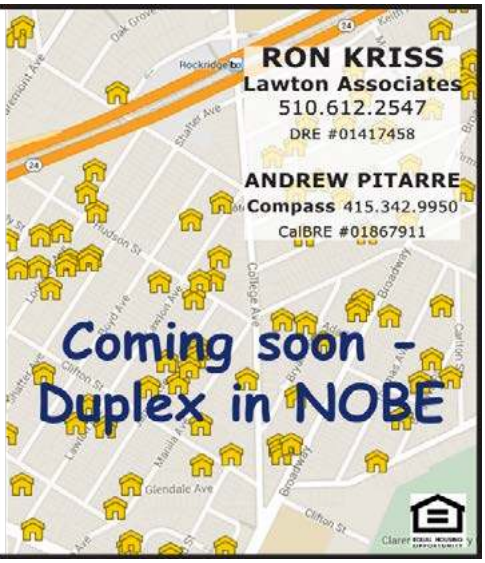
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