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When an E-Mail is Not Enough: Assessing, Strengthening, Focussing Rockridge Neighborhood Communication Resources

by Zabrae Valentine, RCPC
Communications Committee member

How do you communicate with other Rockridge residents about important local issues?

Do you subscribe to a Rockridge Yahoo group? Have you attended an RCPC Town Hall meeting? Have you used online information-sharing apps you think could be usefully applied in Rockridge if people knew about them?

Please take a few minutes to share your experience and advice with the RCPC on the topic of communication in Rockridge by taking a survey. (See box at far right for the survey link.)

Over the next few months, RCPC will conduct a comprehensive assessment and analysis of how Rockridge residents receive and share information, how residents would like to be able to communicate and work with neighbors in the future, and what is the right combination of tools to support these activities.

This topic will be discussed at the May

16 AGENDA: RCPC Town Hall Meeting, May 16

Join us May 16 at 7:30 p.m. for "Communication in Rockridge," an inclusive discussion about how the Rockridge community defines itself, what residents want for the community in the future, and what kind of communication tools can best serve these goals.

This discussion and survey results (see survey links in the box below, right) will provide critical data to the RCPC


as it examines how best to support Rockridge residents in effective, efficient communication that can further strengthen our community by, for example, reducing crime, improving pedestrian safety and disaster preparedness, greening the neighborhood, and more.

Bring your ideas, experience and wisdom to the May 16 Town Hall meeting to contribute to this effort.

Thursday, May 16 | 7:30-9 p.m. Rockridge Branch Library, 5366 College at Manila

16 Town hall meeting. In addition, RCPC will conduct individual interviews, and host smaller group discussions.

The data collected through these steps will allow RCPC to propose a more responsive "Communications Tool Kit" which will improve the ability of Rockridge residents to build and strengthen community bonds, respond to issues of mutual concern, and identify and act upon opportunities for community improvement.

FIND THE SURVEY HERE:	
Web Address	Scan QR Code
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RockTalk	

If you would like to join this effort, completing the survey via the link above is
Communication, page 13

Last Call for Rockridge Kitchen Tour Candidates

by Natalie Mehta,
Kitchen Tour chair


A fantastic variety of kitchens is what this fall's Rockridge Kitchen Tour is all about, and we need a few more options to round out the tour. Do you have – or know of – a project that should be considered?

The planning committee has been visiting neighborhood kitchens and has been amazed by the thoughtful designs, craftsmanship, and



stories that accompany these projects. We are in the last few weeks of meeting with candidates before selections are made at the start of June, so this is the "last call" for candidates. If you or someone you know is putting the final touches on a kitchen remodel, or if you are already enjoying a completed renovation, please let us know.

Renovation can include reuse, as illustrated by this vintage range at left, incorporated in a redone kitchen visited by the tour's planners. Approximately
Kitchen Tour, page 13



Rockridge Kitchen Tour: September 29



Volunteer organization Scenic Streets has made good on its pledge to perk up the Claremont Avenue freeway on- and off- ramps. Pictured above is the on-ramp, now laden with poppies and daisies instead of trash. Read more about Scenic Streets' work in Rockridge on page 8.

Op-Ed

Essays on matters of local interest are invited for consideration as Op-Ed pieces for *The Rockridge News*. Please limit length to 450 words and submit to editor@rockridge.org.

Views expressed in Op-Ed essays do not necessarily reflect those of The Rockridge News, its editor, or the board of directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council.

How Old is Claremont Middle School, Really?

by Ann Kasdin, Rockridge resident

Claremont Middle School's presence at the intersection of Birch Court and College Avenue dates back to the year 1918, according to documents obtained from the History Room at the Oakland Public Library. It was relocated just five blocks from its former location at the intersection of College and Claremont avenues where it was founded as a one-room schoolhouse in 1899.

At the time, it was called Claremont Grade School and was positioned at the entrance to the expanding neighborhood on the Berkeley-Oakland border. The name tells us a lot about the neighborhood back then, when Winifred and Raymond Perry famously purchased a substantial amount of property in the upscale Claremont district adjacent to Vernon Park, purchasing just over five acres of the Roselawn subdivision at the northeast end of the city of Oakland. At the time, this area was already well known for the Pagoda Hill Estate and Roselawn Park Estate, which were considered the largest and fanciest in Oakland.

Indeed, the Perrys' choice of location in 1910, now the site of St. Albert's Priory, to build their estate – Brookhurst – at the end of Birch Court (formerly called Pagoda Avenue) to constitute a country estate near the heart of a great city, reflects just how fine this neighborhood was and how the addition of Claremont Grade School at the opposite end of Birch Court would have been well-received by families moving into the community. In fact, enrollment was so

great that the lower grades were split off in the 1920s to form the Claremont School Annex on Chabot Road, later renamed Chabot Elementary School.

At some point Claremont Grade School became a junior high school. I could not find a date in the history room but when I moved to Birch Court in 1976, it was known as Claremont Junior High. It officially became a middle school in 1985 when a sixth grade was added and the ninth graders were sent to Oakland Technical High School. My oldest son was in that first sixth-grade class.

Today the sign on the side of Claremont Middle School states, "This school has been here since 1913." Unfortunately, the sign is celebrating the wrong year, as the school opened for its very first class in 1918 and, in fact, there is a photograph at the history room of the first class sitting in front of the gate that states: "Claremont Grade School, 1918."

I believe that, over time, the letter on the signage eroded and the 8 turned into a 3. As the mother of three children who attended Claremont Middle School in the 1980s and 1990s, I wholeheartedly support and celebrate the school and the excellent teachers my kids were fortunate to have.

I understand that the Claremont Middle School community is planning a centennial celebration. I would, however, like to suggest that they save the date for historical accuracy to celebrate this wonderful school, its dedicated teachers and its place in the history of this northeastern part of the city of Oakland.

Editor's Note: Ms. Kasdin's article was previously published in The Montclair newspaper. An article in a recent issue of the school newsletter, the Claremont Middle School Knightline, also discusses the centennial date and offers research into the question that supports the school's centennial celebration date. That article is on-line at <http://www.claremontms.org/archives/2183>.

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HOURS:

Tue: 12:30 – 8 p.m.

Wed, Thu, Sat: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Friday: 12 – 5:30 p.m.

Sunday and Monday: CLOSED; Also, 5/28

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.

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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
www.rockridge.org

The Rockridge News, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611

RCPC Voice-mail: 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/Deadline

Publication date of the next issue is:

☛ June 8, 2013

☛ June deadline is May 23, 2013

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. RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad that it deems inappropriate. (Classified ad contact, page 14.)



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Rockridge Community Planning Council

2012 Financial Statement

Fiscal Year January 1 – December 31, 2012

RCPC P&L

All as of 12/31/12

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

Contributions	2,791
Rockridge News	40,065
Legal Defense	3,815

Total Income 46,671

Expense

Bank Charges	288
Office Expenses	2,314
Committee (Land Use Appeal)	2,000
Contractors	5,635
Events	415
Fundraising	30
Grants / Scholarships	21,610
Library Furniture	615
Maintenance / Cleaning	1,228
Misc Expenses	2,438
Reconciliation Discrepancies	-34
FROG	527
Program Expenses	725
Rockridge News	34,090
Taxes	2,249
Utilities	312

Total Expense 74,441

Net Income -27,770

RCPC, FROG, Balance Sheet

ASSETS

CDs

FROG	10,390
RCPC	36,842
TOTAL CDs	47,232

Checking/Savings

FROG	27,342
RCPC	39,764
Total Checking/Savings	67,106

Other Current Assets

FROG Restoration Grant	22,022
Prepaid Expenses	1,000
Fixed Assets	3,648

TOTAL ASSETS 141,008

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Sales Tax	10
Total Liabilities	10

Equity

Opening Bal Equity (QR)	193,172
Equity Transfer	-54,988
Retained Earning	30,585
Net Income	-27,770

Total Equity 140,998

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 141,008






RCPC tax records are on file at the Rockridge Branch Library for public review.

Bike to Work Day: Rolling Along for 20 Years

Join cyclists from around the Bay Area and ride your bike to work. The San Francisco Bay Area's 20th annual Bike to Work Day (BTWD) is Thursday, May 9, an event to encourage cycling as a non-polluting and healthy commute option.

Bike to Work Day is for everyone. This event has been growing by leaps and bounds in the East Bay over the past 5 years, a 285 percent increase in the number of people riding. Bike to Work Day got its start in the Bay Area with the first celebration organized by East Bay Bicycle Coalition members at Oakland City Hall in 1994. Keep the momentum going and join us for the 20th East Bay Bike to Work Day.

Bike Commute Tips

-  Obey all traffic laws including stop signs and traffic lights.
-  Ride predictably, conspicuously and safely.
-  Check out your route in advance.
-  Make sure your bike is well tuned and your helmet fits.
-  Wear comfortable clothing.

If your ride includes BART, check BART's web site at <http://www.bart.gov/guide/bikes/bikeRules.aspx> for bike rules, which have changed recently. Remember that BART does not permit bicycles on escalators. They must be carried on the stairways.

Also, AC Transit bus bike racks may be fuller than usual on Bike to Work Day; plan extra time.

Use Energizer Stations

Get refreshed! Hank and Frank Bicycles is sponsoring our local energizer station at the Rockridge BART station from 7 to 9 a.m., May 9, providing goodie bags and refreshments.

Celebrate Together at Oakland City Hall

Oakland's 20th annual Bike-to-Work Day pancake breakfast, a joint project between the city of Oakland and the East Bay Bicycle Coalition, will be held on



Thursday, May 9, 7-9 a.m. at Oakland City Hall, 14th and Broadway.

Enjoy pancakes and coffee, all day valet bike parking, free bike safety checks, free downtown rides, Bike Bucks, an awesome raffle, and more, such as great stuff for your bike from these Oakland bike shops:

- Bay Area Bikes (light set)
- Cosmic Cycles ("seat bag with everything you will need if you break down on a long ride")
- Fruitvale Bikestation/Alameda Bicycle (\$50 gift card for Alameda Bicycle)
- Hank & Frank Bikes (light set)
- Lakeview Bicycle (On Guard Pitbull U-Lock)
- Manifesto Bicycles (Boombotix speaker & a gift certificate)
- The Spoke Cyclery (Kinderfeets wooden push bike)
- Spokeland (one-year shop use membership \$100 value)
- Wheels of Justice Cyclery (two full bike tune ups)

For more information, see <https://www.ebbc.org/btwd> and Oakland's BTW Day web site: <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/PWA/o/EC/s/BicycleandPedestrianProgram/OAK024651>.

Cycling Safety

Free East Bay Bicycle Coalition urban bicycle safety classes are offered in May and June to teach cyclists how to safely share the road. Sign up at www.ebbc.org/safety.

There is no Land Use Committee report this month: there are no current Rockridge issues to report on or progress to discuss; no meeting was held.

RCPC Land Use Committee

The RCPC Land Use Committee meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Rockridge Branch Library, upstairs meeting room, 7:30 p.m. Next meeting: Wednesday, May 22. Check www.rockridge.org for updates.)

City Takes Pothole Fight to the Streets

Annual Public Works "Pothole Blitz" Will Blast Worst Offenders

From Mayor Jean Quan's Facebook Page:

On your way to the various weekend events around Oakland, be sure to look out for and report potholes. Every year in late April, the city does a "Pothole Blitz" where we often rely on residents to provide the locations

of some of the worst potholes.

The blitz started April 29 and goes until June 6. Find more information here: <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakcal/groups/cityadministrator/documents/memorandum/oak040370.pdf>.

Report Your Potholes for City's 'Pothole Blitz'

by Don Kinkead

Shortly after Susan Shawl's informal pothole survey was published in the March issue of The Rockridge News, many of the pavement failures she documented were filled and paved, including the one on Claremont Avenue that measured a whopping 3 feet by 4 feet by 3 inches deep.

Coincidence? Possibly.

To be fair, an announcement from Oakland's Public Works Department states that changes in the weather bring an opportunity for longer-lasting pothole filling: "When the rains stop, Public Works crews try to catch up on potholes. For effective patching and repairs, the more permanent materials need warmer weather."

In fact, it turns out that every year in late April, "the city does a 'Pothole Blitz,'

filling thousands of potholes and repaving some of the worst sections," according to the announcement.

The city repair crews even build their repair list from information provided by citizens as alarmed as Susan Shawl was, asking residents "to provide the locations of some of the worst potholes."

As the Mayor noted in her statement above, the pothole blitz runs from April 29 until June 6. If you have a favorite – or particularly egregious – pothole, the city wants to know about it; or *them*, if you're aware of more than one....

Reporting Potholes

Note the location of your pothole, then use one of the following three ways to report it to the city: Call the Public Works Department at 615-5566; e-mail the

changes ON COLLEGE

by Theresa Nelson
New

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department at pwacallcenter@oaklandnet.com, or (perhaps the easiest), use the SeeClickFix app on your smartphone. You can include photos of the locations needing repair. To get SeeClickFix, visit the website at <http://seeclickfix.com/>. Apps for iPhones, Android and Windows phones are available for download from the site.

Anecdotal reports indicate that multiple reports of the same problem highlight the areas of greatest concern which may then draw prompter attention from authorities.



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Peralta in Bloom! Spring Festival

by Daniel Brownstein, Peralta parent

Peralta Elementary School invites members of the community to join us in our annual Peralta in Bloom Spring Festival, a full-flung celebration on Saturday, May 18, from noon to 4 p.m.

As the flowers in our school gardens grow and bloom, the small North Oakland school opens its campus to celebrate the achievements of our student body at this Blue-Ribbon school.

Peralta in Bloom recognizes the tremendous achievements of our elementary school students and celebrates the artistic opportunities we provide to our kids.

Open to the entire community free of charge, the event features music, face-painting, 10 carnival games and more. In addition to live music, the last two hours feature a rollicking cake walk presided over by a master of ceremonies. Many kids will go home with wonderful cakes – prepared and donated by school parents – to continue the afternoon feast and sweets.

Peralta’s active parents have maintained the school’s strong focus on the arts throughout its curriculum. Our festival features arts activities for all ages, emphasizing art-making as this year’s theme.

As well as visiting a station for recycle art, a spin-art table, and many crafts, kids will have a chance to silk-screen their own shirts, bags, aprons, or sweatshirts in the kindergarten courtyard, and to use spray-art and vinyl art. An added attraction will be a

pottery station. A local kiln will fire the created pieces.

Among the many garden games offered, attendees will find stations to decorate pots for plants to encourage kids to plant tomato starts or flowers for their families. Right next door, a henna-art station, and, nearby, a paint-the-drum event, asking kids to decorate a drum to be raffled off at day’s end. At another raffle opportunity, the festival offers the chance to win art educator Ellen Oppenheimer’s most recent quilt, designed by Peralta kids, and a basket



CORRECTION: Event Contact

Contact information for the person in charge of advertising and sponsorship was given incorrectly in the April issue of The Rockridge News. The correct information is below. The Rockridge News regrets the error.

■ **The Peralta in Bloom Spring Festival 2013**, open to the community, will be held May 18 from noon to 4 p.m on the Peralta School grounds, 460 63rd Street. The event, “Art Making,” is built around school and children and is largely dependent for success on sponsorships. To help, contact Tara McCulloch at 510/333-2580 or tara.mcculloch@gmail.com.

raffle of items donated by community businesses and theaters.

A tasty activity in the garden is a special masa-making station, using vegetables grown in our garden, combining tactile fun and delicious eating. In the meantime, those whose appetite strikes will find a rich variety of sweet fare and fresh barbeque.

We look forward to seeing you at the Spring Festival “Peralta in Bloom,” Saturday, May 18 from noon until 4 p.m. at Peralta Elementary School, 460 63rd Street, near Dana Street and Alcatraz Avenue.

While admission is free, the event is a fundraiser; proceeds support the school’s many programs, such as arts and sports.

Festival waste will be reduced through the use of compostable plates and by sorting trash into three recycle “monsters”:—Compostina, Lenny Landfill, and Rerun.

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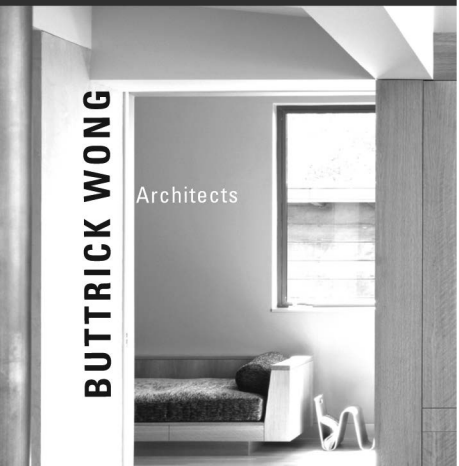
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FROG Park Earth Day 2013

We had a great community work day on Earth Day, Saturday April 20. From 9 a.m. to well after noon, the community volunteers showed up to clean the pond and spread new gravel in preparation for the creek to be turned on. A mountain of new fibar was moved into the playground area, new sand was put into the sandboxes and we replaced pavers, sealed roof structures and cleaned the area of debris and garbage.

Thanks to all the volunteers who made the time to help. In particular, thanks to the city for arranging for the new materials we needed and coordinating

tools and staff. Special thanks to Katrina Rozelle, Bakesale Betty's and the Temescal Station 8 Firefighters.

Remember that without your help we cannot keep up with all the park's maintenance items. We work with the city to support our park and our volunteers to create a clean and safe park for our neighborhood. Check out the images of our workers at the Hardy play area. See you next year.

— Howard Ferrier,
Volunteer Coordinator,
Friends of the Rockridge-Temescal
Greenbelt (FROG) Park.



Thanks to everyone ~ volunteers, city staff, parents and children ~ who came together to take care of our park. Join us in June! See page 9 for more information about future cleanup work days.



After the creekbed was cleared of trash, weeds, and tree limbs, the sluice gates were opened briefly and waders went to work. The permanent summer-time creek turn-on should occur when the drainage pipes are unplugged.

PHOTOS BY KEN RICE AND DON KINKEAD.



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- 3BD++/2BA with legal in-law, in Chabot District. Represented Sellers. 5932 Ocean View, Sold at \$1,300,000
- 4BD+, 2BA Peralta Dist. w/ FP, large south facing yard. Represented Buyers. 407 North St. Sold @ \$1,011,000.

AVAILABLE:

- 2BD, 2BA Rear Farmhouse cottage + detached mini-barn, Peralta, sweet brick patio/garden. 434 North St. \$749,000

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LAWTON ASSOCIATES REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE

New Trees Spruce up Davita Dialysis Facility

by Tony Bolton, local resident

Scenic Street volunteers planted nine flowering sidewalk trees around the dilapidated Davita Dialysis facility on Claremont Avenue at Clifton Street last month, but ground-breaking on the company's own landscaping improvements – promised over a year ago – remains to be seen.

"The new trees will add badly needed greenery around the neglected property," says Peter Lund, founder of Scenic Streets, the local group coordinating the effort.

"Our goal is to improve the street view of this prominent property without inhibiting its business activities" he says. His group has added a total of 29 new sidewalk trees to the Rockridge-Temescal gateway in just the past year, and volunteers water them regularly.

Last month's planting was a true community effort that took months to arrange, Lund explained. Scenic Streets had first to negotiate permission from the property's landlord. Then-Councilmember

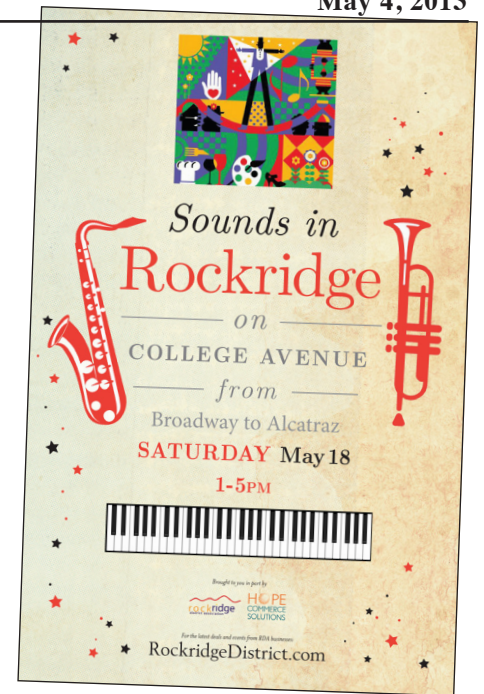


Volunteers from First Congregational Church of Berkeley install flowering trees around the Davita Dialysis facility at 5354 Claremont Avenue.

/URBAN RELEAF

Jane Brunner provided funds for the sidewalk cutting last fall. Urban Releaf, a local non-profit organization, donated the trees and lined up two dozen volunteers from First Congregational Church of Berkeley to dig the holes. Within a few months, decorative shrubs will be added to boxes with support

↳ **New Trees, page 13**



Sounds in Rockridge

Spring Stroll brought to you by the RDA
Saturday, May 18, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The Rockridge District Association (RDA) is proud to announce the Sounds in Rockridge Stroll. We are looking forward to another fun-filled afternoon on College Avenue. Our Valentine's event was very well received, with over 12 musical venues and great shopping and dining.

Join the musical event and support your local merchants; stroll, sample food, drink and street music. Consider spending some time in one of our wonderful restaurants; many will have in-house music as well as specials for your enjoyment.

Be on the lookout for the many special offers during your afternoon stroll.

Also, mark your calendar: the RDA's Out and About street festival is Sunday, October 6. We're looking forward to an exciting, interactive fair with many activities and great food and entertainment.

Bumper Crop of Poppies Not Just Nature's Doing

by Nancy Schaaf, local resident

Hundreds of orange poppies have brightened up the Claremont Avenue highway ramps this spring, but Mother Nature had a helping hand. Scenic Streets volunteers spread nearly two pounds of seeds last fall hoping for lots of color about now. The on-ramp near Hudson has put on a particularly good show in recent weeks.

"Even we were a bit surprised," says Lee Patterson, one of the volunteers. "Like many Californians, our state flower has a mind of its own, and we weren't sure what kind of germination rate to expect." He notes that the results could have been even stronger with just a bit more precipitation

earlier this year.

The group also sowed Blue Lupine seeds that got off to a strong start but then perished due to lack of water in January. "Luckily, dozens of daffodil bulbs donated by Keep Oakland Beautiful helped fill in some gaps" says Patterson. "But we'll try the Lupine seeds again next year. They look terrific mixed in with the poppies."

The temporary spring flowers have added a splash of vibrant color to the hundreds of drought-tolerant shrubs and trees the group has planted since forming just two years ago. Neighbors with green thumbs are encouraged to volunteer one flexible hour a month at www.scenicstreets.org.

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Oakland Tech, Berkeley Kiwanis, Circle K Join in First Saturday FROG Cleaning



'First Saturday' Cleanup Spruces Up Frog Park

Over 30 service club and community members worked together during April's "First Saturday" work day to

clear tree trimmings, remove ivy, sweep, rake, prune, pick up debris, clear the area around the sand box, clean out the pond bed in preparation for turning on the creek, and perform other general cleanup.

Special thanks to: BuildOn, Oakland Tech; Key

Club, Oakland Tech; Berkeley Kiwanis Club; Circle K, UC Berkeley; Luciano Cortes, City of Oakland gardener; FROG; and DMV Neighbors Association.

Join us at a special June community workday held jointly with the DMV Neighbors

on June 15, 9 a.m.-noon.

We supply the tools and gloves, just come over to help for 30 minutes or more.

Meet at Big Frog Park or Redondo/Clifton.

Upcoming "First Saturday" workdays: July 6, August 3, September 7. All: 10 a.m.- 1 p.m.

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See you at the RCPC
 Town Hall meeting May 16;
 Rockridge Library, 7:30 p.m.
 2nd floor meeting room.



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 at the editor's discretion. Views expressed in any letter are the writer's own, and may not necessarily be shared by the editor, or by RCPC.

CALDECOTT'S FOURTH BORE MUST BE LAST BORE: PLAN AN ALTERNATE NOW EDITOR:

How much exhaust fumes are we expected to take? The Caldecott Tunnel will be opening soon and some gridlock relief will occur for a while. But can we not expect continued population growth in Contra Costa County? It is time we began a campaign for another tunnel, midway between the Caldecott and Highway 580. There should be support for this on both sides of the hills.

Such an effort will take years (perhaps decades) for persuasion, planning and execution. I suggest RCPC appoint a study group to attack this issue. Might there exist a comparable group of allies east of the hills to join in the effort?

— **Marv Tripp**

PROTECT OUR PETS

EDITOR:

This is a message for everyone who has or cares about dogs and cats.

Foxtails (pictured below) are out and ready to spread. They work their way easily into dogs and cats and are difficult to remove as they are like fish hooks. They can work their way into every orifice, eyes too, and can cause great damage to your pet.

When you see foxtails, pull them out by the root, trying to get all the parts. Then put them into a plastic bag, tie it tightly so nothing can escape and put that bag into the trash, NOT the green bin. Every foxtail plant that is not pulled out will turn into many more foxtails next season. All the pets will thank you.

— **Sari Kulberg**



How We Roll: AC Transit Announces New Buses 'A Better Ride' is coming your way; your feedback is welcomed

by AC Transit Marketing & Community Relations: MCR@actransit.org

Great news! Recently, AC Transit launched the first 10 of 65 new buses, all of which will be on the road by early June.

These 40-foot buses are made in the East Bay by Gillig. With a new seat design and layout, and engines that are 90 percent cleaner than those of the buses being replaced, they're already making a big impression on passengers, based on the many compliments we're receiving via social media and e-mail.

Want to learn more about our new buses? You can find a promotional video at <http://youtu.be/HKBNmjffmU> about them, and there is a special webpage (<http://www.actransit.org/a-better-ride-on-ac-transits-newest-buses/>) with additional details.

If you've had a chance to ride one of the new buses, we'd like your feedback. Just e-mail us at abetterride@actransit.org,

"like" us and post on our Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/rideact>), or follow us and tweet via [@rideact](https://twitter.com/rideact) using #aBetterRide.

The new bus roll-out kicks off AC Transit's year-long program of service and performance improvements, called "A Better Ride." It includes initiatives for improving on-time performance and service reliability, instituting a quality assurance program to maintain cleaner buses, and bringing other service efficiencies to our customers.

As part of the A Better Ride campaign, additional new buses will join our fleet this summer and fall. Keep up with the program's exciting changes by bookmarking the A Better Ride web page: <http://www.actransit.org/betterride>.

New Gillig bus.
AC Transit Web site.



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4/19/13	3	3	6125 Broadway	\$699,000	\$699,000	8	\$760,000
4/25/13	2	2	5888 Chabot Court	\$895,000	\$895,000	12	\$905,000

Average original list price to sales price is currently 116% vs 98% last year · Median sold price is currently \$807,500 vs. \$489,500 last year · Properties are selling in an average of 11 days · There is a one month supply of active inventory

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Eyes on Rockridge

Local Activist Listens and Builds Community

By Judith Doner Berne

Ever the activist, Stuart Flashman didn't wait around for dating websites to be invented. Back in the early 80s he advertised for his future wife in the San Francisco *Bay Guardian*.

"I said I was a politically active, liberal guy with a friendly dog," Flashman tells me as we sit at the table in his sun-lit dining room. "I got about 50 responses. I started working through them. We – Jacqueline (Jacqui) Richter, a geriatrician who now works for Kaiser Permanente in Walnut Creek – just hit it off."

His was not false advertising. Politically active and liberal continue to ring true today. And I attest to the fact that their two dogs, Hestia and Roxie, are friendly.

As you may know, Flashman is often the public face of the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC) since, as chairman of the Land Use Committee, he takes the lead at public meetings concerning proposed construction and expansions within the RCPC's borders.

But you might not know that the Boston native who practices environmental, land use and elections law also has a PhD in biochemistry and molecular biology from Harvard.

I first encountered Flashman in February at an RCPC Town Hall meeting that included the environmental impact report for Safeway's second project at Broadway and Pleasant Valley Avenue.

He was impressive, both for his in-depth knowledge of the project and his calm responses to passionate residents questioning whether the proposed Emeryville-style shopping center is even appropriate for

Rockridge's southern border.

"He always listens to people with respect," says Annette Floystrup, who served on the board with Flashman. "He's adept at keeping meetings moving. He's pretty no-nonsense on the one hand, and yet he has a wonderful sense of humor."

Emeryville is actually where Flashman, in the mid-'80s, began honing his skills as an activist fighting corruption and poor planning.

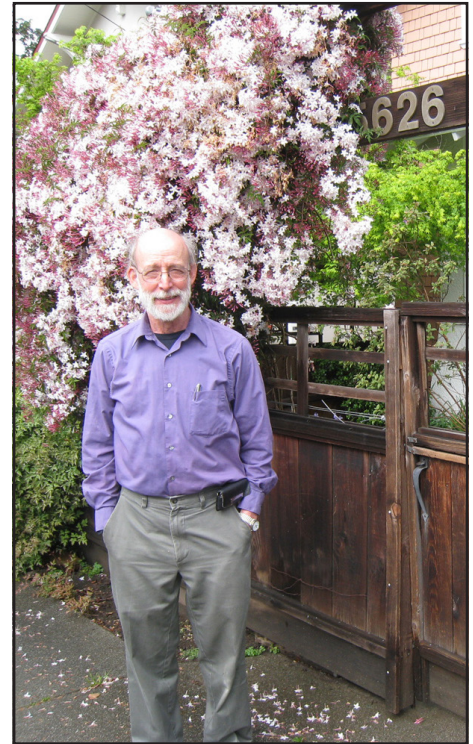
While working as a senior research biologist at Stauffer Chemical Co. in Richmond and living in Emeryville, he was elected and later bounced from the Emeryville City Council, served on the Emeryville Planning Commission and founded and co-chaired the Emeryville Shoreline Committee.

After one heated meeting when a city official barked at him, "You're not a lawyer," Flashman got the idea to become one. So, when a company merger led to Flashman (and the rest of Stauffer Chemical Company's agricultural biotechnology research group) being laid off, he opted for law school rather than move to the Midwest, where agricultural biotech research had become centered.

"Having a law degree would be another tool in my tool belt," he says. And, "It actually was a pretty easy transition from biology to law."

"It was a very busy period," he vividly recalls: "I got elected to the East Bay Municipal Utility District [he was president in 1994]; I had to leave a class [at the New College of California School of Law] to take my wife to the hospital" for the birth of their first child.

That would be Sarah, now 23 who is



Stuart Flashman and wife Jacqui Richter live so close to College that they often walk or bike to favorite restaurants and shops. /JUDITH BERNE


studying for a master's in social work at Smith College. Johanna, 17 and a junior at Bishop O'Dowd High School, was born after they moved to Rockridge in 1992. (He and Jacqui already frequented the Rockridge Café.)

Flashman knew that working in environmental law wasn't easy because he had a brother in the field. But, he decided: "I'll hang out a shingle and see what happens." After doing contract work for other attorneys, "I got a few cases. I won a few cases and what do you know, I had a practice. I've been doing it for 22 years."

He was appointed to the RCPC board to fill a vacancy in 2007 after the pro-development faction of the board lost the election and another pro-development person resigned. He rose to the position of chairman and is now chairman emeritus.

Rockridge citizens in the mid-1970s prescribed neighborhood commercial zoning that would be limited to three stories, Flashman says. "They were very perceptive." As a result, "Rockridge is more or less built out," he says. "We are basically a two-lane street. In Rockridge, it's not more people, it's more cars."

I asked him about potential conflict of



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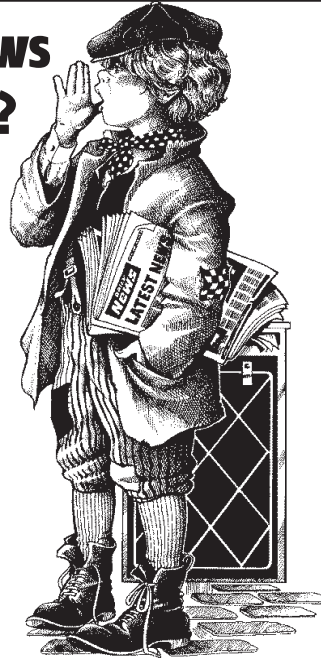
Locksley Avenue Rockridge News Route Available: Are You Ready?

Thanks go to Claudine Jones who has joined our volunteers as a Marshal, replacing one of our original Marshals and Rockridge treasure, Nancy Dutcher.

Now there is one remaining Block Captain route available and needing a delivery person. We hope that the residents of the 5200 block of Locksley Avenue don't go long without their Rockridge News.

You can help spread the word: Call 510/547-3855 or e-mail smontauk@gmail.com if you are ready, willing and available to spend about 20 minutes once a month (except in August, when the newsletter is not published) delivering the newsletter to:

- **Route 17F:** Both sides of 5200 Locksley Avenue



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Stuart Flashman

from page 11

interest between his land use practice and community work. In the only instance, when the RCPC was involved in the Fourth Bore Coalition (FBC) litigation on the Caldecott Tunnel and Flashman served as the FBC attorney, he recused himself from RCPC board discussions related to the litigation.

In his role as land use committee chair, Flashman has been intimately involved in the proposed Safeway expansion discussions. He was one of the people to negotiate a compromise on the College Avenue Safeway where he says, demolition should start by fall and construction around the end of the year.

Currently, he also meets with both the city of Oakland and citizens on the Safeway shopping center at Broadway and Pleasant Valley Avenue. He doesn't think the big box stores that are proposed will affect College Avenue retail. "It's going to be a different kind of retail," he says.

But Flashman is concerned with neighborhood cut-through traffic, which "hasn't been properly addressed." He's

optimistic that the city planner assigned to the project, who he says "is the best one they have," will come up with solutions.

His friends are happy that the hours, expertise and caring that Flashman has given on behalf of Rockridge are being written about.

"We got to know Stuart and Jacqui when our daughters were in Duck's Nest Preschool 18 years ago," says Charli Depner. "He's an activist in the very best sense, sharing his extensive knowledge and experience in an engaging way, meeting people where they are, listening and building community."

"When I despair that we will never save the world," says Depner, who works on children and family judicial branch programs, "I take heart that people like Stu will motivate us to make the present better."

Stu is just a great guy all around," adds Mitch Chyette, who does legal research and writing and is married to Depner. "He embodies the aphorism: think globally, act locally. He has a big heart and I greatly admire his dedication to our community."

Judy Berne welcomes your comments and column ideas. Contact her at judyberne@att.net.

Kitchen Tour

from page 1

two-thirds of our tour guests are neighbors who are contemplating their own renovations and are looking for inspiration. Share your knowledge and experience with them.

Any questions or submissions may be directed to Natalie Mehta at 415/279-5148, or Natalie.mehta@yahoo.com.

Communication

from page 1

an important first step. Next, plan to attend "Communication in Rockridge" Town Hall meeting, Thursday, May 16, at 7:30 p.m.

If you have suggestions and questions, or want to arrange a smaller neighborhood meeting on this topic, please contact Zabrae Valentine at zabrae@yahoo.com.

New Trees

from page 8

from a Temescal merchant's group, he said.

Ideally, the trees would have been installed after Davita had completed its own landscaping upgrades to the property, such as replacing the ragged perimeter fencing. However those improvements remain bogged down in red tape, and Lund says the trees simply couldn't wait any longer.

Scenic Streets continues to enable Davita to begin its landscaping improvements. Beyond new perimeter fencing, a company spokesperson pledged in October 2011

to add more greenery to the property's northwest corner. Shortly thereafter, Scenic Streets provided bids from local contractors totaling just over \$20,000 for the entire project, but surprisingly little progress has been made by the \$7 billion corporation since. Davita operates over 1,800 dialysis treatment facilities nationwide including three in Oakland, said Lund.

Davita's landlord confirmed he is receptive to the proposed improvements and is awaiting formal documentation from the company's representatives. The paperwork should be the final hurdle, and Lund remains optimistic that the company will fulfill its promise this summer.

RN Classifieds

Your Message Could Be Here

Your 36-word message is \$22. (Phone number counts as one word.) Mail to: **RN Classifieds**, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. June deadline is May 23.

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Rockridge Stress Reduction

Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction class in Rockridge Tuesday mornings, 9-11:30. 8-week series validated by research includes meditation, gentle yoga, education, and communication exercises. Register: www.centerforstressreduction.com, 510-594-8224.

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Life Story Video Editing

E-mail *Rockridge News* Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), or mail to: *Rockridge News* Community Calendar, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month.

Compiled by Jo Ellis

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

Residents and business members engage in discussions about crime and public safety with representatives of OPD. 2nd Thursday each month, 7pm. Rockridge Library, upstairs meeting room, 5366 College Ave. Confirm mtg. info at www.rockridgencpc.com or chair@rockridgencpc.com.

Rockridge Branch Library

5366 College Avenue, 597-5017

Free computer tutoring for all ages: Download e-books. Help with e-mail and basic computer skills. Tuesdays from 3:30-7pm. Call 587-5017 to make an appointment.

FOR CHILDREN

- **Family Story Time:** Stories/songs/rhymes (to age 5); Saturdays, 10:30am.
- **Pre-School Story Time:** (ages 2 to 5); Thursdays, 10:30am.
- **Toddler Story Time:** (up to age 2); Thursdays, 10:30am, upstairs.

All story times followed by Play Time; parents and caregivers invited.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- **Celebrate Asian & Pacific Islanders Heritage Month.** Tuesday, May 7th, 7pm. Kamishibai stories & treats from Japan. All ages welcome, best for children ages 4 to 10. Kamishibai set funded by Friends of the Rockridge Library.
- **Bananas Parenting Workshops Series:** New and expectant parents; three classes by Bananas experts:
 - **Yoga With Baby:** Saturday, May 11th, 11:15am. Led by **Sonia Roberts**, mother and expert in parent/baby yoga practice. Bring your pre-walking baby and a yoga mat.
 - **Baby Massage:** Saturday, May 18th, 11:15am. Bring your baby. Learn benefits of infant massage with Bananas expert **Tsadae Neway**.
 - **Language & Brain Development:** Tues, June 4th, 7pm. Essential information for parents of children from birth to age 5.

FOR TEENS

- **Teen Advisory Board:** (ages 14-18) Advise the library how to better serve teens. Get community service credit for school. Snacks provided. (NOTE: **May mtg. on 5/18 instead of 5/4**) – otherwise 1st Sat. each month, 1-2 pm. Confirm: 597-5017.
- **Rockridge Ninjas:** watch Anime, 2nd Tues each month (5/14, 6/11) from 5-6:30 pm.
- **Teen ‘Scape:** Play video and board games; make crafts; light snacks provided. Every Wed., 2 to 3:30pm.
- **Tie-Dye workshop:** Make your own tie-dye t-shirt. Materials will be provided. 5/15 at 2 pm.

FOR ADULTS

- **Writers Support/Critique Group:** All writers welcome. Bring 17 copies of up to 5 pgs. (double-spaced, MS margins) of any prose for on-site reading/discussion (also welcome to come empty-handed). Third Saturday each month; 1 to 5pm. Sponsored by the California Writers Club, Berkeley branch. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com.
- **Lawyers in the Library: Free legal advice and referrals.** First Tues. each month (2/5, 3/5), 5 to 7pm. (Advance sign-up starts 4:45pm at adult reference desk). Volunteer lawyer leaves before 7pm if no more people present.

ART EXHIBITS (subject to change; call to confirm) Gallery:

May: Merritt College Figure Drawing Class.
June: “Tunnel Visions” Photographs of the Caldecott Tunnel Fourth Bore by **Rebecca Rosa**.

Lobby Display Case:

May: Merritt College Figure Drawing Class.
June: **Lori Fischer**; Dolls 4 Artsake.

LIBRARY HOURS

Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.
Wed., Thurs. and Sat. 10am to 5:30pm.
Fri., 12 to 5:30pm.

Closed: Sundays and Mondays; also **Tues, 5/28.**

Diesel Book Readings and Events

All FREE and open to the public.

- Thurs, 5/9, 7pm. Publication party for **Samuel Sattin: League of Somebodies.**
- Fri, 5/10, 7pm. **Elizabeth Graver: The End of the Point.**
- Sat., 5/11, 7pm. **James Kelman: Mo Said She Was Quirky.**
- Mon, 5/13, 7:30pm. **Amnesty International Meeting (2nd Mon. each month):** All invited to exchange ideas on action.
- Fri, 5/17, 7pm. Release Party for **ZYZZYVA’s** Spring/Summer issue. Editors **Laura Cogan** and **Oscar Vil-**

lalon will host. Readings by local contributors **Molly Giles, Alexandra Teague, Aaron Jae-Ho Shin,** and **Marianna Cherry.** Wine and snacks.

- Thurs, 5/23, 7pm. Local author **Scott Johnson: The Wolf and the Watchman: A Father, a Son, and the CIA.**
- Sun., 5/26, 3pm. Poetry Flash with **Tim Kahl** and **Joshua McKinney.**
- Fri, 5/31, from 7 – 9pm. Local acoustic band **Smooth Toad.** Veterans of three art forms: music, poetry, and theater. Hear them on www.myspace.com/smoothtoad. DIESEL, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave. More info (and other events and discussion groups): 653-9965 or events@dieselbookstore.com.

Book Reading

Rockridge author **Elizabeth Fishel** will read from her new book *When Will My Grown-Up Kid Grow Up? Loving and Understanding Your Emerging Adult* (coauthored with **Jeffrey Arnett**) on Wed., May 22, 7:30pm at Mrs. Dalloway’s, 2904 College Ave. B. Info: 704-8222 or info@mrsdalloways.com.

Rockridge Artist Open Studio

Liz Maxwell, participating in ProArts Open Studios, welcomes visitors to her studio to view her paintings prints and drawings: Sat. and Sun., June 1 and 2 and June 8 and 9, 11am to 6pm. 5808 Chabot Road. lizmaxwell@prodigy.net. Information about other local artists and ProArts East Bay Open Studios 2013 at www.proartsgallery.org.

Wisteria Ways House Concert

Round Mountain: Folk music from around the world with brothers **Char** and **Robby Rothschild.** Sunday, June 9, 3pm. Outside venue; wheelchair accessible. Bring a blanket, lawn chair and picnic. \$15-20 donation for musicians (cash only at the door). 383 61st Street. For reservations (highly recommended), RSVP to info@WisteriaWays.org or 655-2771.

Jazz at the Chimes

The Claudia Villela Duo with Brazilian vocalist **Claudia Villela** and guitarist **Bob Basa.** Sunday, May 19, 2pm; followed by artists’ reception and refreshments. Tickets at the door (cash only) beginning 12:30; doors open 1:30pm: \$15 general; \$10 seniors (60+) and students - for concert and reception. Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave. Wheelchair accessible. **Free parking.** Info: www.jazzatthechimes.com, chimesjazz@gmail.com or 654-0123.

Flea Market at North Oakland Senior Center

Sat, June 8, from 8am to 3pm. – Rain or Shine. Vendors, rent your space now at the reception desk. \$12 per space for Sr. Center members; \$18 for non-members. Cash Only – No Refunds – No Vendor Food Sales. More information, 597-5085.



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