Local Assisted-Living Residents Adjust to Challenging Times
— By Judith Doner Berne

“We’re sort of in a cocoon here. We’re safe from the outside world. I’ve never done so many puzzles in my life.”

That’s what Bob Kelleher, a resident of The Point at Rockridge for more than three years, opened with as we talked about how he and his assisted living neighbors are coping with daily life in the age of Covid-19.

I was curious because even during the original shelter-in-place order, most of us could still choose to venture outside for exercise and do essential shopping. But for several months I didn’t see any of the regular walkers from Merrill Gardens at Rockridge, the assisted living facility that is down the street. The Point is

Eyes on Rockridge, see page 12
COVID-19 Uncertainties Outweighed By Need for Long-Term Planning
— By Stuart Flashman, RCPC Land Use Committee Chair

It’s been over two years since RCPC initiated a study of housing in Rockridge. The purpose was, and remains, to figure out how best to accommodate more housing in Rockridge without destroying the charm that has attracted residents to it for over 100 years.

The impacts of COVID-19 have disrupted that study, as they have so many aspects of our world. The study has relied on models that help predict what could feasibly be built in Rockridge. The models are based on expectations for things like land values, construction costs, and predicted sales prices or rental costs for different kinds of new residential buildings. The models’ predictions, in turn, have allowed testing out various options and incentives to see how they would affect future local development.

Uncertainties created by COVID-19 and the ensuing economic disruption, have upended many of the expectations underlying the modeling. What to do? Continue forward using the current models? Or put the study on hold until the long-term effects of COVID-19 became clearer?

At the Land Use Committee meeting on July 22, 2020, members and other interested Rockridge residents looked at the pluses and minuses of the options. Factors favoring pausing included not wasting time evaluating modeling results that might turn out to be based on invalid assumptions, as well as the fact that most development planning had also been placed on hold as a result of COVID-19 — meaning the on-the-ground situation in Rockridge might not be affected by a pause.

Factors favoring moving forward included the general assumption that in the long term, it’s likely people will continue to want to move to Rockridge, so the pressure for more housing is unlikely to disappear.

Further, both City and State planning are continuing to move forward, so developing an affirmative long-term planning stance would help Rockridge control its own destiny rather than being pushed by outside forces.

Finally, there is the fact that the models being used, and the analysis coming out of the study, can continue to be modified to reflect changes and provide ongoing guidance.

After considerable discussion, the committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Directors to continue moving forward with the housing study. At its August meeting, the Board of Directors unanimously agreed with the Committee. The study is therefore moving forward. Please see online articles published at rockridge.org for more recent land use updates. ■
**ELECTION 2020: RCPC Board Candidates**

**Brian Chadwick**  
*Miles Avenue*  
Father. Husband. Veteran. Renter. Homeowner. All these words have come to describe me in the six years since moving to Rockridge from Tampa, Florida. With that move, my wife and I doubled our rent and dropped our square footage by a quarter — we fell in love with everything about Rockridge, but the sticker shock hasn’t worn off. Now that we are homeowners, we look forward to raising our family here for many years to come. I desire to serve you on the RCPC Board as a voice that both prizes our neighborhood’s wonderful character and leads us to a more accessible, sustainable, and equitable future — starting with housing. In short, Rockridge may not be able to do much, but we can do more. With a private sector background in finance after over a decade in uniform, I believe I can help us strike the right balance.

**Casey Farmer**  
*Hermann Street*  
I am an advocate, both professionally and by nature. I lead Alameda County’s efforts for Census 2020 (be sure to get counted!) and I’ve been advocating for community needs since I joined my neighborhood Crime Prevention Council at age 10. In my next term on the Rockridge Community Planning Council, I will advocate for more retail on College Avenue by supporting housing options. (I believe that more accessory dwelling units will help address our severe affordability crisis.) I will advocate for more community projects like the one where I live (Hermann / Ayala streets) which was completed to reduce traffic speeds by painting street murals. I bring a number of skills to RCPC: I’m a bridge-builder, I know how to get things done — even within government bureaucracy. My husband and I have had the privilege of being homeowners in Rockridge for over six years and to be raising our young children here.

**Barbara Dunne**  
*Birch Court*  
As a 15+ year Rockridge homeowner with my wife, I support RCPC’s mission for our neighborhood and others who visit, shop, work, and play here. A cohesive, successful, and active commercial street like College Avenue isn’t an accident. Thank you prior RCPC Board Members! Current challenges to RCPC’s mission of “health, safety, and quality of life” include the uptick in petty crime as well as the encroachment of proposed out-of-proportion, high-density building. Theft is ongoing. I’m concerned that growth will not match our current single-family, multi-unit, and commercial buildings. I support right-sized, in-context development while understanding impacts on our already congested intersections and services. I am a Bay Area native, educated in both public and private schools (UCB ’82), more than 30 years of management experience in small-to-large Bay Area retailers (consumer goods and food), ten years as rental property owner/manager, Tennis and Pickleball player, and loyal patron of local businesses.

**Annette Floystrup**  
*Birch Court*  
I’ve been a Rockridge resident since 1981 as both a renter and a homeowner. I’m a past President and Board Member of the nine-county Bay Area Small Business Development Corporation, and a past RCPC Board member. I co-chaired the Rockridge DVD project. COVID-19 has changed our world. Our neighbors, small businesses, and City face difficult new circumstances and will need our help. RCPC rose to meet many hard new realities when BART/Hwy24 construction closed over half of all businesses on College Avenue, and we must do so now. RCPC’s Mission Statement of furnishing a forum for community involvement, and providing leadership and representation of neighborhood interests gives broad latitude for creative solutions. Rockridge has been an important economic driver, and in the past, made unique contributions to Oakland including funding and building our library, creating Hardy Dog Park, and FROG Park. I am running, because we must step up again.

**David Garcia**  
*Miles Avenue*  
Rockridge is at a crossroads. On one hand, Rockridge is the true embodiment of the quintessential livable neighborhood. But no community ever stays the same, and Rockridge is no exception. While we instinctively desire to maintain our identity in the face of change, that doesn’t mean that change will not arrive. In fact, we already see it coming, in new legislation, proposed projects, and our already changing demographics. RCPC needs strong, balanced leadership to guide us through this period of growth in a manner that reflects the inclusive values of our community. That’s why I am seeking election to continue on the board. My time with RCPC has given me insights into the issues we face and my professional experience as a UC Berkeley housing expert gives me perspective on the best way to move us forward. My wife, son, and I love this community, and I hope to continue my service with RCPC.

**Candidate Statements**  
continued on pages 4 & 5

**SAVE THE DATE**

**District 1 City Council & School Board**

**CANDIDATES FORUM:**

Thursday, October 8, from 6-8:30pm  
(online meeting details coming soon)

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Candidate Statements continued on page 5

Robin McDonnell
Auburn Avenue

My husband and I moved to Rockridge in August of 2018. We made Rockridge our home because of its unique combination of urban life and sense of community. Soon after moving here I read about the Kitchen Tour in The Rockridge News. Shortly thereafter, I was helping to select the kitchens and serving as the Docent Coordinator. It was a great experience meeting homeowners, RCPC members and docents alike. When a seat became available, I thought my background in community, housing and economic development as well as my volunteer work and past nonprofit board membership could be useful to me on the board. The RCPC can be a valuable resource to help our community recover from the COVID Pandemic and rebuild in a way that serves the whole community. I would like the opportunity to serve a full term so that we can work together to achieve that vision.

Jennifer McElrath
Rockridge Blvd.

Though my Oakland heritage does not span 170 years like my husband’s family, I moved to Rockridge with my husband and daughter at the beginning of the millennium. I imagine the changes now pressed upon the neighborhood could be as significant as they were in those early years. Preserving positive attributes of the community, yet embracing newness that will enable residential and commercial streets to burst with activity and pride, propels me to seek a term on the RCPC board. As a former business executive and entrepreneur, I get the need for vibrancy and respite where one calls home. It is that balance and heritage that drew me to attend RCPC meetings, and to be on the steering committee of Upper Broadway Advocates. To contribute more would be a privilege, and I would still deliver The Rockridge News, as my husband and I have done for more than a decade.

Diana Mitchell-Chavez
Shafer Avenue

My husband and I have lived in Rockridge for 41 years. From a pumpkin patch/Christmas tree lot becoming The Market Hall, The Chimes convenience store becoming CactusTacqueria, the ’89 Earthquake, and the ’91 Oakland Hills fire, we’ve seen a lot of changes. Two of my neighbors and I started the Annual 5300 Shafer Block Party and it’s due to me that we were the second block to get permit parking. We’ve seen a generation of wonderful kids become great parents and bring their kids to celebrate Halloween. I have a Master’s from NYU, an Associates in Journalism from Columbia, and worked for Cosmopolitan Magazine as well as a P.A. for a senior partner for SOM (a large architectural firm). I believe mindful change will keep families here and bring more diverse people into the neighborhood enriching us all.

Brett Moyer
Miles Avenue

Hi, my name is Brett Moyer. My wife Adrian and I moved to the neighborhood about two years ago. Growing up in a college town in Florida, I always valued community — whether it was local faith, sports, or the neighborhood. Since moving to Rockridge, I’ve fallen in love with running around Lake Temescal, reading the Sunday paper at the Rockridge Café, and enjoying the best burrito in the neighborhood at the Burrito Shop (sorry Cactus fans). I work for Silicon Valley Bank where I perform financial analysis. We recently added a puppy named Perry to our family and hope to raise him in the neighborhood for years to come. Given the uncertain times we now live in, I’d like to help the neighborhood however I can by using my personal and professional experience to support the neighborhood for decades to come.

Michael Rosen
Lawton Avenue

Hi neighbors! It’s been really fun to see everyone enjoying the Shafer Slow Streets. I currently work as an editor at Apple News; in the past, I’ve written about cities as a journalist and worked for a Berkeley councilmember. I live across the street from Rockridge Cafe in a hundred-year-old apartment with my girlfriend and our dog. I’d like to be on the RCPC to represent fellow renters, who make up roughly a third of the neighborhood, and to make the area more accessible to people like us, young professionals in our late 20s with plans to start a family in the near future. It’s important to involve young voices in the planning process not just because it’s the right thing to do, but because it’s in the interests of the people who live here. After all, the vibrancy of Rockridge is what makes it a special place to live.

Ken Rich
Manila Avenue

I lived in Rockridge previously and loved the neighborhood in so many ways. I was thrilled to move back here last year, to a beautiful bungalow on Manila Avenue. The main reason I moved back to Rockridge is that it’s the most “neighborhoody” neighborhood I’ve lived in, and how better to get involved and give back than running for RCPC Board? I have 23 years of professional experience with real estate and city planning issues. I firmly believe Rockridge needs to add housing and do its part, and I’m confident we can do this in a way that makes the neighborhood even better. Our beloved College Avenue needs more nearby residents to keep the businesses afloat, especially after Coronavirus, which will challenge many of our neighborhood shops and restaurants. On housing and other topics, I look forward to bringing my negotiation skills and passion as an urbanist to this amazing place!

Mark your calendars for Thursday, September 17, from 7-9pm, when The Rockridge Community Planning Council will host its Candidates’ Forum online. Email info@rockridge.org to receive log-in/dial-in information.
Kirk Petersen
College Avenue

I love Rockridge. I’ve worked here for 30 years and lived here for seven in our live/ work storefront on College Ave. My architecture practice includes single-family and multi-family residential; the sort of work that will be built in Rockridge. I was born in Oakland. This gives me no ‘standing’, other than it has allowed me to closely observe change over decades. I joined the Sierra Club in 1969. I have worked on both ‘sides’ of development, as project proponent for clients and as public sector ‘regulator’ while chairing Oakland’s Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. I want to help RCPC inform the process of change while maintaining the Rockridge look and feel we all like so that our new neighbors can also enjoy what we have. As a present member of the RCPC Land Use Committee I work to address such issues. I’m glad we live in a walkable neighborhood just now, and one with a sense of community.

Leonora Sea
Miles Avenue

My Rockridge roots run deep — I’m a fourth-generation resident. I love the neighborhood, and believe in RCPC’s mission to enhance Rockridge. Currently the Board Chair, I bring a perspective to our neighborhood organization based in my own nonprofit experience and practice. I ran a small nonprofit, which granted funds to community-based environmental projects and forged equal partnerships between community groups and experts. It taught me that local people best understand local problems, and should help initiate and be significantly involved in the processes set up to solve those problems. Opportunity for meaningful participation is one benefit RCPC provides Rockridge, and drawing on my background and RCPC Board experience, I know how to build community involvement and make it work. I believe in the wisdom and resilience of Rockridge neighbors, and I hope to collaborate for another term with the next RCPC Board to serve every resident.

After the Arrest
— By Karen Ivy, Greater Rockridge NCPC Secretary

The Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) regularly gets questions about why people arrested for certain crimes seem to be back offending again so soon. In this meeting, speakers Terry Wiley, Senior District Attorney in the County of Alameda, and William Locke, retired Public Defender in the County of Alameda, attempted to speak to that.

Wiley noted that once a case is transferred from the police, the D.A. has 48 hours to review the case, decide whether and what to charge, file a complaint, and arraign the suspect. If the suspect can’t afford a lawyer, he’s assigned a Public Defender who interviews him immediately. Under COVID-19, they try to release people from custody as soon as possible. Before COVID-19, it wasn’t unusual for suspects to spend several months in custody waiting for trial.

Locke noted that our criminal justice system isn’t really based on trial-by-jury, but more a system of plea bargains that pressures people to give up their rights. The cash-bail system makes it very hard for people to get out of custody, especially if they are low-income. A plea bargain allows the accused to trade his 4th Amendment rights for three years of felony probation during which the police can stop and search him, on terms set by the judge, which could include his home and car, and/or his Internet-connected devices, depending on the crime.

Officer Josiah Ladd, our Community Resource Officer, noted that OPD no longer does random stops.

This is a brief overview of a long meeting, to read the whole account, visit: http://tinyurl.com/nygrtme. The next meeting will be held on Oct 8.
y family thought it was weird. They gave me six months,” says Ayana Kelly, a 25-year-old, lifelong Rockridge resident, when she created her own company, The Granola Guru, in April 2018. “My parents are not entrepreneurs, so they didn’t entirely understand it.” She made her first test batch and gave it to her family and friends as Christmas gifts. The reception was extremely positive.

For the first year, she and a family friend spent 12 hours a day baking the granola batches in a commercial kitchen. Production has since expanded to a facility in downtown Oakland where she produces 500 pounds a week — all in small, handcrafted artisanal batches.

After graduating from Hillcrest School, the College Preparatory School, and St. Mary’s High School, Kelly majored in business and environmental studies at Pitzer College (a member of the Claremont Colleges), and graduated in 2016. Her interdisciplinary education left her with a desire to create an eco-friendly business. She always liked to cook, and it’s been her lifelong dream to open a food business before the age of 30.

She learned to make granola at a cafe where she worked in college but wasn’t able to find any granola of the same quality in local stores. She searched for granola that was gluten-free, vegan, low in sugar, refined-sugar free, and baked with healthy oils — finally experimenting with her own recipes — which led to the creation of The Granola Guru.

The Granola Guru Goes Beyond Farmers’ Markets
— By Myrna Walton

The Granola Guru, see next page
In 2018, she made her debut at the Farmers’ Market in Alameda. “You might think that was an easy start, but it took about five months to acquire the permits and perfect the recipes. I burnt the first batch, in fact I burnt the first few batches. I sold 40 bags that first week and developed a loyal following of customers that returned week after week.”

She currently sells four flavors, each enriched with super-foods such as red berries, turmeric and ginger, and cacao nibs, which are nutrient-rich foods believed to positively affect health. Her most recent creation is Classic Hemp — a maple cinnamon granola boosted with hemp seeds. All ages enjoy the different flavors, but the Mixed Berry Vanilla is a kid’s favorite. Her personal choice is Golden Glow, a unique blend featuring the antioxidant duo of turmeric and ginger.

After success at the Farmers’ Market, Kelly went store-to-store, seeking shelf space within a very competitive market. Market Hall on College Avenue was an early influential buyer. “They gave me good shelf placement, let me demonstrate the product in the store, and helped me find local sources for ingredients.”

Within two years, The Granola Guru was in 70 stores spanning the East Bay, Marin, San Francisco, and the Peninsula, and can now be found in independent retailers, specialty markets, and regional chains including United Markets, Rainbow Grocery, Farmer Joe’s, Lunardi, Piazza, and Draeger’s. While COVID may have slowed down her pace a bit, she has 15 conditional acceptances ready to go once the pandemic ends.

As her only employee, she calls herself a one-woman army. Kelly oversees a range of tasks including brand management, packaging design, ingredient sourcing, website design, accounting, cultivating buyer relationships, product research, quality control, and more. “The only thing I outsource now is streamlining manufacturing and distribution, but even then I keep a close eye on the product.”

Kelly is in a class by herself: a solo, female, minority, young entrepreneur. Her youth can sometimes be an impediment. “Many times people don’t believe that I own and operate my business by myself. At times, people have a difficult time taking me seriously. Despite this, most people like supporting a young female entrepreneur.”

What’s next? “I’ve acquired a distributor to help me get into large chains like Whole Foods and Nugget Markets. Eventually I want to be all over northern California.”

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The Granola Guru, from previous page

“At times, people have a difficult time taking me seriously. Despite this, most people like supporting a young female entrepreneur.”
Remembering John Wagers

— By Jo Ellis

John Wagers came into the world in the middle of one pandemic and departed during another. In between, throughout his many years in Rockridge, he lived for, supported, and advocated for every environmental and social justice issue that grabbed his attention.

While people did a lot of talking about an environmental movement, John lived it in his daily life years before it was popular. He was often thought of as a lovable eccentric as he picked up cans, bottles and assorted trash tossed in the street, and sometimes not quite so lovable as he scolded those who didn’t follow his example.

He recycled, reused, and composted just about anything that was once a living organism. He refused to shop at stores that, in his opinion, used too much packaging. No discarded item escaped his determination to get it all to the recycling center. For John, it was just the right thing to do.

At his core, he was a farm boy from the heartland, born at home on the family farm near Shickley, Nebraska. He taught for two years at a one-room schoolhouse but wanted to learn more about the world. His degree in chemistry from the University of Nebraska in 1942 opened the door for his new adventure: He hitchhiked to Berkeley to work for Shell Oil as a research chemist during World War II.

After a long tour around Europe, he returned to Oakland and settled in Rockridge. By this time, his experience of life in Berkeley and exposure to European culture and ideas had radically changed the conservative farm boy from Nebraska. It was the beginning of a life dedicated to crusading for his view of a more just and sustainable world.

He built a 24-unit building at the corner of Claremont Avenue and Martin Street which he actively managed until shortly before he died. It was his home base — Ground Zero for Zero Waste. John took delight in having all his tenants sign leases stipulating that no garbage be allowed — everything must be recycled or composted.

Tenants claimed they dutifully placed all items in the proper bins for recycling, and John regularly toted their organic waste to his local park to amend the soil. It was, of course, suspected that his tenants deposited their garbage in nearby cans in the middle of the night and it was a fact that John was embroiled in a war for many years with the City to cancel his garbage bill because, as anyone could see, he had no garbage.

John was also a passionate developer of neighborhood mini-parks. At Racine Point Park (the intersection of Racine and Telegraph Avenue) his intention was to mitigate dangerous traffic flow, but even more important was the creation of “a planted area instead of an asphalt blight”.

He inspired more than 20 volunteers to help bring in soil and plants. He loved to show off his City of Oakland Commendation which reads “For John Wagers in Recognition of His Extraordinary Accomplishments in the...”
John Wagers, from previous page

Creation of the Racine Triangle Park.”

He also created Ayala Park (Ayala and 57th), now donated to the City, and the Martin Street Park (NW corner of Ayala and Martin), where, even at 101-years-old, John was still walking to the park to bring compost, do a bit of pruning and weeding and visit with neighbors who helped out with the gardening chores.

And, oh yes, let’s not forget street trees. John campaigned to eliminate broken and uneven sidewalks from overgrown tree roots that sent pedestrians flying. “The Right Tree in the Right Hole” was his battle cry as he sent off Letters to the Editor and was a regular at City Council and Planning Commission meetings. Some success of this endeavor saved the city millions in lawsuits from injuries sustained from tripping and falling.

To many, John was best known as our most dedicated “newsboy”, delivering The Rockridge News until he was nearly 100-years-old. He walked his route every month no matter the weather or time of night (he often fearlessly made his deliveries at 2am).

Friends were concerned about his vulnerability to COVID-19 but John was too tough for that. It spared his life but took something precious. It deprived him of the joy he felt in the company of others. As the fog of dementia was taking hold, a feeling of abandonment began to overtake him; everyone was sheltering in place and some days it was hard to understand why no one came to visit.

Few realized how wealthy John was; he did not “dress for success.” His no-waste, re-use policy was also applied unspARINGLY to his clothing and other personal possessions — most of which came from unspecified and used sources. It came as quite a shock to most who saw him as a shabby fellow picking up bottles and cans to learn that he not only spoke up for dozens of organizations that advocated for civil rights, human rights, the earth and all who would care for and protect it, he put his money where his heart was.

This month, more than two dozen of those organizations will get $100,000 each from the John Wagers Trust, and a few substantially more when the Trust is terminated, including Doctors Without Borders; Planned Parenthood; water disputes on the Delta; the American Humanist Association; and the ACLU. Beneficiaries in the Rockridge community include Friends of the Oakland Public Library, and the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation.

When it will once again be safe for a large group to congregate, all will be invited to his beloved Ayala Park to remember John, to tell his stories (everyone who knew John has a trove of great stories to tell), to plant a tree in his honor, and to be sure no trash is left behind.
New Businesses Find Life In The Space Between
— By Annalee Allen

The long-empty storefronts on College Avenue between Lawton and Ocean View (across the street from Cole Hardware) will once again have pop-up retail. Westwind Succulents and custom furniture by Lucas Ahlstrand will occupy one space, and the space next door will soon be occupied by Bartbridge Design and the Oakland Art Rental Gallery.

Already on display are the patches and hats designed by Luke Fraser. His brother Gabe Marshank is the new owner of the building. Apartments occupy the second floor of the Mission revival-style commercial building, built in the 1920s when Rockridge used to be a streetcar suburb of Oakland. Fraser, who was a high school student in Berkeley in the 2000s, started buying patches from Telegraph Avenue vendors and soon had quite a collection.

He got the idea to add the patches to baseball caps, and his business was born. “By then I lived in the Glen Ellen community in the North Bay, but I still liked to come down to games at the Oakland Coliseum Complex — both the Athletics and the Golden State Warriors.”

“Like so many others, I used to take the Richmond/Fremont BART line and get off at the Coliseum stop and walk across the bridge to the games. That’s where I came up with the name of the company, Bartbridge Design, mentioned Fraser.”

In 2018, terrible wildfires swept through the Glen Ellen and Santa Rosa areas. “My studio and home was there, and I lost everything,” he said. When Luke learned that his brother was buying the commercial building in Rockridge, he decided he could start over and relocate to the Oakland area. “I am excited to have my business in this neighborhood.”

“When I started collecting these patches, I knew of course about Oakland and Berkeley and San Francisco, but I soon found out that there are so many more communities throughout the Bay Area and Northern California, each with their unique names and symbols.”

Soon thereafter, he and his partner Mike Hampton were designing and embroidering their own patches. Now customers can choose a patch to go on a hat, such as from the town where they are from, or where their relatives live. It makes for a fun and special gift.

Personally, I plan to buy a hat for someone who now lives in Nevada City, when I get the chance.

To see what's available, visit www.bartbridge.com, or better yet, stop by 5540 College Avenue for a visit.
Dining along College Avenue has been negatively impacted by the recent pandemic, but Rockridge architect and landscape firm InsideOut Design has stepped up to meet the challenge to bring diners back.

Working in collaboration with The Golden Squirrel, InsideOut Design has helped to create a new outdoor patio space, making take-out no longer the only available option. Not only does the space feature tables set safely spaced apart from each other, but it also includes a garden installation to “green up” the street.

“We got involved because we wanted to give back to the community,” says Penn Phillips, InsideOut’s landscape design principal. Penn and his wife Julianna Fecskés Phillips, who is the principal architect, started InsideOut Design in 2003 as an effort to bridge the gap between interior and exterior design.

Setting up shop near The Golden Squirrel, the two became restaurant regulars. When Penn noticed the owner, Andrew Snow, using wood pallets as a patio foundation in mid-July, he reached out knowing his firm could help. “We know the restaurant business has been hit particularly hard,” he said. That is why all the plants, soil, design, and installation that InsideOut provided is a community donation, offered free of charge.

Using drought-tolerant plants and repurposed materials, such as old wine crates and barrels, InsideOut made The Golden Squirrel’s patio environmentally friendly, which isn’t new for the firm. “I think it’s great to green up College Avenue. We emphasize creating outdoor spaces and making them an extension of your living space,” Penn says.

This also highlights the need for sustainability, something he and his wife have prioritized throughout their career. As a LEED-accredited design professional, an achievement recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council, Julianna ensures that green solutions are pursued in the company’s architecture projects whenever possible. Within the firm’s landscape sector, Penn acts as a city arborist for Lafayette, enforcing tree protection ordinances to protect native oaks and other local species. InsideOut has also completed several green roof projects for multi-family residential developments in San Francisco and El Cerrito.

While many of these spaces are recent installations, the Alameda County Department of Environmental Health authorized, and recently updated, the “Flex Street’s Initiative” which allows for outdoor dining, along with a detailed list of Restaurant Operating Procedures. To ensure the safety of customers, employees must conduct Health Self-Assessments before work and be subject to symptom checklists and temperature screenings by their employers. Tables within the dining space must be six feet apart, unmovable, and designated for single households and “bubbles” of up to six people. On the restaurant patron’s side of responsibilities, the Department of Environmental Health recommends wearing face coverings until seated. Disinfection wipes or hand sanitizers are to be made available for use at dining area entrances. No food items, such as condiments, are to be shared between dining parties.

When following these policies and monitoring personal symptoms, Rockridge residents can support local outdoor restaurants in a relaxed, welcoming environment until indoor dining resumes.
The pandemic hasn’t ravaged assisted living facilities the way it has skilled nursing homes. None of the 150 residents at Merrill Gardens was known to have contracted the virus in either its assisted-living or memory-care apartments as of this writing, although an employee did test positive in late July, according to the facility’s website.

The Point reportedly had no current cases among its 118 assisted living apartments as of late August. However, from May 23-June 6, 11 residents and three staff members tested positive within its 30-apartment memory-care unit, according to executive director Deborah Savoie. Sadly, three patients, two of whom were already in hospice care, died.

“We hunker down, we expand, tightening and loosening restrictions depending on the COVID-19 status,” said Allison Rodman, The Point’s co-director of sales and marketing. “We’re in touch with the Alameda County Health Department every day and strictly follow their protocols.”

As of mid-August, they were able to reinstate films in their movie room, bingo sessions, and exercise classes for ten residents at a time on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Even as The Point’s indoor public areas and activities were shut down and visitors banned, Kelleher, 92, and his wife Lolly, 89, kept active. He walked the halls, masked of course, and ventured onto The Point’s first-floor patio garden. He drove to pick up pre-ordered books from the Rockridge Library. Visits with their four daughters continue via Zoom.

“Do miss some of the activities, but they have replaced them,” Kelleher, who retired as manager of accounting at New York Life’s San Francisco office, told me. “We get a little packet every day with all kinds of puzzles, what happened in history on that date, and a version of bingo. We do have some neighbors who are going out of their minds.”

As for meals, they come non-stop, according to Kelleher’s colorful description: “For breakfast, a couple of gals come up with a wheeled vehicle and you take what you want.” Then there’s the mid-morning snack. A boxed lunch, mid-afternoon snack, and then “son-of-a-gun, here comes a cart with all kinds of booze on it, and it’s Happy Hour.” Dinner follows, also in a box, and then dessert — usually ice cream. “By god, you’ve got to be careful!”

“son-of-a-gun, here comes a cart with all kinds of booze on it, and it’s Happy Hour.”

“I can almost see the ocean, and I can go outside in the rain,” said Francie Kendell, 72, who is grateful to have a covered balcony off her apartment at The Point. “I feel quite safe here. I don’t go off my floor unless it’s to go to the garden. I wear my mask. I’m spending more time by myself than I ever have,” said Kendell, who has a doctorate in education and organizational change and is writing her third book on diversity. “I read a lot. I want to know what the news is. I talk to friends and that keeps me sane.”

Several residents left the facility to live with their families during the pandemic, Rodman said. Bill Roisen, 94, is one of them. “The Point did a good job by going on lockdown early.”

Eyes on Rockridge, see next page
Kyle Wong, A Favorite Chabot Teacher, Retires
— By Lara Coffin

It was with mixed emotions that Chabot Elementary announced the retirement this past Spring of third-grade teacher Mr. Kyle Wong. Thirty-five years ago, Wong began his teaching career at Chabot Elementary. Back then, no one would have anticipated the impact that young man would have on so many hundreds of students and their families throughout his life as a teacher. It’s an extraordinary end to an extraordinary career.

During his time teaching, Wong had been a master educator — his classroom is full of fun, respect, and tremendous learning. Wong was a true team player, and so many of us at Chabot have benefited from the wisdom he has shared.

He leaves a profound legacy that has transformed the lives of many. We wish him all the joy that retirement can bring and are fully supportive of this decision, — and he should know that he will be very, very missed.

To honor Mr. Wong, the school is putting together a book of memories. Did you have Wong as a teacher? Did your parent? Did your child? Did you have Wong as a teacher? Please share memories, thoughts, or anecdotes. We would also love to see any photographs, please send them to office@chabotelementary.org.

Claremont Auction Seeks Donations, Participation
— By Susan Montauk

Claremont Middle School’s (CMS) annual auction fundraiser will be a virtual event this year, and parent organizers are appealing to the community to secure donations to be auctioned online October 20th to 29th.

If you are a business owner or service provider, or even if you have a special skill or hobby you’d be willing to share with others via a live Zoom class or demonstration, we hope you’ll consider donating. We are also asking for donations of wine to create an “Instant Wine Cellar” to be raffled off. If you’re able to donate a bottle or two, you can drop them off at 5660 Ocean View Drive, or call/text (415) 260-1490 for pick up.

Visit https://claremontms.org/pta/auction. For questions, email auction@claremontms.org.

Daily Bread Needs Volunteers
— By Susan Montauk

Do you have an hour a week to deliver food to organizations that feed people in Berkeley/Oakland? If so, Daily Bread can use your help. An all-volunteer group, Daily Bread has been directing excess, nourishing, perishable food from food vendors to pantries, shelters, and meal providers in the community since 1983.

With the goal of reducing food insecurity and waste, we make delivery runs 7 days a week, morning through evening.

Several runs are available now for volunteers; all you need is a car, some time, a willingness to help others, and a ready smile. It’s serious fun.

For more information on how to volunteer, call Patrice Ignelzi at (510) 526-3123, or email DailyBreadBerkeley@gmail.com.
Alameda County Voting Information for the November Presidential Election
— By Louise Rothman-Riemer, Board Member, League of Women Voters Oakland

One hundred years ago, on August 18, 1920, Harry Burns cast his “vote for women,” and Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote. Unfortunately, it took even longer for many women of color who had to wait for the Voting Rights Act of 1965 for full participation due to segregation laws (poll taxes, literacy tests) that were still enforced.

Unlike years past, this year all California registered voters will receive a ballot by mail. There will be no local polling places in Alameda County; instead there will be 100 voting centers and 66 ballot drop-off boxes. There will be no postage required, and confirming your registration information early is advised.

Important Dates to Note:

- September 4: Registration deadline to receive the early version of the Voter Guide.
- September 24: Last date to register to receive an early ballot.
- October 5: Vote by mail ballots will begin being sent to voters.
- October 19: Last day to register to vote online.
- October 27: Recommended date to have put your ballot in the mail to make sure it arrives on time to the Registrar of Voters.

To register, visit Alameda County’s official website www.acvote.org/voting/register-to-vote. You can confirm your voter registration at https://www.acgov.org/rovmvp_app/mvp.do. You can still register to vote on Election Day, but you will likely wait in a long line. Whatever you do, this election is perhaps the most important election of our lifetime... VOTE!

For more information regarding the election, visit The League of Women Voters at www.LWVOakland.org.

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SALE PENDING in just 7 days!
322 Clifton Street · 322Clifton.com
Happy Sellers :)
-hosted by home needed to bundle the rockridge news
— by susan montauk, the rockridge news business manager

thanks to our block captains, district captains and marshals (who did not miss a beat), as of the first week of july, the rockridge news has been back in print and once again distributed to the doorsteps of rockridge homes and businesses. we will continue with the digital versions (for those who love the color), and continue the printed versions as long as we find a place to do the bundling and sorting of the volunteer packets.

here are the requirements:
- a good size dining table
- a decent size front porch (for volunteer boxes)
- a minimum number of steps up to the porch (5-10 is ok)

receipt of newsletters the morning of the first friday of each month (except for august).

routes up for grabs
- CAv1/Block Captain: Businesses and apartments along college avenue from claremont ave to BART. Stacks at Zachary’s, 1951, Supercuts, and the Golden Squirrel.
- Marshall/District Captain: Pick up one box and drop it at 473 McAuley St./one additional bundle drop to the Temescal Library.

please contact susan at smontauk@gmail.com or (510) 547-3855 if you would like to discuss hosting the bundling or taking on a route.
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MARKET UPDATE

Average Sales Price

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Sales Volume

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*Data from Multiple Listing Source 2019-2020

Golden Gate Sotheby’s International Realty is thrilled to announce that McGuire Real Estate’s #1 Agent in the East Bay, Claudia Mills, has joined our team. She brings with her a proven set of skills and vast knowledge of Bay Area real estate, as well as a unique service-oriented approach to meeting or surpassing her client’s goals.

Claudia Mills
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