

## Documentary Features Long-Time Rockridge Residents and Disability Rights Activists

— by Neil Jacobson

On March 25, the film “Crip Camp – A Disability Revolution” was released on Netflix shortly after its debut at Sundance where it won the Audience Award. It’s directed and produced by Nicole Newnham and Jim Libreht, along with Sara Bolder, and in conjunction with Barack and Michelle Obama’s Higher Ground Productions.



Neil and Denise Jacobson both starred in the film “Crip Camp” which was an audience favorite at the Sundance Film Festival this past January.

*Crip Camp, see page 12*

## School’s Out, But Claremont Middle School Keeps On Keeping On

— by Shona Armstrong

In the wake of the abrupt closure of Oakland public schools on Friday, March 13, Rockridge’s local middle school perseveres. Principal Jonathan Mayer, along with the district and his team of determined and caring staff

and teachers, has since put together distance-learning programs for students that the teachers continue to refine and improve in cooperation with Claremont families. Students are

*Claremont, see page 11*



## Looking Back, Moving Forward: An Author’s Recollections

— by Judith Doner Berne

It’s hard to have your “Eyes on Rockridge” when you are confined to your house. I never imagined being dependent on Instacart and a daughter for groceries, and the daily, almost hourly worry about far-flung family, embedded in coronavirus hotspots like New York City, Chicago, Washington D.C., Massachusetts and Detroit.

**eyes**  
on Rockridge

In fact, my eyes are the only uncovered part of my face as I venture onto neighborhood streets in a daily attempt to get exercise, fresh air and a taste of spring that awakes my senses.

My eyes delight in the arrays of

*Eyes on Rockridge, see page 14*

*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.*



## Sharing The Love Through Baby Clothing Donations

— by Lisa Klein

The idea of Loved Twice began in September 2005 when I was watching the heartbreaking news of Hurricane Katrina. That event was especially devastating to disadvantaged mothers who simply needed to keep their babies warm. Having just had my first child, I was deeply motivated to help.

After seeing a posting on Craigslist from a church in Louisiana requesting donations of baby clothes to help displaced newborns, I sent an email to my network. I collected over 200 pounds of baby clothing in four days from friends and neighbors and mailed them to the church. Witnessing the impact this had, I realized this simple idea could expand as a result of the overwhelming local need.

We collect gently used baby clothes (sizes 0-12 months only), sort these essential garments into boy and girl one-year-wardrobes-in-a-box, and distribute the boxes through licensed social workers in hospitals, shelters, and clinics in underserved neighborhoods. Each baby receives approximately 75 items, including newborn onesies, sleepers, hats, booties, books, and a warm soft blanket. Keeping babies warm and reusing



Rockridge resident Lisa Klein donates boxes of clothing for newborn babies through her nonprofit, Loved Twice.

these items accomplishes two essential goals: Support vulnerable families by helping meet their basic needs while simultaneously recycling thousands of baby items that would otherwise end up in landfills.

The stories I hear from social workers that distribute our boxes of baby clothes are heartbreaking. For example, I received a box request for a 15-year-old mother whose parents threw her out of her house for getting pregnant; another for a baby whose father was just murdered; still another for struggling parents who just lost their jobs. The stories go on. Knowing I can help a newborn leaving the hos-

pital and headed straight to a shelter with little to keep warm other than a hospital-issued blanket motivates me to keep going.

I never thought a one-time baby clothing collection drive would turn into a successful nonprofit that has donated over 2 million garments to infants living in crisis. Due to Covid-19, we now have a contact-free drop-off site open in Lafayette. Monetary donations can be made on our website. Sign up for our volunteer network. ■

To date, more than two million essential garments have been delivered to underserved communities. Visit [www.lovedtwice.org](http://www.lovedtwice.org) or email [info@LovedTwice.org](mailto:info@LovedTwice.org) for more information.



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## CITY OF OAKLAND ANNOUNCES NEW COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

The City wants to share a variety of resources to support small businesses and workers during the pandemic, and has launched a [www.oakland-businesscenter.com](http://www.oakland-businesscenter.com) to serve as a portal for all of the local, State and Federal resources available to support small businesses and workers. Businesses, nonprofits and self-employed individuals that have been impacted should visit [https://www.ed.ca.gov/about\\_edd/coronavirus-2019/pandemic-unemployment-assistance.htm](https://www.ed.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019/pandemic-unemployment-assistance.htm).

To request one-on-one assistance, take the City's [COVID-19 Business Impact Survey](https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/coronavirus-2019-covid-19-business-and-worker-resources). This serves as the intake method for businesses seeking assistance. An online survey is in English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese. Additionally, The City is sending out weekly business updates, and business owners, entrepreneurs and nonprofits can subscribe at: <https://oaklandca19202.activehosted.com/f/8>.

Check back regularly for new info at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/coronavirus-2019-covid-19-business-and-worker-resources>.

## FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL RESOURCES

### The Paycheck Protection Program

PPP offers cash-flow assistance with a 100% federally guaranteed loan to employers, self-employed and independent contractors who maintain their payroll during this emergency. Check with your local bank for info.

These loans may be forgiven if borrowers maintain or restore payroll. SBA guidelines are pending publication, but the program will be available through SBA's 7(a) lenders. [The Paycheck Protection Program](#) will be available through June 30, 2020.

### KIVA.org

A City of Oakland partner, offers [zero interest loans via crowdsourcing to entrepreneurs and small business owners](#). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, KIVA has raised its maximum loan amount to \$15,000, has expanded eligibility for loans, and has extended the repayment grace period up to six month's post-loan disbursement for greater financial flexibility.

There are other local business providers who offer loans and technical assistance specifically to Oakland small businesses, including Main Street Launch, Working Solutions and Pacific Community Ventures, among others.

AnewAmerica is offering counseling sessions with telephone appointments, including support for SBA loans.

### Oakland COVID-19 Relief Fund

Addresses food insecurity, homelessness, community health & education, and economic security of workers, nonprofits and small businesses.

### [Oakland Undocumented Relief / OUR Fund](#)

Provides \$500 grants to undocumented immigrants and those in mixed-status families who've lost jobs / income.

### [One Fair Wage Emergency Fund](#)

Serves very-low-income service and tipped workers. The fund has a grant from the Oakland COVID-19 Fund of \$100,000 dedicated to Oakland residents.

### State of California's Small Business Finance Center

Provides loan guarantees and direct loans for small businesses that face difficulties accessing capital through its [Disaster Relief Loan Guarantee Program](#).

### State Unemployment & Disability Insurance Benefits – Waiting Periods Waived

Governor Newsom's Executive Order on March 12, 2020, waives the one-week waiting period for people who are unemployed and/or disabled as a result of COVID-19 to seek unemployment and disability benefits. Please direct affected workers to the California Labor & Workforce Development Agency's website to review what benefits are available including sick leave, paid family leave and workers' compensation benefits. Additional information and resources can be found at [CA Gov's website here](#).

Self-employed workers, including independent contractors, may be eligible for benefits and are encouraged to apply for unemployment insurance at [https://edd.ca.gov/about\\_edd/coronavirus-2019.htm](https://edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019.htm).

*more resources, see next page*



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### Thoughts & Prayers To All While We Shelter In Place

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3/12/2020	3	2	5645 Broadway	\$1,150,000	\$1,150,000	7	\$1,530,000
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## Rockridge Business District Responds to COVID-19

**D**uring this time of Shelter-In-Place, local restaurants have altered their hours and services to meet the needs of our community.

The Rockridge District Association maintains updated information on local restaurants offering take out and delivery services. Be sure to call ahead to

confirm the services provided as information remains fluid and some business may be open that are not included. Please help keep this list updated at <https://www.rockridge-district.com/covid19>, and thank you for supporting Rockridge merchants during these unprecedented times.

— Chris Jackson, Operations Manager

*more resources, from previous page*

### Other Measures to Preserve Cash Flow

Employers experiencing a hardship as a result of COVID-19 may request up to a 60-day extension of time from the State of California's Employment Development Department (EDD) to file their state payroll reports and/or deposit state payroll taxes without penalty or interest. A written request for an extension must be received within 60 days from the original delinquent date of the payment or return. For questions, employers may call the EDD Taxpayer Assistance Center. Toll-free from the U.S. or Canada: (888) 745-3886 Hearing-impaired (TTY): (800) 547-9565

### State Franchise Tax Board

Has postponed until July 15, 2020 the filing and payment deadline for most businesses.

### U.S. Treasury Department, IRS, and U.S. Department of Labor

Announced that small and midsize employers can begin taking advantage of two new refundable payroll tax credits, designed to immediately and fully reimburse them, dollar-for-dollar, for the cost of providing leave to their employees. For COVID-19 related reasons, employees receive up to 80

hours of paid sick leave and expanded paid childcare leave when employees' children's schools are closed or childcare providers are unavailable. Employers with fewer than 50 employees are eligible for an exemption from the requirements to provide leave to care for a child whose school is closed, or childcare is unavailable in cases where the viability of the business is threatened. Employers receive 100 percent reimbursement for paid leave pursuant to the Act. Health insurance costs are also included in the credit. Self-employed individuals receive an equivalent credit. Reimbursement will be quick and easy to obtain. An immediate, dollar-for-dollar tax offset against payroll taxes will be provided.

### City of Oakland's Paid Sick Leave Requirement for Workers

The City of Oakland is reminding all employers and workers of Oakland's voter-approved sick leave benefits. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that workers have the ability to take paid time off when they are sick. Measure FF, voter-approved in November 2014, requires the accrual of paid sick leave for any individuals employed in Oakland. The minimum rate of accrual is one hour paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked.

## CHILDCARE RESOURCES

**First 5 Alameda County** has put together a list of great resources for children and families to cope during the COVID-19 pandemic and order to Shelter-at-Home.

Resources include:

- Talking to Kids about COVID-19
- Distance learning resources (including free Internet services)
- Food assistance
- Financial aid

[CLICK HERE](#) to access these and other resources.

Employers with less than 10 employees must allow employees to accrue up to 40 hours of paid sick leave at a time and larger employers with 10 or more employees must allow employees to accrue at least 72 hours of paid sick leave. Employers who have questions should email [minwageinfo@oaklandca.gov](mailto:minwageinfo@oaklandca.gov).

### Resources to Support Workforce Reductions

If you're reducing your workforce, please consider the state's [Work Sharing Program](#) that helps employers minimize or eliminate the need for layoffs, keep trained employees and quickly prepare when business conditions improve. The program helps employees whose hours and wages have been reduced to receive Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.

### Engaging the City's Rapid Response Team

Meets with affected workers before the layoff will allow your employees access to services and programs to help them through this difficult time. Rapid Response is carried out in partnership with Oakland's American Job Center. To access these Rapid Response services, contact Tamara Walker at [twalker@oaklandca.gov](mailto:twalker@oaklandca.gov) or (510) 238-3630.

### Help with Mounting Housing Costs and Residential Displacement

Through the [Keep Oakland Housed Program](#), services are available to all Oakland residents who are at risk of losing their housing. In addition to emergency financial assistance to help with rent, utility payments, and other housing-related costs, the program offers supportive services and legal representation for tenants with an active eviction lawsuit. If you or any of your employees are at-risk for residential displacement, please connect with Keep Oakland Housed.

*Hang in there, Rockridge!  
We'll get through  
this together ❤️*

*-Daniel*



*more resources, next page*

More resources, from previous page

### Eviction Moratorium

On Friday, March 27, 2020, the Oakland City Council passed an eviction moratorium for residential renters, nonprofit organization renters, and small business renters (generally those with fewer than 100 employees).

This moratorium will prohibit most evictions, effective immediately and continuing through May 31, 2020, unless the City Council extends that date. The full text of the ordinance is available at: <https://bit.ly/2UQI52b> Commercial tenants and property owners with questions about the eviction moratorium should email [busdev@oaklandca.gov](mailto:busdev@oaklandca.gov).

### Oakland Chamber

The Chamber has launched "Oakland's Open," a crowd-sourced list of organizations providing modified services during COVID-19. Support #OAKPROUD organizations where and when you can. Email the [Chamber](mailto:Chamber) to be included. [View the List of Open Restaurants](#), and #StayInOrderOut. Email Ashleigh Smallwood at [asmallwood@oaklandchamber.com](mailto:asmallwood@oaklandchamber.com).

### Grants and Financial Assistance

Attention Literary Arts, Performing Arts, Visual/Media Arts, Freelance Artists, and Nonprofits, [resources for artists and non-profit arts organizations are now available here](#).

### Rapid Relief Fund for Kids and Schools

To purchase healthy food for students, distance learning materials, and to ensure school facilities are safe when students return. Contribute [online](#) or text "Oakland" to 31996.

### East Bay FeedER

Purchases meals at full price plus tip from local, independently-owned restaurants and delivers those meals to feed frontline workers at five East Bay hospitals. [Get your restaurant involved](#), [donate](#), or [volunteer](#) to drive.

### Volunteer Your Time

We're seeing a generous outpouring of volunteer support from Oaklanders. Volunteers are needed to help Seniors, low-income families and other vulnerable populations in Oakland. [Sign up here to support](#).

Help still is available for those experiencing domestic abuse. The [Alameda County Family Justice Center \(ACFJC\)](#) is a Division of the Alameda County District Attorney's Office. It provides legal, health, and support services for victims of domestic abuse.

### Testing for COVID-19

The City of Oakland is operating a COVID-19 test site to serve essential service providers such as healthcare workers, grocery store employees, homeless outreach workers, and others working directly with the public during the pandemic. If an organization operates within one of the listed areas and has not yet made arrangements for testing, they should email [covid19testing@oaklandca.gov](mailto:covid19testing@oaklandca.gov). In order to use this testing service, individuals must be exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or have had confirmed exposure to COVID-19. ■

Thank you Keira Williams, Harry Hamilton, and the Business Development Team at the Economic & Workforce Development Department, City of Oakland. You can reach Keira at [kwilliams@oaklandca.gov](mailto:kwilliams@oaklandca.gov); (510) 387-8003.

## "Prep is Love!" Youth Video Contest

— by Doug Mosher OCP&R Program Manager Oakland Firesafe Council

Hey you(!)th, stuck at home? Don't you love watching funny videos? Or videos that show an insanely simple way to do something? If your kids or grand-kids love watching videos that get lots of "likes" or "shares," chances are they can make one themselves. Enter this super fun, super easy "Prep Is Love!" video contest, and win one of the following gift card prizes to be awarded:

- One \$200 1st Prize gift card
- Three \$100 2nd Prize gift cards
- Ten \$50 3rd Prize gift cards

Please pass this along to your neighbors, friends and family with kids ages 21 or under. This is their chance to create a short video on any topic related to emergency preparedness and response and enter to win!

Sponsored by the Oakland Firesafe Council's Oakland Community Preparedness & Response program. For details go to: <https://oakland-cpandr.org/videos>.



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## For the First Time, Ever

— by Susan Montauk, *The Rockridge News Business Manager*

So much happened this April, for the first time. There were first-time virtual seders and Easter celebrations, first-time hiring of a personal shopper, first-time standing on a line outside a grocery store, first-time walking with friends while keeping six feet between you, first-time turning away your family member who wanted to hug you, first-time mourning a friend or relative who succumbed to the virus.

It was also a first for *The Rockridge News*. For the first time in 35 years, the newsletter did not land on neighborhood doorsteps. This month will be a repeat of April — no printed edition of *The Rockridge News*.

We hope that this new practice of publishing online-only will not continue for long, but, in the meantime, we still depend on our cadre of loyal volunteers — Block Captains, District Captains, and Marshals — who under normal circumstances, do the hard work of getting the newsletters directly to your home or business.

This month, we've asked them to spread word via email, along with the link to the digital May issue, to their lists and social media outlets. We also

encourage you, our readers, to do the same.

We realize that not all Rockridge residents are on an email list and that a substantial number of them will not know to access our online edition, and we would like to fix that problem. If you or someone you know in Rockridge is not on a block email list, we ask that you sign up at RCPC's website [Rockridge.org](http://Rockridge.org). Click on the link at the top right-hand of the home page to join our Constant Contact list so you will automatically receive the link to the online newsletter each month.

Our sincere thanks go out to the more than 150 volunteers who deliver *The Rockridge News*. You are indispensable to the continued success of our newsletter that is funded essentially by its advertisers. We ask that you, our dear readers, please reach out to these advertisers to thank them, or use their services now, while we shelter-in-place, and again when we come out of it. A click on most ads will direct you to their web page.

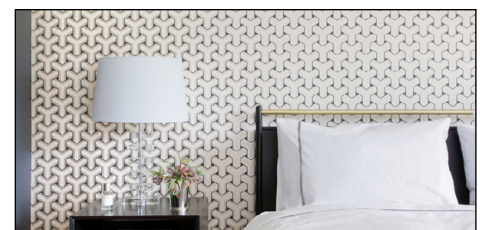
We wish you all continued health and safety. ■



## Thank You

Speaking as the Chair of the Rockridge Community Planning Council Board, I'd like to thank all the volunteers for your commitment to distributing *The Rockridge News*. Thanks also to all those volunteers who printed out the special front page flyer and posted it widely in the neighborhood and shared it with their contacts to make sure the Rockridge community was aware of the postponement of the RCPC Annual Meeting. Your ongoing support is much appreciated.

— Leonora Sea



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## An Unexpected Adventure On The Journey Home

— by Kaitlyn Johnke

*My neighbor Kaitlyn Johnke, 24, was a research volunteer in a rural town in Sierra Leone when the nonprofit she was working for told her to return home due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Five days later, she began her 50-hour journey, returning to her Rockridge home on March 24. Here, edited for space considerations, is her story. — Judy Berne*

There weren't any cases within Sierra Leone at the time, but there was a worry that if or when it got there, the health infrastructure is so unable to support its population against basic health disparities like malnutrition, malaria, and typhoid, COVID could wreak havoc on West Africa. And if that happened, we would be stuck in Sierra Leone — indefinitely.

My two co-volunteers and I were on hold for hours on end with airline's and third-party booking companies as we frantically tried to change flights originally booked for months later. They found flights that would leave within 48 hours. Mine would leave three days after theirs. We said goodbyes in our community that were too hasty for the deep ties that we had built over the last six months.

Together, we took a company vehicle to the capital city of Freetown, about five hours away. The next day, Sierra Leone made the announcement that they would be closing their airport the day before my evacuation flight. Did that mean my flight was cancelled?

As we rushed to the downtown airlines office, in front of every building were hand-washing buckets. I had washed my hands at least four times. They assured me that the flight would leave — the last out of Sierra Leone — and there was no space available on the flight that would be leaving sooner. I wasn't very reassured.

My flight was in three legs out of Sierra Leone; first to Ghana, then Ghana to Dubai, and finally Dubai to San Francisco. Overnight, I was informed that my second flight to Dubai was cancelled and my flight from Dubai to San Francisco was delayed by two days.

My first flight, to Ghana on

Sunday, still appeared to be intact. This started a new wave of panic that I might get stuck partway in my journey back to the USA. It made absolutely everything feel uncertain. I bought myself a new ticket from Ghana to Dubai even though it left me with more than a 48-hour layover in Ghana. I began wondering if I should leave at all. There still was no virus in Sierra Leone, and I would be heading to an area of high infection. I had support in Sierra Leone, but no one if I somehow got stuck in Ghana or Dubai.

The two days before my flight passed with general sadness and anxiety. It's a long trip by ferry to the airport. A few minutes before boarding they made the announcement that I had feared — the Ghana flight was cancelled. One last flight was still scheduled, Kenya. Despite having no ticket, I got on the ferry and, thankfully, was able to use my laptop to secure a seat on that plane.

They wouldn't allow me to check in until I bought my revised tickets, again via my computer, for the series of flights back to San Francisco. Finally, I checked my baggage and headed for Kenya where I had a 16-hour layover spent scrolling the news, taking naps, making new friends and eating expensive airport food.

No one was allowed to leave the airport — another COVID restriction — and many cancellations and delays were announced. Luckily, my flight wasn't among them. After Kenya, I went to Dubai, and then finally got a flight to Seattle. But by the time I got off the plane and tried to transfer my luggage, my flight to SFO was departing. I waited for another few hours for the next plane.

*Journey, see next page*

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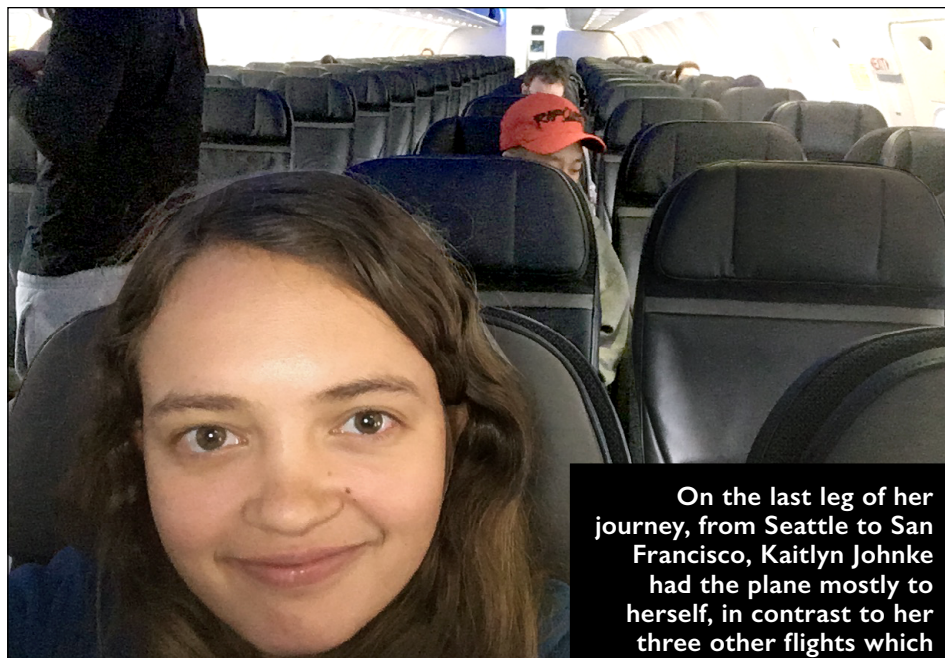
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*Journey, from previous page*

I arrived at SFO, exhausted and disoriented, to be greeted by my mom and sister. I wasn't sure if I should hug them, as I had no mask while traveling all those hours and was aware of how often I had touched my face or gotten close to strangers. I came from a place that was still awaiting its first case and where life was still "normal" to a place that was much farther along in COVID response than almost anywhere else in the United States.

I am glad to be at home and healthy and weathering this out with my family, though my heart aches for the people and countries who do not have the privilege of taking needed precautions or have limited access to health care. For all of us, I eagerly await the day that we can go on to a new "normal." ■



On the last leg of her journey, from Seattle to San Francisco, Kaitlyn Johnke had the plane mostly to herself, in contrast to her three other flights which were jam-packed.

## Aurora School Navigates Social Emotional Distance Learning

— by Robert Movradinov

Every Tuesday morning before the onset of COVID-19, [Aurora School](#) would host a school-wide assembly in its auditorium, including all of its K-5 students and teachers, along with most staff and many parents. No assembly was complete without [singing](#), announcements, and the occasional dance. For the closing song, music teacher Eve Decker would invite community members to hold hands.

Every classroom would kick off each day with a morning meeting for students and teachers to connect socially and emotionally by sharing, playing games, or practicing mindfulness. Then teachers would lead students in reading and writing, science, and math. Perhaps these rituals explain why the transition to distance learning was so jolting.

As if it weren't enough that teachers and students had to adapt classroom learning to virtual platforms overnight, they would also have to forgo the visceral, human ties that make progressive education what it is:

Experiential, collaborative, intentional — more concerned with the "why" than the "what."

Notwithstanding, Aurora teachers, led by Abbie Koss, rose to the occasion. They leapt into online learning on March 16, when Aurora, like so many schools and districts across California, began sheltering-in-place. Kindergarten and first-grade teachers filmed seven-minute daily reading lessons over the first two weeks; and heard from parents that their children would watch them repeatedly and respond as if their teachers were in front of them!

Fourth- and fifth-grade teachers assigned writing exercises, including the "Time Capsule," in which students write letters to other students or to their future selves, to be opened much later in life. While the exercise makes a yearly appearance, these children clearly will not forget this year's exercise. Some student reflections were wistful. "I miss hanging out with my friends in real life," or "I sometimes dream I'm still at school, happy." Some saw a silver lining. "I've been getting into cooking by myself and

*Aurora, see next page*

### CLAUDIA BRINGS VIRTUAL TOURS TO A NEW LEVEL

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Joined by students and parents, teachers and staff, Tuesday Morning Assemblies are a tradition at Aurora. Pictured above is a recent virtual assembly.

*Aurora, from previous page*

painting which is really amazing.” All showed an awareness that we’re in uncharted waters.

If recent months are any indication, Aurora will come out of this stronger. The school’s tagline, “The Power of Small,” is more evident now than ever. Despite distance learning, the size of the school allows its tightly knit community to look after one another. Through virtual parent coffee hours and one-on-one conversations, teachers and administrators partner with parents in a steady loop of feedback to refine the delivery of its curriculum and ensure that student needs are met.

The effort was not lost on one fifth-grade parent, who recently remarked: “Thank you for all that you are doing for our Aurora kids. My partner and I are so grateful for how effectively, seamlessly, tirelessly, and warmly you are reinventing the wheel. I know that the energy and time you are putting forth is above and beyond our imagination. We cannot imagine our child thriving without you.”

Whether in the classroom or virtual, thriving educationally will always depend on relationships. The Power of Small has allowed this community to stay connected and close — despite the distance. At a recent Tuesday assembly, held via Zoom, the music teacher gave her standard prompt for students to reach out and hold someone’s hand before singing the closing song. At that moment, one 4th grader held his hand to the camera of his device, making himself invisible and saying, “I want to hold everyone’s hand” — humbling the adults in the Zoom assembly.

Don’t we all. ■

### Aurora’s Tips for Parents, Students & Teachers: Differentiated Learning & Social Connections While Zooming

Some people connect better one-on-one than in larger groups. For this reason, teachers are providing one-on-one Zoom meetings with students. To help your child focus on Zoom instruction and foster the connection with their teacher, pin the teacher or switch the view to Speaker View.

Breakout rooms have helped tremendously with remote teaching. As second- and third-grade teacher Regina Sorey notes, “Breakouts allow the students to interact and work with each other, and also enable me to check in with small groups and more easily give support and assess learning. Letting the kids work together allows them to stay connected rather than only listening to the teacher during a large Zoom meeting.”

If your child is feeling shy, switch off their video until they are more comfortable with being seen.

If your child connects best through touch, allow them to have a stuffed animal or favorite pillow nearby while in a Zoom lesson/meeting to hug and hold onto, if a parent is unable to be nearby.

To encourage one-to-one connections with peers, let your child have Zoom play dates with one other friend. Rotate these friends throughout the week, so your child can remain connected to a number of their peers during this time off-campus. ■



  
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*Claremont, from page 1*

being held accountable for the work they do this spring, though semester grades will be Credit/No Credit.

During the first confusing weeks before spring break, many students felt bewildered and anxious. One student expressed the prevailing sentiment aptly: "Everything is so scary." Teachers reached out to students with weekly calls home to check in and maintain contact as the entire community scrambled to cope with the alarming and ever-evolving new circumstances.

Teachers and administrators began meeting virtually to strategize even as they struggled to adjust to their own families' disrupted patterns. First, the school worked hard to identify students who needed extra support in the form of more personal contact or to access technology. To help everyone access online learning tools during this emergency, The Community Schools Manager, Edana Anderson, delivered Chrome Books to students who did not have access to a computer, and Comcast is providing 60 days of free Internet.

This contribution is generous and welcome, but it is temporary. It has not solved the issue of access for every student, so teachers and administrators remain open to suggestions about how to ensure universal Internet access.

Claremont has now begun to implement its educational programs online and virtually. Teachers continue to meet and share ideas, hold office hours, post video links and assignments on Google Classroom, and host student Zoom and Google Hangout sessions with updated security.

The school webpage features a "Continuity of Learning" homepage and invites students to ask for additional help with instruction, or with computers and computer access. The local school sites, like Claremont, are working with the district to determine how students earn credit for the work they do during this unusual and challenging spring semester.

Mr. Mayer, Assistant Principal

Mr. Watson, the grade-level deans, Lacy Lefkowitz, Eric Galvan, and Deniz Thacher, and all the staff and teachers are doing their utmost to make sure students continue to learn and to keep the community intact and healthy in anticipation of hitting the ground running once schools are back in session for the next school year.

The Claremont PTA continues to work on behalf of the school community as well. Along with everyone in the world, the PTA is reassessing its budget and priorities for what promises to be a challenging coming year.

Please support the continuing success of one of our neighborhood's bedrock public institutions by contributing to the PTA's interrupted fundraising efforts at <https://www.claremontms.org>, or by sending a check to the Claremont PTA at 5750 College Avenue, Oakland, 94618.

Many OUSD families struggle with

instability and hunger, even in the best of times. The shutdown of the economy is impacting these families the hardest. Many families are sheltering-in-place together, scraping together money for food and shelter — all of which makes managing the continuing education of their children extra difficult.

If you would like to donate any part of your stimulus check to assist those in greater need, consider joining Oakland's teachers in the "Stimulus Pledge," to donate stimulus funds to families at high need in Oakland schools (<https://stimulus-pledge.org/schools-partners/>). ■

*The Claremont Knightline newsletter provides a wealth of updated information, resources, and links for students and families about what is happening. Please subscribe by entering your email and clicking the link at <https://www.claremontms.org/>.*

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**Crip Camp, from page 1**

Spanning the years from the late 1960s to the present, it tells the story of 14 disability activists, mostly consisting of campers and staff members at Camp Jened, which was located upstate New York in the Catskills until it closed in 1977. Many campers went on to lead the Disability Rights Movement.

The film highlights the struggles for the civil rights of disabled people through numerous video clips, photographs, interviews, and the discussions regarding the 504 Demonstrations (disability rights sit-ins) and protests that occurred throughout that time.

Before going to Camp Jened, I was

a camper at nearby Camp Oakhurst. I knew of many other camps for people with disabilities, similar to Oakhurst, where most of the counselors were young college students who wanted to help people less fortunate have a good summer experience. Counselors had a room separate from where campers slept. Activities were always well planned, and schedules strictly followed. People formed close relationships, but most of these ended when people returned home.

Camp Jened was very different. The grounds were shabby. Water came into the cabins through the ceilings when it rained. There were many days when there was no hot water. Many of the staff were former campers themselves. Most camp workers were hippies from the Woodstock era and conscientious objectors of the Vietnam War.

Campers and staff were all there to have fun together as equals. Activity schedules were made but loosely followed. After evening activity, campers went with their girlfriends or boyfriends unaccompanied by a counselor. If you have any doubts about what we did, watch the film. Relationships formed at Camp that often lasted for decades. Many still exist. My wife, Denise, and I re-united here years later through a mutual friend, Judy Heumann, who is also featured in the film.

The free, open, equitable, and loving environment found at Camp Jened undoubtedly is why so many of us

went on to have our own families; successful careers in academia; business, and government; and as civil rights advocates. The shabby, run-down campus taught me that I don't need to be overprotected or handled with kid gloves. Being one of the most conservative people at Camp Jened, I had many heated political discussions. I learned that regardless of political views, injustice to anyone is an injustice to everyone. We all must combat prejudices in any way we can.

Throughout my childhood, my body caused me physical and emotional pain. At Camp Jened, I got to see that everybody is beautiful and that my body can be pleasurable to other people and to me.

I urge you to watch "Crip Camp." Afterward, please let me know what you think. Nowadays, does a place such as Camp Jened exist? If not, where do young people with disabilities learn the many life lessons the Camp offered?

Have fun watching it! ■

*Neil Jacobson retired from Wells Fargo after 29 years where he served as VP of System Automation Management & Wireless Technology. He is currently the founder and CEO of Abilicorp whose mission is to increase employment opportunities for entrepreneurs with disabilities. Denise Jacobson recently completed her memoir, "My Camp Jened Summer: A Teenage Misfit's Tale of Love, Heartache, and Belonging." Email Neil at [neil@abilicorp.com](mailto:neil@abilicorp.com).*

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# To All Rockridge Residents: Please Remove Any Foxtail Grasses In Your Area

— by Linda Zunas

Getting out and about may be a necessity, and gardening and walking your dog are wonderful ways to get some well-needed exercise and fresh air. This time of year, it is especially important to be careful of foxtails.

As a weed, foxtail grasses shed thousands of seeds that dry out and get blown around the neighborhood, endangering our pets. Many will sprout again next year, compounding the importance of removing them safely and completely each year.

Foxtails can be a health hazard for dogs, cats and other domestic animals, as well as a nuisance for people. In pets, they can become irreversibly lodged into their bodies after being picked up in their fur. Foxtails often enter the nostrils and ear canals of many animals. When this happens, the foxtail can physically bore into their bodies via muscular movements or, in the case of nostrils, air flow, and ultimately cause the foxtails to burrow through soft tissues and organs, causing infection and physical pain or disruption, and in worst cases can even result in death.

The best way to remove them from the soil is to dig out the root bundle with a simple garden tool. Cutting



or breaking off the seed stems is less effective and may need to be repeated several times since this may miss many of the seeds. Mowing them and leaving the clippings on the ground or sidewalk is the worst way to deal with it.

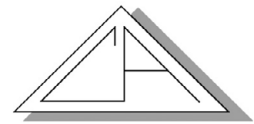
Please place all foxtail remains in a plastic refuse bag, seal it tightly, and place it in your trash. Do not place it in the green yard waste container, as this will spread the seeds into any resulting mulch.

Take care of yourself, and your pets... and stay safe. ■



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*Eyes On Rockridge, from page 1*

California poppies. Even behind a mask, the lush smell of wisteria lulls. And it's worth removing my earphones to substitute bird song for Pandora.

Yet my eyes are also wary of the passing runner, oncoming pedestrian, the front-yard gardener and a bicyclist, as my mind calculates how to keep a safe distance. I have never lived through a time as personally terrifying as what the COVID-19 virus has wrought. But the way in which my daily life has changed conjures up memories.

I obviously wasn't alive when the poliovirus first haunted both Europe and the United States during warm weather months around the early 1900s. But I remember its peak in the summer of 1952 when it infected 57,879 people, mostly children, causing paralysis and 3,145 deaths.

Although it didn't compare to the length and breadth of our current confinement, swimming pools and movie theaters in my suburban Detroit

neighborhood closed and my parents kept us from home from parties and playgrounds. I remember going to visit good friends of my parents whose young son was hospitalized with the disease. He spent almost a year in an iron lung in the same facility where President Franklin Roosevelt, who was infected as an adult, had recovered. Like Roosevelt, he was confined to a wheel chair, but through determination and intelligence led a highly successful life.

Grocery delivery is something I haven't experienced since childhood. In those days, milk delivery, placed in our built-in milk box with both inside and outside access, was a given. But we also ordered groceries and had them delivered from a small nearby market. Even when we drove there to shop, many of the products were stacked on high shelves behind the counter. That required the grocer to collect them for us, like the brave men and women who are shopping for many families today.

Housework and the increase in cooking bring to mind an earlier life. Frankly, I haven't done my own house-keeping in decades. Who knew about Swiffers and other such cleaning devices and supplies that I now buy for our wonderful housekeeper and her crew, but am still not sure how to use. How did upright vacuum cleaners suddenly become so heavy? I promptly ordered a canister version. Cleaning turns out to be good exercise, especially when you do it at an advanced age.

I also find myself gravitating towards comfort foods. A headline in *The New York Times* says it all: "I Just Need the Comfort: Processed Foods Make a Pandemic Comeback." I haven't resorted to the tuna noodle casserole that I made regularly when my husband was in graduate school and when I had my first job as an underpaid journalist, but it's on the horizon.

Mahjong, which my mother enjoyed with friends at a card table set up in our living room, is a hobby I took up two years ago at the behest of a Rockridge tennis friend. It was a substitute way of getting together when our game got rained out, although decidedly less active. With tennis off limits, I play either online with random people or set up private games with Oakland friends. By adding Zoom to the picture, literally, it's almost like the old days (back in February!) when we gathered together at someone's house.

*Eyes On Rockridge, continued next page*



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*Eyes On Rockridge, from previous page*

A final memory is more recent. My husband and I returned from a 20-day Caribbean cruise on March 2. If we had been boarding that cruise ship rather than getting off, we would have found ourselves on the open seas as the virus pounced — fortunately, that ship ended up virus-free. But it was on board that, ironically, we had a small taste of what it means to shelter-in-place.

After a few days of personally experiencing intestinal problems, and my husband's hacking cough (no congestion), we went to the ship's doctor. She remanded us to our suite for 24 hours, with food delivered on paper and plastic by a masked crewmember, later bagged and taken away. Having no temperature the next day allowed us to resume our shore excursions and a normal shipboard life.

I'm sure neither of us had the virus but it's hard to know whether the ship's medical team was even looking for it. I do know that boarding the ship took a longer time than usual since they paged through our passports to determine whether we had been in China recently.

We all have our stories, our memories. Luckily we live in a state and community where early action by forward-thinking politicians and brave medical and food service workers, among others, has allowed the majority of us to be safe. For now, sheltering-in-place is our contribution to the COVID-19 virus story. We look forward to the day when this experience is a distant memory. ■

*If you have comments on this column or, better yet, confinement-triggered memories of your own that could be part of a future column, please email [judyberne@att.net](mailto:judyberne@att.net).*

## Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council Held April Meeting via Zoom

— by Karen Ivy, NCPC Secretary & Information Officer

Beat 12Y		
Crimes	2/9/2020 – 4/8/2020	2/9/2019 – 4/8/2019
Robbery Firearm	2	7
Robbery Strongarm	2	2
Carjacking	1	0
Auto Burglary	55	101
Residential Burglary	4	9
Commercial Burglary	3	2

The Greater Rockridge Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) met with Dan Kalb and other concerned Rockridge residents via Zoom last month to review the current crime data. The statistics show that during the shelter-in-place order, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, crime in the area has been reduced, but not eliminated.

Not shown in chart above, **auto-related property crime** in 12Y took the most spectacular dive, from 80 in February, down to 33 in March. That's still slightly more than one a day. The only increase in March was **Property Crime** in 12Y, up from 16 to 19 instances. **Crimes Against the Person** were flat in 12Y and nonexistent in 13X. **Quality of Life** crimes in 12Y (mostly vandalism) dropped from 23 in February to 10 in March; in 13X they increased slightly from 3 to 4.

Updates for the latest monthly crime statistics for beats 12Y and 13X are now available for viewing

on the NCPC website. Please note that the NCPC will not meet in May. For more information, visit <http://rockridgencpc.com>, Rockridge Crime Trends can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/y5mc2suu>. For the direct link to the Crime Stats document, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/va2xnl7>. ■



We are thinking of our wonderful community doing its best to handle this major challenge to our health. Sending best wishes to all as we shelter in place.

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## Rockridge Businesses Use GoFundMe For Support During the Pandemic

### Child's Play

For over 20 years Child's Play has been a staple in the Rockridge community and we would love to continue our legacy of providing great second hand children's apparel and goods to families in the area for years to come. Due



to the recent COVID-19 impact we, Child's Play, are not able to keep our doors open and had

to furlough our beloved and dedicated employee, Lillian, until further notice. This is not what we want to do but we are left with no choice. We are doing our best to keep business going by updating products on our website, [www.childsplayoakland.com](http://www.childsplayoakland.com) in an attempt to "keep the lights on". We will not be able to make it without you!

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/childs-play-relief-fund>

### Right-Way Shoe Repair

Right-Way Shoe Repair has been a family owned business for the past 16 years. As the third owners of this shop, we appreciate the love and support of our surrounding community. Unfortunately, this unexpected virus has caught us unprepared financially. We are doing all we can to collect as much income as possible to get through this hard time. We feel lucky to be a family business, and united we will get through this.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-for-right-way-shoe-repair>



Gerardo learned the business from his father when he was in his 20s.

### Rockridge Day Spa

Our business relies on servicing our guests, in person, face to face. Touch is healing, but during this time we continue to stay closed in an attempt to keep our community safe from the spread of COVID-19 and the shelter in place order. Last year, most of you know, I made a very difficult, expensive and oh-so-time-consuming decision to switch our entire staff over to Employees.

We have no renters, no independent contractors, and we are a wonderful beautiful team of 18. I am forever grateful for the decision I made, because during this trying time my employees are able to file for unemployment and be supported with their loss of income.

We love you, we love Oakland, and we'll get through this one day at a time.

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## RN Classifieds

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Mail to: RN Classifieds, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. The deadline for the June issue is May 21, which will be available on June 3, 2020.

For more information, email Susan Montauk at [smontauk@gmail.com](mailto:smontauk@gmail.com).

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### Neighborhood Says Sad Goodbyes to Local Favorites

#### Bica Coffee Shop

Located across from the Rockridge BART for the past 10 years, the shop is now closed for business.

#### Ruby's Garden

After 14 years in Temescal, Ruby's Garden will be closing on May 31, and will offer 50% off online until then, with free curbside pickup.



# Signs of the Times:

Special thanks to neighborhood photographers: Leonora Sea, Judy Berne, Star Lightner, Julianne Sherback and Audrey Liu

