

# THE Rockridge News

VOL. 24 ■ NO. 8 ■ ISSUE NO. 259 ■ September 5, 2009

■ CIRCULATION: 5,100 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

Sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council • 5245 College Ave. PMB 311 • Oakland, CA 94618 • 869-4200

2009 Rockridge Kitchen Tour: Sunday, September 20. Purchase tickets at [www.rockridge.org](http://www.rockridge.org)

## RCPC Town Hall Meeting AGENDA September 2009

**Thursday, September 10, 7:30 p.m.**  
Rockridge Branch Library, 5366  
College at Manila,  
Community Room (Upstairs)

### NPR Reporter Lonny Shavelson Moderates a Battle of the Greens at September Town Hall

by Jennifer Edmister

A few years ago, David Gottfried fanned the green flame within and undertook a radical renovation of his modest, 1915 Craftsman bungalow. Gottfried implemented solar electric, solar hot water, rain water recapture and gray water capture, among other things. Wherever possible, he used salvaged wood from a local bridge to complete the project, which did not significantly increase the square footage of the home.

A few miles away, Michael McDonald, whose home will be on the Rockridge Kitchen Tour, erected his own green dream entirely from scratch. With brand new construction on a formerly vacant lot, featuring in-floor hydronic heating, state-of-the-art green appliances, smart-house automation, an interior air quality management system and a third-story, planted rooftop garden, the Margarido House is 4,000-plus square feet of high tech green majesty.

#### Which shade of green are you—and does it matter?

Whether you're a diehard dark greenie, or simply a good neighbor looking to do your part for a healthy planet, join us on Thursday, September 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Rockridge

➔ **Green and Green, page 2**

## The RCPC Kitchen Tour: Last Chance for Presale and Premium Tickets!

by Jennifer Edmister,  
Kitchen Tour co-chair

The 2009 Rockridge Kitchen Tour, which takes place Sunday, September 20, features eight beautifully remodeled home kitchens and one complete home, the Margarido House. This eminently walkable

tour through the historic Rockridge neighborhood is the eighth biennial tour since 1995, and celebrates the newest innovations in kitchen design and appliances.

New to the event this year, the Premium Ticket includes the full Sunday

tour, plus an exclusive preview of the famed Margarido House at a cocktail reception on the evening of Thursday, September 17.

The Margarido House Reception proudly showcases the first custom home in the country to be both

➔ **K-Tour Tickets, page 2**

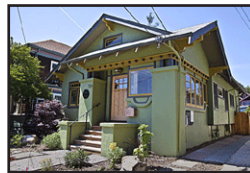
## Green Built — LEED Certified: Two Homes in Rockridge

Existing/Adapted: David Gottfried

New Construction: Mike McDonald

by Don Kinkead, editor

As the founder and first president of the U.S. Green Building Council and founder of the green building consulting firm Regenerative Ventures, Rockridge resident David Gottfried put his family where his passion was



DAVID GOTTFRIED

➔ **Existing/Adapted, page 12**

by Rockridge News Staff

Top to bottom, the Margarido House is gorgeous. Set into the hillside, the house offers breathtaking views of both the Bay and the property's unique landscaping.



MARIKO REED

house and its grounds will be open to the public for the

➔ **New Construction, page 10**

## Rockridge Out & About Street Festival

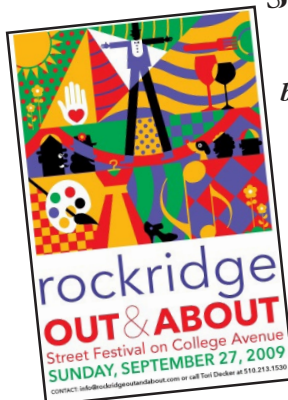
Sunday, September 27

11 am – 6 pm

by Roberta Klugman, RDA

Every year, "Rockridge Out & About" showcases the area's businesses and services with a something-for-everyone street fair.

Outside and alongside the shops and restaurants that make Rockridge a year-round destination, over half a mile of College



➔ **Out & About, page 12**



PHOTOS: RDA

## K-Tour Tickets

from page 1

LEED-H Platinum certified and Greenpoint rated and guests will be guided through this remarkable, environmentally dynamic home in the Oakland Hills by the professionals involved in its conception and construction.

Oakland's newest culinary sensation, B Restaurant & Bar, will provide the dinner treats. Hall Wines, Frey Vineyards and New Belgium Brewing Company will supply beverages to complement the cuisine.

The 2009 Rockridge Kitchen Tour takes place Sunday, September 20, from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. Here's how and where you can get your tickets:

### Get Your Tickets Now

ONLINE: Presale Standard Tickets (\$30) and Premium Tickets (\$60) are available online, until the evening of Friday,

September 18. Visit [www.rockridge.org](http://www.rockridge.org). Tickets purchased online will be held for pick up in the will-call line at the registration desk on the day of the tour.

ON THE AVENUE: Tickets are also available during business hours at Maison d'Etre, 5640 College Avenue, until 3 p.m. September 18.

ON SITE: For those who wait, \$40 Standard Tickets will be sold at the registration desk, 5951 College Avenue, beginning at 11 a.m.

### Docents Needed

We are still in need of a few volunteer docents who will guide our guests through the eight stunning Rockridge kitchens and the Margarido House.

Docents, who are assigned a short shift at one particular home, will receive a complimentary ticket to visit the rest of the homes before or after their shift. If you would like to be a docent, call Nancy Sale at 655-4625, or e-mail [kitchentour@rockridge.org](mailto:kitchentour@rockridge.org).

## Green and Green

from page 1

Library for lively discussion between two Rockridge neighbors who proudly reside on very different points along the green spectrum.

Moderating the discussion will be the renowned writer, photojournalist, radio journalist, author and physician Lonny Shavelson. Shavelson brings his journalistic prowess from numerous articles in the New

York Times, Newsweek, Mother Jones and other publications, but you may know him best from NPR's All Things Considered, Morning Edition and Day to Day.

Shavelson, who has himself observed that the "low-hanging green fruit" may have more impact than over-the-top green strategy of any shade, will rouse the audience to a lively debate of the issue.

Tickets for the Margarido House Reception and the Rockridge Kitchen Tour will be on sale at the Town Hall or can be purchased now at [www.rockridge.org](http://www.rockridge.org).

## ROCKRIDGE BRANCH LIBRARY

5366 College Avenue

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HOURS:

Tues: 12:30 – 8 p.m.

Weds, Thurs, Sat: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Friday: 12 – 5:30 p.m.

Sunday and Monday: CLOSED

Library program details: See Calendar, page 15.

## THE Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded in 1986 by Don Kinkead, is published monthly in Oakland and is sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), a nonprofit public benefit organization founded to: preserve and enhance the unique character of the Rockridge neighborhood; promote the health, safety and quality of life of its residents; furnish a forum for community involvement, and provide leadership and representation of neighborhood interests.

### Rockridge News Production

Don Kinkead.....Editor  
Ortrun Niesar.....The Muse  
Barry Kaufman.....Food  
Jo Ellis.....Advertising & Community Calendar  
Theresa Nelson.....Neighborhood Merchant  
Susan Montauk.....Business Manager  
Don Kinkead.....Graphics & Layout

### RCPC Board of Directors, 2008-2009

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Contact the Board: [chair@rockridge.org](mailto:chair@rockridge.org)  
For information: [info@rockridge.org](mailto:info@rockridge.org)

### NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

To subscribe to **The Rockridge News**, send your check for \$20, payable to Rockridge News Subscriptions, to: Rockridge News Subscriptions at the address below.

### CONTACTING THE ROCKRIDGE NEWS

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

Contact us at one of the following:

Editor: [editor@rockridge.org](mailto:editor@rockridge.org)  
[www.rockridge.org](http://www.rockridge.org)

The Rockridge News, 5245 College Avenue,  
PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618

RCPC Voicemail: 510/869-4200

Articles submitted for publication may be e-mailed to the above address. Submissions are limited to 600 words; must include the author's name, phone number, e-mail address, and city or neighborhood of residence; and are subject to editing. To reprint a Rockridge News article, please contact the editor.

### NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING/DEADLINES

Publication date of the next issue is

October 3, 2009

October deadline is September 17, 2009.

Advertising rates are \$26/column inch. Six-month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at 653-3210 (after noon), or e-mail [joellis1@hotmail.com](mailto:joellis1@hotmail.com). RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad that it deems inappropriate. (Classified ad contact, page 14.)

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## RCPC Land Use Committee

**NOTE: Fall Land Use Committee meeting dates are revised, due to new library schedules:**  
**Sep 30 (5th Wed) | Nov 24 (4th Tues)**  
**Oct 21 (3rd Wed) | Dec 23 (4th Wed)**  
**Meetings start at 7 p.m.**

# Safeway's Rockridge Center Plans Panned at Planning Commission Scoping Hearing

by *Stuart Flashman, RCPC chair*

Safeway has said it wants to hear from the public about its proposed plans for dramatic remodeling of the aging Rockridge Shopping Center located at Pleasant Valley Road and Broadway. The company got an earful at the Planning Commission's July public hearing held to receive comments on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to be prepared for the project.

Safeway's plans call for increasing the size of the shopping center, currently about 185,000 sq. ft., by 110,000 sq. ft. Most of the center's buildings would be replaced by two story structures, with the Safeway store itself expanding from 50,000 sq. ft. to 65,000 sq. ft. and moving to the space now occupied by the Longs Drugs/CVS store. (That store would be replaced by a much smaller 15,000 sq. ft. conventional drug store.) Most of the parking (1,000 spaces in all) would continue to be surface parking spread over the lot. Some underground parking is planned, as well.

Planning commissioners heard from several neighborhood groups, including RCPC, and other interested citizens. In addition to its testimony at the hearing, RCPC submitted a six-page comment letter.

The dominant theme of the comments

was that Safeway's plans had major problems and would need a lot of revision.

Other neighborhood groups weighing in included Friends and Neighbors of College Avenue (FANS), the Temescal area's Standing Together for Accountable Neighborhood Development (STAND), and Urbanists for a Livable Temescal Rockridge Area (ULTRA). A fifth group, Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League (PANIL), submitted written comments but did not attend the hearing.

While the groups have sometimes been at odds with one another on past North Oakland development projects, they were conspicuously unified in rejecting the Safeway proposal. Indeed, several commissioners commented on how unusual it was to have the entire community speak with one, united, voice.

Speaker after speaker pointed out the project's potentially damaging transportation, air quality, and public safety effects. Speakers also emphasized the need to look beyond Safeway's proposal at more urban, transit-oriented, and community-integrated alternatives. Several specifically referenced a study that the City itself had commissioned two years earlier for a commercial "node" at the Broadway and 51st Street intersection.

After the speakers finished, the commis-

**Land Use Meeting Agendas**  
 Contact Stu Flashman at 652-5373 or chair@rockridge.org for a copy of the current Land Use Committee meeting agenda.

sioners had their say. After complimenting the speakers for exceptionally cogent and well-thought-out comments, the commissioners, one after another, chastised Safeway for its unimaginative, suburban-style proposal. Commissioners echoed the speakers in asking for a more urban alternative proposal, and made it clear that major changes would be needed if Safeway expected to get Commission approval.

It remains to be seen how well Safeway heard the message.

**Editor's Note:** Much has been posted on local-issue blogs and on the Internet about Safeway's Rockridge Center plans. Below are a few links to City documents, Safeway's plans, and blog discussions, provided as a service to Rockridge News readers, not necessarily as an endorsement of any content or point of view found via the links:

■ **Oakland City Planning Staff Report:** <http://www.oaklandnet.com/government/ceda/revised/planningzoning/Commission/July-15-2009/Item5/SafewayPCReportEIR-scoping7-15-09.pdf>

■ **Safeway's Pre-Application Plans posted at docstoc:** <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/7400347/Rockridge-Center-Safeway-Pre-Application-Plans> <http://transbayblog.com/2009/06/30/more-pleasant-on-pleasant-valley/>

■ <http://ouoakland.blogspot.com/2009/07/blog-pulse-pleasant-valley-safeway.html>

■ <http://www.abetteroakland.com/new-broadway-safeway-eir-scoping-session-tonight/2009-07-15>

## Update: Safeway on College Proposal

*Submitted by Concerned Neighbors of College Avenue Safeway*

The Planning Department does not expect to receive the proposed scope of the EIR (Environmental Impact Report) for the College Avenue Safeway project from Safeway's environmental consultant until sometime in September, at the earliest, according to case planner Peterson Vollman. This schedule effectively puts the project in a holding pattern.

Asked about the traffic study rumored to be prepared during the summer, Vollman said the study cannot begin until school starts.

Once the scoping document is submitted to Vollman's office, he will review it

and decide on potential revisions. When the document is approved by Vollman, a "Notice of Preparation" will be issued which will specify the date of the scoping hearing.

Neighbors and community members will then be able to review the proposed scope and prepare comments for the public record and for Safeway's response.

If you have thoughts or questions about the project, e-mail [safewayneighbors@sbcglobal.net](mailto:safewayneighbors@sbcglobal.net). Safeway posts information at <http://www.safewayoncollege.com/> — **Editor's Note:** the links to these Web sites are provided for informational use only, not necessarily as an endorsement of any positions stated at the sites.

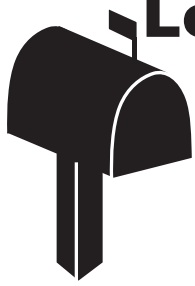
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## Letters to the Editor

*The Rockridge News welcomes letters to the editor. Your name, address, phone number, e-mail address and city/neighborhood must be included for verification. Only your name will appear with your letter. Letters may be edited for clarity and brevity.*

### “CHANGES IN STORE?” ARTICLES WERE BIASED AND NOT JOURNALISTIC

#### EDITOR:

Shame on you, Rockridge News, for the series “Changes in Store?” I am anticipating the next installment might be titled something like: “Changes in Store? New Safeway Coming in Form of Mushroom Cloud.”

These biased articles in the June and July issues of the newsletter did not present any news or facts, had no bylines and were not represented as op-ed pieces. Their only purpose was to spread baseless fear about the new proposed Safeway store on College, especially in regard to traffic (even when the June article points out no formal traffic study has been completed yet).

We all want the best for our neighborhood, regardless of one’s opinion about the proposed Safeway. The fact is, whether one likes the new store plans or not, Safeway has gone out of their way in a very professional manner to engage in dialog and has come up with many solutions to address concerns about scale, urban fit, parking, and delivery problems.

There is enough fear and divisiveness already on the topic without the Rockridge News and RCPC thinking they have the right to control and manipulate opinion using petty tactics. There has to be room for dialog from all sides, yes, even Safeway’s. These articles, as presented, crossed a line and I don’t think they represent the journalistic standards I have come to know from The Rockridge News.

— John Hauser

#### EDITOR’S REPLY:

Mr. Hauser: Thank you for your interest in the “Changes in Store?” squibs recently printed in the newsletter. Your concern about a lack of bylines is valid. The editor, alone, conceived of and designed the content to illustrate aspects of Safeway’s proposal that got short or no shrift in the public presentations, and regrets not having taken credit.

The content was not incisive analysis. Deliberately couched in conditional terms and fantasy vignettes, the content was meant to encourage readers to consider aspects of the proposal not evident in Safeway’s presentations. There was no intent to spread baseless fear. It has never been the intent of The Rockridge News to spread baseless fear.

Considering possible effects of changed traffic patterns prior to a completed traffic study is responsible examination. This project would not have been proposed as it has without an expectation by Safeway of increased patronage, which often means increased traffic.

Lastly, please do not attribute to RCPC all material appearing in the newsletter. While the organization sponsors the newsletter, it does not necessarily agree with or support all of the points of view expressed herein.

— Don Kinkead, Editor

### WHAT’S UP WITH FROG’S PUBLIC ART?

#### EDITOR:

FROG Park is where Pugsley gets walked on days packed with meetings or when the weather’s too awful to go to the Albany Bulb or Point Isabel for off-leash activity. Hardy Dog Park under the freeway was a good idea, just not the best location.

Since FROG is on my radar screen, the unfolding non-drama of the public art “sculpture” along the walkway is a curious one. I don’t remember the name of the artist selected; I do recall local artist Mark Bulwinkle was the runner-up; an unfortunate decision, borne out by the results to date.



**Pugsley the dog reviews FROG Park art progress.**

PHOTO: AL CROFTS

Last year, elaborate pits were dug, followed months later by roughhewn cement forms with rectangular openings near the top— vaguely stupa-like. Had I not stumbled across a flyer at FROG describing the finished product, I would have assumed that was it. Instead, the openings will be filled with information about local typography, history, flora and fauna. I await that development still...

Too bad the selection committee wouldn’t accept art for art’s sake, but picked a proposal for its edifying and didactic nature, like sugary breakfast cereal coated in vitamins. Surely, what the public can see so far doesn’t support Bulwinkle being passed over. An artist myself, I’ve enjoyed looking at his work over the years, including his residence on Manila which he covered with

Letters, page 5

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# Letters

from page 4

metal sculpture. His gates and freestanding sculptures — often with his signature dogs and plant forms — abound in East Bay gardens. His most visible public art is the parking lot steel relief sculpture on pedestals at the East Bay Bridge/Home Depot shopping center on the Oakland/Emeryville border. I credit Pat Cashman, a former City of Oakland employee who went to work for Catellus, the shopping center developer, for the astute pick, probably a risky one since corporate taste tends to be overly cautious and conservative.

No doubt the FROG art committee decided sculpture like Bulwinkle's — so skilled and assured they might be cut from butter and not steel — was too amusing. Instead, we have unfinished cement outcroppings, neither aesthetic or amusing, nor yet edifying.

Time at FROG for a Miss California remedy: replace Carrie Prejean and award the prize to the runner-up! Pugsley would approve.

— Robert Brokl

### REPLY BY JENNIFER COOPER, FROG CHAIR

Mr. Brokl's letter refers to the interpretive art project sponsored by the city of Oakland Public Art Program that will be completed this fall in the Greenbelt. The artist, Mark Brest VanKempen of Oakland, was selected by a panel made up of community members and artists, organized by the city of Oakland and FROG. It is important to note that the concrete monuments are not meant to stand alone, but to house a series of spotting scopes focusing on sculptures of animals and artifacts that have special relationships to the site such as the model

▶ Letters, page 8

# Park Corner

FROG

A monthly update on what's happening at the best community-built and maintained park in Oakland



## FROG Park Fall Maintenance Day

FROG Park needs your help to make FROG Park Fall Maintenance Day a success. Join your neighbors and friends to sweep, rake, paint, clear, and replant at FROG Park. Adults and kids over 13 years old are welcome. We will work on the Hardy and Redondo Playgrounds and the adjoining Greenbelt. When does the fun begin?

Saturday, October 3, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. (It's OK to come by for just an hour or two.) Meet at either the Hardy or Redondo playgrounds. Bring your own trowel, tall

garden fork, pruners, garden rake and work gloves, if possible.

We'll also maintain the existing structure and new kiosk. FROG will provide cold drinks and snacks for all volunteers.

### FROG's lease renewed

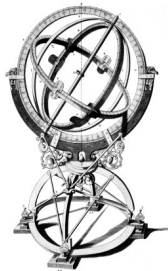
As part of the Fourth Bore Coalition settlement, the City of Oakland's FROG Park lease with Caltrans was renewed for another 10 years. FROG Park lies on City of Oakland, Caltrans right-of-way, and Alameda Flood Control land.

## RCPC Board Vacancies Available to be Filled: Your Help Welcomed

The Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) seeks to fill by appointment two vacancies on its board of directors. Recently-elected board member Ruth Miller has left the board because of work-related travel conflicts. Board member Colby Lavin will be leaving the board because he and his family are moving out of the Rockridge area.

Applicants appointed to the vacancies will serve out the remainder of the two members' terms, until the spring of 2011. Board members must be age 18 or older and reside within the RCPC boundaries as shown on the map on RCPC's Web site, [www.rockridge.org](http://www.rockridge.org). In addition to attending monthly board meetings and town hall meetings, board members are expected to serve on at least one board committee. The expected time commitment is approximately 10 to 15 hours per month.

Those interested in applying for a seat (either for yourself or someone you know), should send a short (roughly 150 word) statement of interest, including qualifications, to the RCPC, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, 94618, or by e-mail to: [chair@rockridge.org](mailto:chair@rockridge.org). Application deadline is September 30, 2009.



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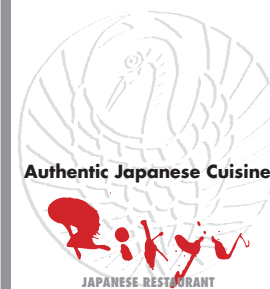
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## Rockridge Cornucopia

Barry A. Kaufman

### East Meets West: Travels Through Turkey

This past spring, we traveled to Turkey. With one foot in Europe and the other in Asia, Turkey has, for over a millennium, served as the crossroads of culinary traditions. Turkish cuisine is generally divided into two main styles: Ottoman and Anatolian. Ottoman food represents the culinary traditions of the urban rich and Anatolian is more representative of the rural poor. Today, both Ottoman and Anatolian are interwoven with Greek, Persian, Balkan, and Mediterranean ingredients and recipes. As with all great cuisines, there are endless regional variations. Even within a region, certain dishes will vary from town to town.

Turkish restaurants are differentiated by the style of preparation and offerings. Diners can feast in restaurants that serve only grilled dishes and lamb kebabs, or in restaurants that offer ready-made stews, casseroles, and vegetables prepared in advance and kept warm in steam trays. But the best are the Turkish taverns that serve an endless selection of *meze*. *Meze* are Turkish small plates or appetizers.

We also fell in love with a version of Turkish pizza called *pida*. *Pida* are prepared on wonderful Turkish bread with a variety of toppings. Other favorites were plates of *kofte* (lamb meatballs) and *mati* (Turkish-style ravioli). But my go-to dish was *imam baylidi*. Literally translated as “the imam fainted,” it is a preparation of eggplant stuffed with ground lamb, tomatoes, garlic and onion – delish! As many times as I had *imam baylidi*, it was never prepared in exactly the same way.

In towns along the Mediterranean, fresh fish is brought into port daily. You can go to the local fish market to buy a whole fish and bring it to a nearby restaurant to have it grilled, accompanied by Turkish bread and seasonal vegetables. Freshly grilled fish sandwiches are a staple in Istanbul. And of course, ending a meal with a visit to a neighborhood sweet-shop for Turkish coffee or tea and an endless selection of

Turkish pastries. We never had a bad meal in our travels.

I’ve had eggplant prepared in many countries, but the Turks are the masters of eggplant. I’m not sure what it is but there is nothing better in Turkey than one of the endless varieties of eggplant dishes. Grilled eggplant and Turkish-style yogurt is found on all meze menus. It is served with warm, crusty, puffy bread brushed with a little olive oil. It can be served as a dip or an accompaniment to grilled lamb *kofte*.

The following recipe is adapted from the incredible cookbook *Turquoise* by Greg and Lucy Malouf.

#### Smoky Eggplant and Yogurt

- 1 eggplant
- 1 small garlic clove, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- 6 oz Turkish or Greek-style yogurt
- Juice of 1/2 lemon

Finely chopped parsley or mint

Prick eggplant all over with a fork and set directly on the flame of your stove. Turn constantly until the whole eggplant is charred. Remove from flame and place in a glass bowl. When the eggplant is cool, gently peel away the skin from the flesh. Drain flesh in colander for 10 minutes.

Put drained eggplant into a bowl. The tender eggplant flesh will fall apart. Mix in crushed garlic, salt, olive oil, yogurt, and lemon juice. Chill until ready to eat. Transfer to serving dish, add extra salt to taste and sprinkle with parsley or mint. Serve with crunchy bread.

#### A New Rockridge Restaurant

Restaurant Chu, an upscale Chinese restaurant, has opened at 5362 College Avenue. Chu is a welcome addition to the neighborhood. The menu is a unique combination of well-prepared and well-presented Chinese dishes. The decor is sleek, sexy and modern.

Barry Kaufman is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy. Barry is available for cooking classes. His e-mail is: kaufman42@earthlink.net



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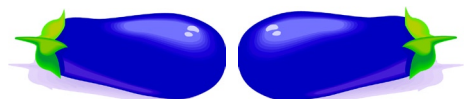
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# New Claremont Principal Discusses Plans and Goals for the New School Year

by Bill Kaufner, chair, RCPC Education Committee

Bright, bubbly, and passionate about middle school education, Kenya Crockett brings a wealth of experience to her new post as Principal of Claremont Middle School. Both Ms. Crockett and her Administrative Team partner, new Assistant Principal Kevin Taylor, are Bay Area educational products who came back to Oakland with the goal of making Claremont an outstanding middle school. Expect to see positive changes in academics, school climate, and the school's buildings and grounds.

Following are excerpts from an interview with the Administrative Team focusing on Ms. Crockett's vision of a renaissance for Claremont.

**RN: What new programs are in store for Claremont?**

**Kenya Crockett:** Building on the success of this summer's Algebra Academy, Claremont is considering 8th grade gender-based math classes. Sixth and 7th graders will take part in the Si Swun-based math program. A thirty-minute daily homeroom curriculum will teach character development and study skills (note-taking, organizing,



New Claremont School Principal Kenya Crockett and Assistant Principal Kevin Taylor look forward to an exciting year.

PHOTO: DON KINKEAD

test-taking).

Science classes will play a large role in rebuilding the Claremont gardens. Our staff development will take place on Friday afternoons this year.

**RN: How will the grade levels be organized this year?**

**KC:** The school will be divided into houses based on grade levels to provide an atmosphere where it will be more possible to address the needs of each child. There will be five houses of about 60 students

each. Claremont is also part of a State program that will reduce class sizes over the next three years. The Mills College TRiO Program is providing interns to assist with counseling issues.

**RN: Will there be an After School Program this year?**

**KC:** We are very excited to have a full After School Program this year. The first 45 minutes will focus on homework completion. The remaining time will offer electives in fine arts, animation, sports, foreign language and dance.

**RN: Have there been any changes to Claremont's physical plant?**

**KC:** The Interior Design class of EOYDC (East Oakland Youth Development Center), taught by Cora Sue of Anthony Staging, has created a design plan. Hallways, classrooms, and lockers have been painted in pleasing colors that give the interior a fresh, modern look. Art and photography works will complete the process. Thanks to the Fourth Bore Coalition lawsuit settlement, we expect new landscaping and ventilation systems to be in place by spring.

**RN: What do you see as your biggest challenge this semester?**

**KC:** Raising student and teacher expectations will be an ongoing task. We want to energize and excite children about education so they will succeed at the next level. We

▶ Claremont Principal, page 8

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## NCPC Sets September Elections

Is it time for you to get involved in your local community policing team? Here's your chance: The Greater Rockridge NCPC has scheduled elections of officers to be held during the September 24 meeting. The available elected positions are Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

If you don't want to be an officer but would like to volunteer, we are interested in expanding NCPC membership, and working on the NCPC's information technology projects (Web site, Yahoo e-mail groups, for example).

Come to the meeting, September 24, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Rockridge Branch Library community meeting room, even if you will not be running for NCPC office or volunteering. There is lots to learn about community policing. Also, you can meet and work with your local Problem Solving Officers.



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## Letters

from page 5

of a Cooper's Hawk, as shown at right. The completed project will use a combination of viewing devices, strategically placed sculptures, and signage to focus attention on the history and ecology of the Greenbelt and Temescal Creek.



Cooper's Hawk

The FROG steering committee has also had concerns about how long the project has taken to complete, and has continued to work with the city of Oakland and the artist to ensure that the project is completed this fall.

It was unfortunate that the monuments were installed so much earlier than the rest of the project, as many park visitors are left wondering about the incomplete monoliths placed in the park.

## Claremont Principal

from page 7

are here to coach teachers to be educational practitioners who base their instruction on data-driven assumptions. We will strive to create a school culture that supports and rewards academic achievement.

**RN: What should parents expect when they send their children to Claremont?**

**KC:** A safe and supportive environment that will educate the whole child with an emphasis on academics, character, and social preparation.



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# A Tree Falls In Rockridge

This wasn't just any tree. It stood about 80 feet tall and was at least as wide in its spread, shading several backyards during the day and rising like a majestic dark silhouette against the sky at night. Its trunk had a diameter of more than five feet. Its crown was home to a virtual kingdom of creatures large and small. Squirrels, cats, birds, insects scurried up and down its hefty trunk and branches that held up an impenetrable canopy of solid dark green, so thick that daylight never entered in some spots. A swing and children of all ages have dangled happily from its branches.

In the Rockridge backyard where the oak tree lived, the ground was so completely shaded and covered with leaves that nothing else has grown there for decades that were not a kin of the oak. The monumental Coast Live Oak had completely claimed its domain. The oak tree began its life's journey there probably about 130-150 years ago. Most likely there was a meadow there and a creek; houses did not reach this neighborhood until about 1920. Today, the root system taps deep down into the underground stream below us and spreads horizontal feeder roots in tiered layers beneath at least six neighboring yards. I like to think that it is cradling our homes in its subterranean arms.

It was about 8:30 p.m. on August 9, already nearly dark, when a strange sound, a creaking and straining, suddenly filled the air. It lasted for a few seconds, only

# THE Rockridge MUSE

by Ortrun Niesar



Arborists remove the carcass of the fallen oak tree. PHOTO: ORTRUN NIESAR

to be replaced by an all encompassing swooshing sound, a thump, and a sudden blast of wind and whirling leaves. Then, silence.

The neighborhood broke out in chatter as people ran from their homes to see what was going on. And there it lay, about one third of the mighty oak spread out over three back yards, a fallen goliath.

An arborist was called, but before he arrived the next morning, the massive tree, already weakened, had lost yet another third of its limbs, smashing garages and fences like match sticks. By this time, a gouge representing a loss of about 50 percent of the tree's girth about half way up the main trunk put our tree in mortal danger. The oak was dying and we knew it.

It did not give up without a struggle, and maybe not altogether. A team of

arborists labored for five days, carefully separating limbs, slowly lowering huge branches on sturdy ropes. A crane was brought in ultimately to remove the severed trunk. Buckets of water poured from its fresh wound. Neighbors eagerly claimed massive blocks, while the tree stump was leveled to the ground, leaving a giant memorial foot print, a smooth platform large enough to dance upon. If the root crown has not been compromised, a new sapling will hopefully emerge one day, much as it would after a natural fire.

The Coast Live Oak has lived virtually unchanged in the Pacific Northwest for 20 million years; it is uniquely adapted to our environment. If not diseased or felled by natural disasters, it can grow to be 250, even 600 years old. It seems that the greatest threat to healthy oaks is human encroachment on their natural habitat. Local ordinances and watchful care are therefore a necessity.

The ancients must have known this as well. In the Indo-European Celtic-Druidic and Greek cultures, dryads — tree nymphs — lived in or near sacred oak groves, warding off evil spirits and mortals bent on doing harm. If a tree died, a dryad died as well and punishment from angry gods for this would be swift and certain.

May our oak renew itself!

Fifth grader Matias Arizmendo memorialized a tree spirit. The fallen tree lived in his family yard.



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# New Construction Parking Meter Fee Increase Still Rankles

from page 1

Rockridge Kitchen Tour, along with the story of how it was destined to become Northern California's first LEED Platinum house.

A drought-tolerant garden frames the concrete and steel structure tucked into the hillside. Windows, doors and openings enable light to stream into the house. Tucked into corners and crannies are pocket gardens, concrete seats, and a luxurious master suite.

Among the many green features are passive solar, custom sun shades, a solar-assist hot water system supplying up to 80 percent of hot water and in-floor radiant heat, engineered and recycled lumber and steel framing, and a 4,000-gallon cistern to capture rain- and groundwater. An electrical control system continually adjusts lighting, ventilation, and heating.

Margarido House is the creation of builder-owner Mike McDonald of McDonald Construction & Development, his architect-brother Tim McDonald of Philadelphia-based Plumbob LLC, and a team of local artisans.

Local vendors Mike Rogero of Concreteworks, Chris French of Chris French Metal, Ian Read of Medium Plenty, Catherine Bailey of Heath Ceramics, and Lauren Schneider of Wonderland Garden and Landscape combined their expertise to create the concrete and steel structure with a living roof and water-friendly garden. Several of these artisans will be on hand during the Kitchen Tour to answer questions and discuss the diverse green issues encountered during construction of the house.

The Margarido House features top to bottom green design strategies and is 55 percent more efficient than California's tough Title 24 energy standards. It is the first newly-built home to receive be LEED Platinum-H certified and be Greenpoint rated.

Learn about applying these strategies and about green living at one of the Kitchen Tour events.

Find more information about the Margarido House at [www.margaridohouse.com](http://www.margaridohouse.com).

Find more details about LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification at the Web site of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), <http://www.usgbc.org/>

## College Avenue Q&A: "How did the parking meter fee increases affect you? Do you think they will affect shopping in Rockridge?"

Interviews and photos: Christina Ahlstrand

Public reaction was swift and sure when the City raised parking fees from \$1.25 to \$2 per hour, and increased some fines.

Talk of a parking and shopping protest boycott spread rapidly; people pointed out that patronizing Oakland's evening restaurant and entertainment venues would be complicated by the ticket machines' two-hour maximums.

City officials responded, creating three-hour evening parking limits between 5 and 8 p.m., and making parking receipts with remaining time valid for other areas.

The Rockridge News interviewed several College Avenue strollers to learn their reactions to the parking changes.

### Suzanne Fraser and daughter Lilah:

"We live in the neighborhood, so it will have no affect on us. I think, though, people will come anyway – even with the parking increases."



### Barbara La Rocca, PsyD.:

"It's ridiculous! Will cause business to decrease. I want to shop less...it makes me sick. It's psychologically demoralizing in this time of financial stress."



### Paul Erskine:

"I've heard some grumbling, but I live nearby and have a parking space, so I'm not affected. I do care that others are, though."



### Tom and Diane Ferlatte:

"Terrible! But they [the City] have to have money from somewhere. We can walk, so it's helping our fitness program, but it's bad for business."



◀ How far was the City prepared to go to increase parking revenue?

PHOTO: MARTHA SILVERSPRING



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PHOTO: THERESA NELSON

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD MERCHANT

BY THERESA NELSON

### Neighborhood History: Rockridge Merchants

This is the first of three articles profiling anniversaries of Rockridge merchants. The listings are not complete. Although I stopped at every storefront (224 of them), some businesses were closed, and at some no one could tell me the year the business opened. I hope to include them in future updates.

If your store or business is not listed in the accompanying list, e-mail merchant@rockridge.org. Also, many therapists with offices on College are not included, as one can't just walk in and ask questions. Therapists and counselors: feel free to

Rockridge merchants are an amazing group. They undertake the brave step of opening a new store or service on a promising commercial street in a friendly neighborhood, hitching their hopes and dreams to the success of the neighborhood as well as their own business. I profile the new ones in this column every month, and it seemed time to highlight the longtime businesses in the neighborhood as well.

On a sunny weekend in August, I spent almost eight hours walking the length of College Avenue, Claremont Avenue, Broadway, and a few side streets. It was great fun, and I highly recommend it – the

e-mail your year of opening on College Avenue.

The accompanying article, first of the series, focuses on stores and restaurants opened over the first 15 years after my family and I moved to Rockridge, 1984 through 1999.

The next article will present the additions to the thriving College Avenue scene since 2000, while the last will showcase the most long-term Rockridge businesses (pre-1984), and reveal the name of the Rockridge business open the longest on College Avenue.

diversity of goods and services available within a 15-minute walk (1/2 mile) from the Rockridge BART station is astonishing. From old-fashioned pubs to stylish new clothing, you can find almost anything for your daily needs in Rockridge.

In 1984, many College Avenue storefronts were vacant, and the neighborhood was still recovering from the freeway and BART construction of the 1960s and '70s, as well as changing demographics where many of the earlier residents left the city for the suburbs. Retail picked up dramatically later in the 1980s; many businesses which opened in the '90s are still operating today.

### Celebrating 25 years in Rockridge, both established in 1984, congratulations to:

Warm Things                      Murasaki

### Between 21 and 24 years ago, Rockridge welcomed:

- About Face & Body (1987)
- Bloomies (1987)
- Claremont Diner (1987)
- Cole Coffee (1987)
- Cutting' Up on College (1985)
- Enzo's Meat & Poultry (1988)
- Hank & Frank Bicycles (1988)
- Hazara Gallery (1985)
- Esther Lerman MFT (1985)
- Oliveto Restaurant and Café (1988)
- Pasta Shop
- Paul Marcus Wines (1987)
- Pavé Fine Jewelry Design (1986)
- Katrina Rozelle Pastries & Desserts Snips (1986)

### In Rockridge for 20 years, all opened in 1989:

- Barney's Gourmet Hamburgers
- Great Wall Chinese Vegi Restaurant
- Itsy Bitsy Jewelry & Gifts
- The Meadows
- Noah's Bagels (College Ave. was the original store in the chain)
- Peaberry's Coffee & Tea
- Pizza Rustica

### From 16 to 19 years ago, Rockridge continued to expand:

- Barclay's Restaurant & Pub (1991)
- Cactus Taqueria (1990) (in their original location near Rockridge Kids)
- Christensen Heller Gallery (1991)
- Citron Restaurant (1992)
- Filippo's (1993)
- Garden Cleaners (1993)
- The Great Frame-Up (1993)
- Market Hall Produce (1991)
- Moderne Eye Optometry (1993)
- Nan Yang Burmese Cuisine (1992)
- Rockridge Kids (1992)
- Rockridge Luggage (1993)
- Spasso Café (1993)
- Tachibana Japanese Cuisine (1992)
- Talisman Antiques (1991)
- Thelma Harris Gallery (1989)


### Opened 15 years ago, in 1994:

- Diesel A Bookstore (1994)
- Maison d'Etre (1994) (in their original location, College near Manila; later relocated near the BART station)

### From 11 to 14 years ago, more expansion:

Our own Rockridge Library (1996) (originally opened in 1919 on Shafter near College, then located at College and Miles for decades until closed in the late 1980s and relocated to a


Happy Anniversary, page 12



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8/11/2009	2/2	5400 Broadway Ter.	\$659,000	60	\$659,000	\$647,500
8/14/2009	4/3	1 Sheridan Rd.	\$969,000	29	\$969,000	\$949,000
8/5/2009	3/3	7037 Chabot Rd.	\$1,050,000	18	\$1,050,000	\$1,009,000
8/14/2009	3/1	5409 Belgrave Pl.	\$1,050,000	42	\$1,050,000	\$981,000

• There is currently a 1.7 month supply of inventory in Rockridge. • Only 20% of properties Listed in Rockridge, Sold for OVERasking price in the last 2 months, compared to 50% last year. • The current median market time is 24 days, compared to a mere 14 days, this time last year. • At this time in 2008, the average List to Sell price was 105% vs the current 98%.  
 • Last year at this time, Rockridge yielded only 1/2 as many closings as in the last 2 months of this year.

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## Existing/Adapted

from page 1

and moved to Rockridge to capitalize on the neighborhood's strong energy-conserving features.

Offering the ability to walk to most destinations, the availability of BART within walking distance and an array of local plants softening the harder edges of concrete and asphalt, Rockridge presented an appealing energy-efficient foundation. David then made plans to bring the family's dated 63rd Street Craftsman bungalow, with its single-pane windows, general lack of insulation and an antiquated heating system, into the world of resource conservation, re-use and recycling: green building.

With the broad goal of improving the efficiency of housing resource use, David grouped his improvements into water capture and recycling, energy generation and efficiency and the use of recycled and reclaimed building materials.

Working with architect Dan Smith and builders Canyon Construction, both with strong backgrounds in sustainable building tenets and familiar with LEED standards, David fashioned a home with double-paned windows, cellulose insulated walls, dual flush toilets, reclaimed woods, Energy-Star appliances, rain gutters that drain into modular water holding tanks (Rainwater HOGS), yard pavers that drain into distributive rock basins, solar panels that generate electricity, and a Felix solar water heater that senses the temperature of the roof to pick appropriate times to circulate heated water.

In 2008, the home was awarded the LEED Platinum rating, the highest of four residential ratings, by the U.S. Green Building Council.

David Gottfried will join Mike McDonald at the September 10 RCPC Town Hall meeting to discuss his role in the development of green building standards and how he applied those standards to his own home.

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## Happy Anniversary

from page 11

trailer on Claremont Middle School grounds until the beautiful new Library opened in 1996)

Ben 'n' Nick's (1997)  
College Avenue Liquors & Deli (1998)  
Flashback Guitars (1998)  
Garibaldi's Restaurant (1997)  
Genray Hair Salon (1996)  
Great Harvest Baking (1996)  
Green Bean (1998)  
Groove Yard (1987)  
In Full Swing (1995)  
Las Palmas Taqueria (1997)  
Pasta Pomodoro (1997)  
Agatha Rainford Boutique (1996)  
Vino! (1995)

### And 10 years ago, in 1999:

Crepevine  
Form Vintage Modern  
Homesteader  
Kirk Peterson & Associates  
Architects  
Oriental Nails

So go out, take a walk, stop in at one of these merchants and congratulate them on their longevity. They are a key part of what makes Rockridge a walkable, neighborhood-oriented district. They'll enjoy hearing from you, and you just might find something you need or something you've been looking for... right here in Rockridge.

## Out & About

from page 1

Avenue becomes the stage for local musicians, street performers fashion shows, cooking demos, in-store workshops, wellness activities, and merchant, artisan, and community booths.

This popular festival features a Main Stage for live music and community announcements, the Rockridge Runway with fashion shows from local boutiques, and The Chef Stage with cooking demonstrations from neighborhood restaurants. Bay Area food writers who will be discussing and signing their books include Jerry Anne DiVecchio, Francoise Dudal Kirkman, Janet Fletcher, Fran Gage, Nicolette Hahn Niman, and Clark Wolf.

Food-themed activities abound with gourmet food and beverage booths, and at Market Hall's "Picnic in the Street" which transforms the corner of Shafter and College into a farmers' market with cheesemakers, olive oil producers, produce growers, and winemakers. Market Hall chefs fire up the grills and merchants hold comparative tastings.

Organized by the Rockridge District Association, Out & About gives visitors and residents alike a chance to celebrate the day by being... well, out and about in Rockridge. Visit: [www.rockridgeoutandabout.com](http://www.rockridgeoutandabout.com).

To learn more about the Rockridge District Association (RDA), visit [www.rockridgedistrict.com](http://www.rockridgedistrict.com).

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**While travelling in Europe recently, Rockridge residents Chuck Afflerbach and Carolina Juárez made sure to keep up with the home front by keeping up with The Rockridge News.**


PHOTO: CHUCK AFFLERBACH



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Classes, Thursdays/10 am, Saturdays/9 am at Methodist Church downstairs at 303 Hudson (at College). Learn Tai Chi principles. Breathe and relax with gentle movement and meditation. Visit [www.harmonytaiji.com](http://www.harmonytaiji.com). E-mail [harmonytaiji@yahoo.com](mailto:harmonytaiji@yahoo.com) or phone 415/786-2469.

## Psychotherapy for Older Women/Grandmothers

Brief or long-term therapy for women wanting a better relationship with their adult children/grandchildren. Older, 30 years experience, interactive psychotherapist. Maggie Rochlin, LCSW. 510/845-6556.

## Gardener

Over 15 years of service to the Rockridge area. Maintenance and garden restoration. Reasonable rates and excellent references. Please call Chris: 510/655-0157.

## Judith Glass & Sheila Sabine

Your Grubb Company Agents appreciate Rockridge. If you are thinking of selling your home, contact us – Moving changes your life – we make the process easy. [www.GlassSabine.com](http://www.GlassSabine.com).

## Jazz & Classical Piano Lessons

Jazz and classical piano lessons from Rockridge jazz pianist with B.A. in music from U.C. Berkeley, 15 years experience teaching and performing. Reasonable rates, patient, dedicated. All ages welcome. Janet 653-6783.

## Skin Care Salon

Penelope's Aesthetics, a serene garden setting in Rockridge 12 years, specializes in professional beauty needs. Facials, waxing, lash/brow tints, skin tag/capillary removal, permanent make-up, reflexology and more! 30% off w/ad. [www.penelopecafe.com](http://www.penelopecafe.com) 510/594-1552.

## Unexpected Guests?

Lovely room 2 blocks from Rockridge BART in owner's flat for short-term. Reasonable. Photos available. [Barbird@aol.com](mailto:Barbird@aol.com) 510/652-7044.

## Upper Flat in Rockridge Duplex

Unfurnished 2/1 flat in Rockridge duplex ~1200 sq ft. Yard, laundry, storage. Utilities. Private deck. Disposal, dishwasher, microwave. Amazing closets. Hardwood/Pergo floors. Off-street parking. Cable/wi-fi ready. Photos available. 510-652-7044. [Barbird@aol.com](mailto:Barbird@aol.com).

## Deco Art

Decorative Painting, murals, faux finish, stencils, gold leaf, color, fine art, interior painting, repairs and restoration. Deco Art. 510/652-0683. [www.carolinestern.com](http://www.carolinestern.com).

## Wood Floors

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## Deck Experts

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## Electrical Repairs & Remodels

From doorbell repair to whole-house rewiring, we've been doing electrical work in Oakland and Berkeley for over 30 years. Sutorik & Company, Lic# 397149. 510/655-3677.

## Restring Necklaces

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## Beautiful Image

Micro current facial toning machine does a wonderful job toning the facial muscles. Give yourself a lift for the holidays! Visit [www.beautifulimageLLC.com](http://www.beautifulimageLLC.com) Then give me a call. Jeanne at 510/653-3100.

## Orlandy's Housecleaning

If you are looking for someone dependable and reliable to clean your house you have found him. I have years of experience and great references, given upon request. Please call 510/858-7290.

## Rockridge Bungalow Vacation Rental.

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## Non-Toxic House Cleaning

Lotus Cleaning Services provides excellent service while protecting your health and the planet. Licensed, bonded and insured. Experienced, reliable cleaners. Great for households with allergies, asthma, small children. Reasonable rates. 510/452-0755, [lotusclean@comcast.net](mailto:lotusclean@comcast.net).



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E-mail *Rockridge News* Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), or mail to: *Rockridge News* Community Calendar, 5245 College Avenue, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94618. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month. **Compiled by Jo Ellis**

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## District 1 Schools Meeting

School Board Director **Jody London** invites you to meet **Oakland's new School Superintendent Dr. Tony Smith**. Learn about Oakland's education priorities, offer ideas and compare notes with other public school supporters. Wed., 9/30, 7-8pm at Oakland International High School, 4521 Webster St. Refreshments provided. For more info and to RSVP: Jody.London@ousd.k12.ca.us or 459-0667.

## Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

### FOR CHILDREN:

- **Toddler Story Time:** Every Saturday, 10:30am.
- **Pre-School Story Time:** 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 10:30am.
- **Baby and Toddler Story Time:** 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 10:30am, upstairs Community Room (same days and times as Pre-School Story Time).
- **Pajama Story Time:** 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7pm.

### FOR TEENS:

- **Rockridge Ninjas (Anime Club):** Teens 13 and up, watch and talk about anime (Japanese animation) with other teens. **Note: New meeting day this month, 9/15, because of a mandatory shutdown day.** 5 to 6:30pm, upstairs meeting rm. Info: Susy, 597-5017.

### FOR ADULTS – Library sponsored events:

- **Writers' Support/Critique Group:** All writers welcome. Bring 14 copies of up to 5 double-spaced pages of any prose for on-site reading/discussion. Meets 3rd Saturday each month, 1 to 5pm. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch ([www.berkeleywritersclub.org](http://www.berkeleywritersclub.org)) Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.
- **Lawyers in the Library:** Free legal advice. First Tuesday each month from 6 to 8pm. Advance sign-up starts 5pm. More info: 597-5017.
- **Memory Camp:** For adults 50+ to improve concentration and memory. Free 12 week session taught by **Pat Schroeder** of the Oakland Adult and Career Center of OUSD. Classes from Sept.15 to Dec 8 on Tuesdays from 12:30 to 2:30pm. **Call 452-2074 to register.**

### Other Library Meetings

- **Greater Rockridge N'hood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC):** Residents and business members can voice their concerns about crime and public safety. **Note: Election of officers at this mtg. (see article p.8).** 4th Thursday each month (9/24), 7- 8:30pm, upstairs meeting room. Info@rockridgencpc.com or infordenise@yahoo.com.

- **Peace Corps Information Session:** Learn about volunteering overseas in education, health, business, environment and more. No upper age limit. Tues., 9/29, 6:30 to 8pm. Info: Heather Driscoll, 452-8444, sfevents@peacecorps.gov or [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov).

### ART EXHIBITS: Call to confirm dates.

#### Gallery:

- Sept.: **Oparna Ewing** quilts by **Oakland Quilt Group**.
- Oct.: **Chris Jennings** (call for details).

#### Lobby Display Case:

- Sept.: Quilts by **Oakland Quilt Group**.
- Oct.: **John Baldwin:** finger puppets.

### LIBRARY HOURS: Note: New Library closed dates

Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.  
Wed., Thurs. and Sat, 10am to 5:30pm.  
Fri., 12 to 5:30pm. **Closed Sundays and Mondays. (Oakland Public Library branches are no longer open on Mondays.)**  
Also closed Tues. 9/8 and Wed. 9/9.

## Diesel Book/Poetry Readings/Events

- All events are FREE and open to the public.
- Thurs., 9/10, 7pm. **David Bacon:** *Illegal People*.
  - Sun., 9/13, 3pm. **Poetry Flash** featuring **Jenny Browne** and **Cheryl Dumesnil**.
  - Mon., 9/14, 7pm. **Amnesty International Meeting:** All invited to exchange ideas on action.
  - Sun., 9/20, 3pm. Local writers **Kathy Briccetti, Meilan Carter** and **Jasmine Dawson** discuss their contributions to the national anthology, *Who's Your Mama?: The Unsung Voices of Women and Mothers*.
  - Sun., 9/27, 3pm. Local author and history professor **Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo:** *Daughters of Aquarius: Women of the Sixties Counterculture*.
  - Tues., 10/6, 7pm. **Daniel Silberberg:** *Wonderland: The Zen of Alice*.
  - Thurs., 10/08, 7pm. Local author & Mills College Professor **Cornelia Nixon's** publication party for *Jarrettsville*.
- DIESEL, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave. Info about other events, book discussion groups and El Grupito, the Spanish discussion group: 653-9965 or [www.dieselbookstore.com](http://www.dieselbookstore.com).

## Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir Auditions

Auditions for the East Bay's oldest children's choir begin on Sat., 9/12. Ages 5-18; no experience required; scholarships available. To schedule an appt. or for more info: 547-4441 or [www.piedmontchoirs.org](http://www.piedmontchoirs.org).

## Rockridge Out & About Festival

Sunday, 9/27, 11am to 6pm; along College Ave., between Claremont and Manila. Our annual Street Fair features: a food extravaganza with gourmet tastings and demonstrations by local chefs; musicians and street performers; fashion shows; many children's activities and much more. Organized by the Rockridge District Assn. (RDA). Info: 301-3122 or [www.rockridgeoutandabout.com](http://www.rockridgeoutandabout.com).

## Wisteria Ways Concert Series

**Stairwell Sisters:** Acoustic old-timey band with punk-rock intensity, and **VOCO!:** stompin' rebel harmony with cello and banjo. Saturday, 9/19; a double bill for two shows at 1pm and 4pm — both bands play at both shows. House opens at noon. Outdoor concert: be sure to bring something to sit on (blanket or lawn chair), hat, a picnic. \$15-20 suggested donation for musicians (cash only at the door). 383 61st Street. Wheelchair accessible. Listen to sound samples at [www.stairwellsisters.com](http://www.stairwellsisters.com) and [www.singers.com/world/moirasmileyVOCO.html](http://www.singers.com/world/moirasmileyVOCO.html). For reservations (highly recommended), RSVP to [info@WisteriaWays.org](mailto:info@WisteriaWays.org) or 655-2771. Please indicate whether 1pm or 4pm show preferred.

## Women Orchestral String Players Wanted

If you play violin, viola, cello or bass, rehearse and perform with the **Community Women's Orchestra (CWO)**, under the direction of **Kathleen McGuire**, for this exciting 25th anniversary season. CWO rehearses by Lake Merritt on Thursday nights from 7:30 to 9:30pm. To join, contact Linda Kay: [itune88@comcast.net](mailto:itune88@comcast.net). More info: Susana England, 658-9473, [susengland@AOL.com](mailto:susengland@AOL.com) or see [www.communitywomensorchestra.net](http://www.communitywomensorchestra.net).

## Singers Wanted

The **Distaff Singers**, the Bay Area's longest-running women's choral group, is seeking new members. No auditions necessary, just the ability to match pitch. Practice Tuesdays, 7:15 to 9pm. **New rehearsal venue:** Bishop O'Dowd HS, 9500 Stearns Ave. A benefit concert in the fall supports local K-12 music programs. Info: Carola Ingram, 547-1191 or [carolaingram@mac.com](mailto:carolaingram@mac.com).

## Creek to Bay Day: Volunteers Needed to Clean Temescal Creek

Join your neighbors on Saturday, 9/19, from 9am to noon, at the DMV parking lot (corner of Cavour and Redondo), to clean the creek bed through the greenbelt. Coffee and morning snacks at 9am; commemorative T-shirts for the first 50 volunteers. Many tools provided by the City Public Works Dept. If you bring your own tools, they should be well marked. For more info/questions: Margaret. 655-1767.

## Volunteer Faire for Oakland Schools

Saturday, 9/12 from 11am to 2pm. Local residents will be linked to school-based volunteer opportunities that match their interests, schedules and abilities as a rewarding way to support students and strengthen schools during trying times. Volunteers will be fully trained before they begin a program. Hosted in the West Auditorium of the Oak. Main Library, 125 14th St. More info: Stan Weisner, 531-2055 or [volunteerfaire@montclairaction.com](mailto:volunteerfaire@montclairaction.com).

## American Red Cross

**Mobile Blood Drives:** Friday, 9/11 at Children's Hospital, 747 52nd St., or call 800-GIVE-LIFE (800/448-3543) or go to [HelpSaveALife.org](http://HelpSaveALife.org) to find a location near you. **In Sept., donors will be entered in weekly drawings for a \$60 gift card to Applebee's or La Pinata Restaurant;** (not available at high school or college blood drives). **Be a Red Cross volunteer,** call Anne at 594-5165 or e-mail [BlackstoneA@usa.redcross.org](mailto:BlackstoneA@usa.redcross.org).

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