

## Oakland's Mother of the Year Toni Locke



NICK LOSTRACCO

Toni Locke at Joaquin Miller Park in Oakland.

BY JUDITH OFFER

The Oakland Mother of the Year Selection Committee announced recently that Eleanor G. "Toni" Locke, long-time editor, and now Editor Emeritus, of the *MacArthur Metro*, is to be declared the 2011 Mother of the Year on Saturday, May 7. The public ceremony will be at the Morcom Rose Garden, 700 Jean St., at 10:30 in the morning.

Mother of the Year is not awarded to a person for raising children per se, although Toni is the mother of three. The intent of the award is to recognize residents who have "mothered" Oakland, that is, made a significant contribution to the civic welfare of the city. Toni's name will be added to the Mother of the Year plaques installed in the Rose Garden main pathway.

Toni received more than a

dozen letters in support of the *MacArthur Metro's* nomination of her for this award, including one from Councilmember, Libby Schaaf, and one from Councilmember Emeritus Dick Spees. In his letter, Dick Spees said that "Toni has been, in fact, Mother of a large portion of Oakland."

"During my twenty-four years on the Council," he says, "Toni was the inspiration for the revival of the Laurel/Dimond Districts of Oakland. She assisted in leading the formation of the MacArthur Neighborhood Coalition and the *MacArthur Metro* neighborhood newspaper that led in the organization, prioritization of the projects, and building of support to make this part of Oakland a safe, vital, and attractive place to live, shop and work."

According to District Four Councilmember Libby Schaaf, Toni's influence extended

throughout the city, including her involvement with the Neighborhood News Network and her role as resource person for neighborhood newsletters.

A third letter, from Doug Ferguson, a former Chair of the *Metro* Board and Emeritus Professor, Cal State East Bay, cites Toni as a volunteer for the Oakland League of Women Voters, a volunteer at Sequoia Middle School, and a volunteer for the Friends of the Dimond Library, among donations of her time to community efforts.

Toni is also the author of *Sail Away: 155 American Folk Songs to Sing, Read and Play*, a book of music for Kodály-method teachers. Doug noted, "Ms. Locke, on retirement, donated to Holy Names University her extensive collection of folk music scores and then volunteered over a period of years at the University's American Folk Song Collection to assist

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CS SMITH-DAHL

Laurel Security Ambassador Earl Harper at his martial arts studio.

See Laurel District Association News on page 2.

## Paws & Claws Celebration

BY SHEILA D'AMICO

Whippets and corgis and pugs, oh my. A dog jumps through hoops.

A canine strikes a pose with her human companion, hoping to gain audience approval in the human-pet look-alike contest.

An inquisitive rescued terrier mix ignores the hoopla and engages its human in a game of "in and out and under and wrap around a small saw horse and tangle the leash." Dogs and humans, and even Tortuga, a turtle fresh from Dimond Park's Earth Day, occupy the parking lot—turned into a sunny plaza for the day—and the adjacent store.

No, it's not Kansas. It's not even Oz. But Toto would certainly approve. It's the grand reopening of Paws & Claws in its new location at 3436 Dimond Ave. Owners Ruth Villaseñor and Diane Pfile opened the original store around the corner on MacArthur in 2004.

Seven years later, in a down

economy when many businesses are slow and some are struggling to stay open, Diane and Ruth are expanding. How did that happen?

Ruth would say it's about doing good business, but it's also about building community, building relationships. That's what Ruth and Diane do. "This is where we live, this is our community," Ruth said.

Diane says when they originally started looking to open a business in their own community, they saw the need for a pet store. At the time, their own dog, Angel, had cancer and they had been researching healthy foods. That helped them flesh out the idea.

"Animals bridge communities," Ruth says. "But," Diane adds, they decided "not to sell pets" because there were so many animals in shelters.

The owners are perfect examples of those who walk their talk. They are members of the Dimond Improvement Association. They belong to the Dimond Business and Professional Association,

which Ruth is quick to point out is the oldest merchant association in the city.

Ruth has also been a member of the Board of Peralta Hacienda, an organizer of the Dimond Holiday parties, the Dimond picnic, and the Peace vigils, creator of the Dimond directory on Fruitvale alongside

Farmer Joe's parking lot, fundraiser for Haiti and other causes, and has been named a local hero. "When the community prospers," she says, "we are going to prosper."

*continued on page 4*



NICK LOSTRACCO

Paws & Claws owners Ruth Villaseñor and Diane Pfile at the grand opening of their new location.

Your support helps keep the *Metro* alive! Become one of the Thousand Friends.

Greacian M. Goeke, Wendy Jacobsen, Helen Lore, Sonja Proulx, Nancy Safford, Suzanne Tipton, Maxine Warren

You, too, can become a friend of the *Metro*. See page 2.

## Laurel Neighborhood News

BY **SHEL WALD**

### Make Music in the Laurel: Summer Solstice Music Festival

This year's Summer Solstice Music Festival (SSMF) is Saturday, June 25.

For the past five years, on the Saturday closest to the Summer Solstice, public and private spaces in the Laurel District become the stages for local amateurs and professionals to perform music. Friends, neighbors and passers-by congregate to listen, dance, sing along, and enjoy the spirit of the beginning of summertime, turning the Laurel into a festival of live music-making. As well, we are all invited and encouraged to make music on our own blocks, indoors or outdoors, planned or spontaneous, in the spirit of the original Fête de la Musique from Paris, which was inaugurated in 1982. Ever since then, the concept has become an international phenomenon, currently celebrated in more than 460 cities in 110 countries worldwide.

The Laurel Village Association is the proud sponsor of the festival, which will showcase performances along MacArthur Blvd. between High and 35th Ave., from the many genres that represent our eclectic spirit in Oakland. SSMF is organized by a core team of eight people who love music and had the idea of a grassroots effort to bring our community together for a free celebration. We would be honored to have you attend.

A collaborative spirit has been growing between the participating businesses, their patrons and neighbors with each passing year of the festival. Businesses that have provided

past venues for performers have included: Laurellinos, Laurel Book Store, Ace Hardware, Phnom Penh Restaurant, World Ground Coffee House, Monique's Clozet, Acme House of Music, Lucky, Citibank and the Laurel Farmers' Market.

Though our program is still being formulated, the plan this time around is, in addition to businesses along MacArthur hosting musicians, to have a main stage area in the street at the intersection of MacArthur and Patterson, adjacent to Kids 'N Dance 'N Theater Arts. A welcome station will also be on that corner on the day of the festival, and you can pick up a program highlighting venue locations and the performance schedule.

**Musicians:** If you would like to participate June 25 at an assigned venue, kindly contact Tim Sullivan at [tim.m.sullivan@gmail.com](mailto:tim.m.sullivan@gmail.com).

**Donations:** If you would like to make a monetary donation to support the festival, we will be appreciative and make great use of your generosity. Your contribution will help pay for insurance costs, a street closure permit, and flyers. Please make checks payable to Laurel Village Association, with a notation that the donation is for the music festival, and send to: LVA, 3727 Quigley Street, Oakland 94619. All donations are tax deductible and will be acknowledged with a letter if there is a return address.

Check out our Facebook page: Summer Solstice Music Festival—Laurel District, Oakland, CA, where you can access current information about our June 25 event, see photos, videos, and listen to music. The LVA Web site [www.laurelvillage.org](http://www.laurelvillage.org). ♦

## Laurel District Association

BY **TOMMY WONG**

### Introducing the Laurel Security Ambassador Program

The Laurel District Association (LDA) is proud to announce our innovative collaboration with Urban Shield Security Services, called the Laurel Security Ambassador Program. If you ever see a friendly person strolling down MacArthur Blvd. with a Laurel-leaf green jacket or black shirt on, please stop and say hi. These are our "Laurel Ambassadors." They are here to help keep our shopping corridor safe, clean, and welcoming for all.

Working closely with Councilmember Libby Schaa's office and with great support from our wonderful Laurel merchants, our Ambassadors consist of security guards, maintenance people, and young leaders from our marketing "street team." Together we are launching proactive, community-building efforts to promote neighborhood safety, cleanliness and security in the Laurel. The program's strategies include:

- Reaching out to relevant communities with safety issues and concerns
- Directly addressing problem individuals and/or groups with opportunities and programs designed to channel their energy into positive outlets

• Sponsoring efforts and events like the "Turfin 247 Dance Tournament" that capture the attention and enthusiasm of young people, and help them build pride in, and respect for, the neighborhood

• Educating merchants on safety strategies and the relationship between community building and economic development

Already, merchants and residents alike have been supportive of our efforts. Our Laurel Ambassadors have quickly gotten to know both young and old in our neighborhood, run safety workshops for merchants, and reached out to "at-risk" youth and young adults, helping them find engaging recreational outlets, job employment, community service and career development opportunities.

A commercial corridor is successful only insofar as it reaches out and supports the greater neighborhood. We are proud to have the Laurel Ambassadors be a shining example of Laurel neighborhood unity and growing prosperity.

Turfin 247 Dance Tournament: Competition is held the last Saturday of every month, 2-6 p.m., at Allendale Recreational Center, 3711 Suter Street. Finals are at the Laurel Street Fair, August 13. Open and free to the public.

Contact [www.laurel-districtassociation.org](http://www.laurel-districtassociation.org) ♦



Earl Harper, head of Laurel Security Ambassadors, conducts a training with over 30 Laurel Merchants.

## HOT NUMBERS

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<b>Drug Hotline</b>	<b>238-DRUG</b>
<b>Public Works</b>	<b>615-5566</b>
<b>Truancy</b>	<b>879-8172</b>
<b>Noise Hotline</b>	<b>238-6777</b>
<b>C.O.R.E.</b>	<b>238-6351</b>
<b>(Communities of Oakland Respond to Emergencies)</b>	
<b>Oaklanders Assistance Center can direct you to the appropriate city services.</b>	<b>444-CITY</b>

City Web Site  
[www.oaklandnet.com](http://www.oaklandnet.com)

### PRIVATE AGENCIES

<b>A Safe Place (domestic violence)</b>	<b>536-7233</b>
<b>Seeds Community Resolution Center (neighborhood disputes)</b>	<b>548-2377</b>



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Letters may be edited for length or clarity. Please include name, address and phone number. We do not print anonymous letters.

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## Leona Heights Neighborhood News

BY GORDON AND LARRY LAVERTY

**D**affodils. How wonderful to see the daffodils pop out of the barren patch of ground near the Rusting Ave. entrance to our Leona Heights Neighborhood. Thanks again to each of the volunteers from our neighborhood who plants those wonderful flowers.

Not all property has fared so well, namely property on Leona Street that once belonged to one of the first residents here. Joe Stern, during the 1950s and through the 1970s, lived with his wife on Leona Street at the top of Griffin. He had transported his home across San Francisco Bay and had it installed on the promontory on which it stands today.

The two lots south of his home were pasture, and one contained a barn. On these

grounds, he would drill horses with other members of the Shriners' Mounted Patrol. In addition to the land he managed, Stern owned the entire ridge above Leona Street that today is dotted with the houses whose driveways head north off of Mountain View Ave., including Laverty Hill.

Joe Stern's life and the upstanding way he lived it set a tone in those early days for Leona Heights. His solid presence as a local businessman and humanitarian made him a cornerstone of our neighborhood. It would do us all good to renew our dedication to doing our best to follow a similar path.

At various times, some of you have stepped forward when a neighbor needed help with one thing or another, and it's that kind of caring and sometimes bravery that Joe stood for. ♦

## High Street Neighborhood News

BY ADELLE FOLEY

### Remembering Shirley Masengill

I realize that this is a bit off my beat. But I was happy to respond to a request and write about Shirley's memorial.

On April 2 relatives, old and new friends, and neighbors of Shirley Masengill packed the back patio of Laurel Books to share their memories of the Laurel's children's literature specialist, and celebrate her nearly 84 years. Luan Stauss (owner of Laurel Book Store) and Shirley's daughter, Celia Docto, led off the program. Luan described Shirley's take-charge approach. When she heard that Luan was going to open a book store, Shirley announced "Here's what we're going to do." Then she helped to open the business and volunteered there on Saturdays. More recently, she helped to plan her own memorial.

Memories poured in from around the corner to across the country. Celia read letters from friends who could not be at the celebration. Some of their stories reached back to the '60s, when Shirley introduced Teresa Nunnemaker Jackson to exotic foods and to places such as City Lights and Chinatown. About the same



Shirley's daughter Celia Docto and Luan Stauss, Laurel Book Store owner.

time, Shirley gave *Lavender's Blue* to Joan Penrose-Borum's children, instructing Joan to start reading it to them at about 18 months. The speakers returned to some common themes: Shirley's advice on children's books, the Masengills' parties, a foil-covered door at Christmas time, good food and drinks, and Shirley's colorful language, which amused and/or shocked those around her. But not all of Shirley's literary advice was for children. She gave an article by Phillip Pullman to Jack Foley, who shared Shirley's enthusiasm and read a section of Pullman's latest book.

A guitar and vocal performance by Shirley's grandson, Gabriel Docto, and his friend,

Luc Stauffenegger, closed the program. Gabriel sang "The Book of Love" by Peter Gabriel. Shirley loved to hear the song over and over again when she was in the hospital. It ends, "I, I love it when you sing to me, and/ You, you can sing me anything."

After the program, a long line of Shirley's admirers lined up to purchase books in her honor. Laurel District merchants contributed to the celebration with flowers from Sudear and food from Trattoria Laurellinos and Lucky Donuts.

### A Third Mosaic Wall

Work on a third mosaic—for the back wall of the Maxwell Park restroom—is underway. Maxwell Park leader Nancy Karigaca was delighted with the participation of children from Maxwell Park International Academy, Melrose Leadership Academy, Fremont High School, Frick Middle School, the Boys & Girls Club and the Discovery Center. Children who haven't participated can create a design the morning of May 7. Bev Shalom invites the community to help put up the tiles on May 7, at 10 a.m., and May 14, May 15, and May 21, at 9:30 a.m.

Just after sunrise  
Birds calling from the plum tree  
Wake up the whole block ♦

Adelle Foley can be reached at [jandafoley@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jandafoley@sbcglobal.net).



Laurel's children's literature specialist Shirley Masengill.

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## From the League of Women Voters of Oakland

BY MARY BERGAN, LWVO

### Redistricting Commission Meets in Oakland

The California Citizens' Redistricting Commission will be drawing new boundaries for districts for U.S. Congress, State Senate, State Assembly, State Board of Equalization. At a public hearing, the Commission will receive the input of individuals about how they view their community and where they would set boundaries. All are invited Saturday, May 21, 2 - 5 p.m., Oakland City Hall, City Council Chambers.

Each person will have up to five minutes to speak. This could be reduced to three or four minutes if there is a large crowd. The Commission is looking for answers to the following questions:

What bonds your community—what are the common links?

Where is your community located—what are the boundaries?

Why should the community be kept together—or separate

from another area?

Maps are helpful.

Information about the work of the commission is available on its Web site:

[www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov](http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov).

### Taxes—The Price of a Civilized Society

As budget battles rage in Washington, Sacramento, and Oakland, some people are actually discussing what kind of society we are and want to be, and what the elements are of a civilized society in the twenty-first century. And they are paying new attention to the words of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes inscribed over the entrance to the Internal Revenue Service building: "Taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society."

Henry E. Brady, Dean of the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley, will discuss the role of taxes in our society at the May program meeting of the League of Women Voters of Oakland.

Dean Brady is an award-winning author and a leading

scholar of public opinion, political movements, and public policy in the United States, Canada, Russia, and elsewhere. He received his Ph.D. in Economics and Political Science from MIT in 1980, and has worked for the federal Office of Management and Budget and other organizations in Washington, DC.

His books include *Expensive Children in Poor Families: The Intersection of Childhood Disability and Welfare* (2000) and *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (1995). He also co-edited *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology* (2008) and *Rethinking Social Inquiry* (2004).

Oaklanders are invited to join League members for an engaging discussion.

Tuesday, May 17, 2011, 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Oakland City Hall, John Hege Hearing Room  
One Frank Ogawa Plaza  
(to the left just inside the 14th Street entrance to City Hall)

Light refreshments will be served. ♦



Paulette Avery,  
R.N., M.S.N.,  
I.B.C.L.C.

### To Your Health

**O**ur bodies require adequate water and other fluids in order to function at their best, and many of us don't drink enough. At birth our bodies are 80 percent water, but this amount gradually decreases to 70 percent or less in adulthood. Infants, young children, and older adults are most prone to serious dehydration, usually brought on by illness or some medications such as diuretics, but the problem can occur at any age. Many more people suffer from chronic dehydration, a condition easily overlooked.

Read on to learn why water is so important to good health, the symptoms of chronic dehydration, and strategies to help you get the fluids you need each day.

Water is essential to our good health and is needed by every system in the body. Without enough water, our bodies can't clear toxins, feed our cells, or keep the mouth, nose, and throat moistened. When we experience serious dehydration, we usually know it by a very dry mouth and by other symptoms such as weakness. But chronic dehydration is less obvious. Some of the common symptoms include:

- Fatigue
- Constipation
- Abnormal blood pressure, either too high or too low
- Excessive weight related to confusing thirst with hunger
- Increased joint pain from a buildup of toxins in the blood
- Respiratory problems
- Stomach problems from

## Are You Chronically Dehydrated?

a lack of fluid to protect against acids

I have also noticed that when I have not had enough to drink, I am more prone to painful leg and foot cramps during the night.

So how much fluid do you need each day? The answers vary, but here are some guidelines. One suggestion you are probably familiar with is to drink eight cups of water a day. Although science has not supported this suggestion, it is an easy way to remind yourself to drink plenty of water each day, and combined with the water from the foods you eat and other liquids you consume, it is likely to be sufficient.

I try to begin each day with a big glass or mug of water, before I drink my morning coffee, to help replenish the fluids lost during the night. At work, I keep a mug of water on my desk and sip it throughout the day, refilling it as needed. Because the water cooler at my office is at the other end of a long hall, I also get some exercise this way.

Remember that your fluid requirements will increase in hot weather and with exercise. They are generally somewhat greater in men than women due to the difference in body size, and that with age we tend to become less aware of our thirst. So make a conscious effort to drink more water. Your body will thank you, and you will feel better! ♦

*Paulette Avery is a registered nurse, lactation consultant, and a freelance writer who specializes in health issues.*

## Paws & Claws

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, as they watched their compatriots sample doggie treats or sniff out the spacious new digs, Oscar, the pug, and Malcolm and Jane's corgi-shiba inu, Sweetie the Wonder Dog, were enjoying the day. Samara's Tibetan terrier mix, Howard, watched the doings. Angela's cattle dog

Bo, emerged from the doggie-grooming rooms sporting newly clipped nails.

Definitely a D[og]-list celebrity, and no doubt the only dog there with a calling card of his own, Great Pyrenees golden retriever, Jack, mascot of Heinhold's First & Last Chance Saloon, the only dog member of both the National Lighthouse Society and Oakland's Lightship "Relief," watched the proceedings with

his boon companion, Lisa. And if they could, the dogs, even one who looked an awful lot like Toto, would join their humans in extending wishes to Paws & Claws for its own and the community's prosperity. Oh, and another one of those days without any cats.

[Ed. note. *Notwithstanding canine wishes, Paws & Claws welcomes cats, and stocks products for cats and other animals including rats, rabbits, pet and wild birds. Find out more on their Facebook page or [www.pawsnclawsoakland.com](http://www.pawsnclawsoakland.com) or 336-0195.] ♦*

## Toni Locke

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

in cataloging them to be deposited in the Library of Congress national database.

"As an accomplished musician she has also been a volunteer teacher in the University's Kodály music program which focuses on music education, especially for young people."

As editor of the *MacArthur Metro*, Toni nurtured a community newspaper that continues to build bridges into the 21st century. In 2003, she received a \$10,000 MAGIC grant from Avant! in recognition of her extensive community work.

The ceremony on May 7 will include a short speech by Ann Woodell, Committee Chair, a speech by the honoree, and light refreshments. Members of the public are cordially invited to this free event. Parking is difficult. Park off Oakland Ave., or better yet, carpool. ♦



PHOTOS BY NICK LOSTRACCO



Clockwise from top: Howard, Samara, and Jack. Tortuga the slider turtle. Robin Goodfellow and Poochinella.

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

**Distribution Coordinator.** The MacArthur Metro is looking for a Distribution Coordinator (DC) to join our volunteer staff. A team of six volunteer distributors picks up the Metro issues and distributes to businesses and private homes on seven routes. The DC coordinates the team, assuring route coverage. DC also covers a route when necessary. Approx. four hours on or about the first of each month. Email [metroreaders@earthlink.net](mailto:metroreaders@earthlink.net).

Past Issues of the Metro with a searchable database available online at [macarthurmetro.org](http://macarthurmetro.org)



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# Dimond Neighborhood News

By CARRIE CAMPBELL, KATHLEEN RUSSELL

## Opera in the Park

On Saturday, May 7, at 3 p.m., Dimond Park is hosting an Open Opera concert.

Open Opera brings free, professional opera to Bay Area parks and builds community through the arts. Bring family and friends, blankets, beach chairs, and picnics for a fun afternoon in the park. This concert will be next to the tennis courts, near the BBQ area. Dimond teens will be selling La Farine Bakery treats as a fundraiser for their group. Contact Dimond Recreation Center 510-482-7831 for more information.

## Marcia Leath DIA Volunteer of the Year 2010

The Dimond Improvement Association (DIA) recognized Marcia Leath as 2010 Volunteer of the Year. Marcia is a volunteer with the dedicated Keep Dimond Clean group of residents who remove debris and litter from the streets of the Dimond business district. She specializes in clearing the storm drains during rainstorms to prevent flooding. This past year Marcia raked up bushels of leaves from the streets of Dimond. Thanks to volunteer efforts, Dimond probably had the cleanest storm drains in Oakland this last rainy season. Marcia also works with merchants to help them meet their commitment to a litter-free Dimond. In one month the collective tally of all volunteer hours totaled 110 hours and the removal of 96 bags of litter (approximately 480 pounds of litter). In recognition of Marcia's efforts, the DIA presented her with the handy "Snap! Bagger" leaf collector, which will help in gathering all those leaves. La Farine Bakery sponsors Keep Dimond Clean.

## DIA Board 2011

At the general meeting on April 6, the Dimond Improvement Association (DIA) elected their Board of Directors for the next year. New board members



Dimond Volunteer of the Year 2010 Marcia Leath with Stan Dodson of La Farine Bakery, sponsor of Keep Dimond Clean.

include Tim Chapman, Fran Donohue, Chris Harper, Tom Rose, and Rejoyce Stovall-Moss. See [DimondNews.org/dia](http://DimondNews.org/dia), for more information, including a complete list of board members. DIA board meetings are on the second Thursday of each month, and the community is invited. For meeting information, email [krussell@russellgordon.com](mailto:krussell@russellgordon.com). All residents and merchants are invited to join this association. Dues are \$15 (individual) and \$20 (household). Checks can be mailed to the DIA, PO Box 27355, Oakland, CA 94602. The next DIA general meeting will be June 1, 7 p.m., at the Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave.

## An Island Breeze from Ceylon's

Ceylon's, at 3423 Fruitvale Ave., is a new clothing store across from Farmer Joe's on Fruitvale. Just in time for spring, owner Sri Lanka White has stocked some fine and affordable footwear. Sri Lanka is the former manager of LaFrance Boutique and took over the space when the owner retired. "People ask me all the time about my name, Sri Lanka. My mother was expecting a baby boy when she took a trip to Sri Lanka and experienced a powerful earthquake there. When she returned I was born and . . . I was a girl. Already having three boys and

*continued on page 7*

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## Calendar of Community Events

BY MARILYN GREEN, COORDINATOR

The MacArthur Metro calendar welcomes a range of listings. We emphasize community meetings and actions that address neighborhood concerns as well as cultural events that enrich our lives. To have your event listed, please contact Marilyn Green no later than the 12th of the preceding month at 531-9233 or marilynmetro@aol.com.

### May 2011

#### Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils

**Maxwell Park Neighborhood Council: Wednesday, May 11, 7 to 8:45 p.m.**, Melrose Leadership Academy, 5328 Brann. Check our Web site. <http://maxwellparknc.com> or call Jan Hetherington at 534-4978 for more info.

**Allendale Park NCP Meeting: Wednesday, May 18, 7 p.m.**, 3711 Suter Street.

**Fruitvale Unity NCP: Wednesday, May 18, 6:30 to 8 p.m.** San Antonio Senior Center, 3301-E12th Street, Suite 201 (in the Transit Village) Free Parking at the Bart Station. Poiluck. Contact: Ana Martinez @ 535-5689 or AMartinez@oaklandnet.com. Web site: [www.fruitvaleunity.org](http://www.fruitvaleunity.org); e-mail: [unity@fruitvaleunity.org](mailto:unity@fruitvaleunity.org).

**Melrose-High Hopes NCP: Thursday, May 19, 7 p.m.**, Horace Mann Elementary school, Ygnacio and Congress. [www.ncpcbeat27x.org](http://www.ncpcbeat27x.org).

**Dimond Library** 3565 Fruitvale Ave. Information: 482-7844. Wheelchair accessible.

**Family Storytimes: Tuesdays, April 5, 12, 19, 26, 7 p.m.**

**Lawyers in the Library: 1st Tuesday, May 3, 6 to 8 p.m.**; sign-up for lottery at 5:45 p.m. Free legal information. Sessions are popular and sometimes subject to change. Please call in advance.

**Spanish Conversation Group: 1st & 3rd Tuesday, May 3 and 17, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.**, Contact: Sarah Hodgson 482-7844, [shodgson@oaklandlibrary.org](mailto:shodgson@oaklandlibrary.org). Improve your skills and learn new vocabulary. Participants should be familiar with the basics. Drop-ins welcome.

**Storytime: Wednesdays, May 4, 11, 18, 25, 10:15 a.m. and 11 a.m., 10:15 a.m. for toddlers to age 2 years; 11 a.m. for ages 3-5 years.**

**Book Discussion Group: 1st Tuesday, May 10, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.** Join us for some spirited conversation about this month's book. Call the library for current title. New members welcome! Contact librarian for title.

**Melrose Library** 4805 Foothill Blvd. Information: 535-5623.

**Friends of the Melrose Library: Tuesday, May 3, 6 p.m.**

**Storytime: Thursdays, May 5, 12, 19, 16, 10:30 a.m.** Stories, songs, and fingerplays for children under 3 years old.

**Imagine, create, and decorate: Wednesday, May 11, 4 p.m.** Use glue, glitter, feathers, stickers, and more with Children's Librarian Miss Adina.

**Knitting and crocheting group meeting: Saturdays, May 14 and May 28, 3 to 5 p.m.**

**Book Discussion Group: 4th Tuesday, May 24, 5:30 p.m.** Join for some spirited conversation about this month's book. Call the library for current title. New members welcome! Contact librarian for title.

#### General Calendar

**Join the Oakland Strokes Rowing Crew:** Ongoing. Open to all high school students. No prior experience necessary. For more information, contact Phil Caruthers at [lafrancecaruthers@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lafrancecaruthers@sbcglobal.net) or 527-4595.

**Register for Environmental Classes at Merritt College:** Classes are ongoing. For specifics, contact [www.ecomerritt.org](http://www.ecomerritt.org) or 510 434-3840. You can register online at [www.peralta.edu](http://www.peralta.edu). Evening, day, and weekend classes are available.

**Fruitvale Presbyterian Church Senior Center: Wednesdays, May 4, 11, 18, 25, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**, 2734 MacArthur Blvd. 530-0915.

**Laurel Book Store Events:** 4100 MacArthur Blvd, 531-2073.

**Saturday, May 7, 6 p.m.** JR Valrey, author of *Block Reportin' Friday, May 27, 7 p.m.* Tina Fahkridd-Deen, author of *Let's Get This Straight, The Ultimate Handbook for Youth with LGBTQ Parents.*

**Dia del Los Niños/Dia de Los Libros: Saturday, May 7, noon to 3 p.m.** Josie de La Cruz Park, 1637 Fruitvale Ave. Afternoon of children's activities and books featuring multicultural music, dance, storytelling, art activities, and book giveaway. 535-5631 for more information.

**Merritt College Horticulture Spring Community Plant Sale: Saturday, May 7, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sunday, May 8, noon to 3 p.m.** Merritt College, 12500 Campus Drive. Rare fruits, perennial and annual vegetables, grasses, California natives, food, music, permaculture tours and more. [www.merrittlandhort.com](http://www.merrittlandhort.com).

**Allendale Park Feet on the Street: Thursday, May 12, 7 p.m.**, Corner of Dale & Minna.

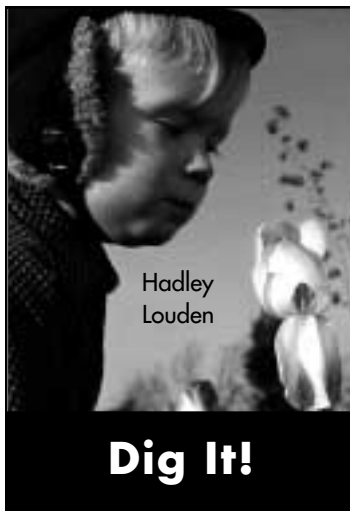
**3rd Annual Spring Bazaar: Saturday and Sunday, May 14 and 15, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**, Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 3900 35th Ave.

**Circle of Care East Bay Agency for Children, Second Annual Walk to Remember: Saturday, May 14, 10 to 2 p.m.** Walk with us around Lake Merritt to honor those people in our lives who are living with life threatening illness, as well as remember those who have died. Contact Shoshana@ebac.org for registration information

**Allendale Park Beautification: Saturday, May 21, 10:30 a.m.**, Suter St. and 38th Ave (Suter Triangle)

**Allendale Park Garden Club Plant Exchange: Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**, Culver St. and Culver Ct. Bring plants, seeds, or seedlings to exchange or make a \$5 donation toward future neighborhood beautification projects.

**Dance-a-thon fundraiser: Saturday, May 21, noon to 9 p.m.**, Melrose Leadership Academy, Brann between 55th Ave. and Morcom. ♦



## Dig It!

### Going Native

I'll confess, I'm not a native-plant fanatic. I'm blessed to be able to spend time in the wilderness each year, so I get in touch with native plants there.

I do recognize that we need to support native plants in the interest of preserving vanishing habitats and endangered species. Native plants have symbiotic relationships with other native insects and animals, so planting them supports the greater native ecosystem. They tend to be drought-tolerant and low-maintenance, needing less fertilizer and pesticides than non-natives. Most reseed or propagate easily. Visit the California Native Plant Society Web site for more info: <http://www.cnps.org/>.

Much of the flora around us seems native but is not. Beautiful forget-me-nots, alas, are not a native flower. Their prominence throughout many of our coastal redwood forests displaces native plants.

Still, when it comes to my own little patch of turf, I'm most inclined to plant whatever enthralls me the most—native or not. Let's admit it: some natives are underwhelming. Give me beauty or give me death!

Fortunately, I find many native California plants downright enthralling. Here are a few of my favorite natives, all road-tested in Oakland:

*Iris douglasiana*: Many California natives are named after the great Scottish botanist David Douglas of Douglas fir fame, who first explored and catalogued the Pacific Northwest. This gorgeous veined flower prefers part shade and thrives under trees. I nabbed my six-inch patch in the hills 10 years ago and it's five feet wide now. There are many commercial hybrids available.

*Aristolochia californicus*—Not super-easy to grow—needing an undisturbed moist shady tree to twirl up, but worth the effort. This fascinating pitcher plant captures insects but only temporarily for pollination purposes.

*Mimulus dentatus*, aka monkey flower, prefers moist, part-shade wetlands but will also handle sunny containers. It reseeds.

*Eschscholzia californica*, the fabulous state poppy is appropriately golden; however, recent English hybrids are available in a rainbow of colors. These hardy perennials will last for years, reseed and have many of the medicinal qualities of their papaver cousins.

*Aquilegia Formosa*, aka columbine, a hardy perennial, handles diverse locations, including rock terraces, part-shade and sunny containers. Many hybrids are available. I dig the "Black Barlow."

*Lupines*—groups of these can form familiar waves of light to deep blue along the coast and hills, while some varieties come in yellow. Hardy perennials that prefer sun, they can last a couple years and reseed.

*Clarkia amoena*, aka farewell-to-spring, thrives in sun to part shade, and like many natives, will reseed. Blooms in stunning shades of purple and red.

*Dicentra formosa*, aka bleeding hearts, are well worth the effort of finding them a shady spot from which to shine. After winter dormancy their early-spring flowers of drooping red and pink hearts may break yours.

*Salvia Clevelandii* ("Cleveland-ee-I") is native to the southern coast ranges of California and Baja California. Sometimes called Ambrosia sage, it smells divine. Under ideal circumstances it can get four to five feet wide and tall, but can be easily contained and is carefree.

A great opportunity to obtain wonderful native and other plants at great prices while supporting the educational and horticulture worlds is the upcoming Merritt Horticulture Spring Plant Sale May 7-8. [www.merrittlandhort.com/plant\\_sale.html](http://www.merrittlandhort.com/plant_sale.html). ♦



Bleeding hearts shine in a shady spot, with gorgeous *Iris douglasiana* growing around them.

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# BOULEVARD BITES

■ Sheila D'Amico ■



Organizers estimated that more than 400 people attended the District Five Town Hall meeting at St. Jarlath Church on April 9. The meeting opened on a sad note as attendees observed a moment of silence for Jesus "Chuy" Campos, the owner of Otaez restaurant in the Fruitvale who had been killed in what police described as a botched robbery. Anyone with information should call police at 238-3821 or Crime Stoppers at 777-8572.

In several break-out sessions, participants discussed their concerns and came up with three priorities for action. The proposed Fruitvale gang injunction was a major topic for the Public Safety session. Emphasizing the split within Oakland on the topic, session facilitators reported their first two priorities as strong support for the gang injunction and strong support against the gang injunction. The third priority of the session was personal safety.

It was good to see and hear youth participate in the event.

At the question and comment session just before adjournment, several young people spoke passionately, particularly on their views of the gang injunction. Many echoed the comments of Merritt College psychology student Lorena Gonzalez, who asked "Why are we spending money on what doesn't work rather than on schools?"

Most of the *Metro* readership area falls in District Four. The D4 Town Hall meeting will be held Saturday, May 14, 11:30 to 1:30, at Bret Harte school at 3700 Coolidge Ave. It's a good opportunity to make your concerns known and to interact in person with neighbors and city officials.

*Metro* copyeditor Diane Stone and Maribel, one of her rescued dogs, were featured in the March issue of *Bay Woof*. Maribel, a pit bull, took the Canine Good Citizen Test and the PALS (Pets and Love Shared) training. Maribel is a big hit when she and Diane make their

weekly visits to the residents at Excell Health Care on High St.

Chief copyeditor Anne Fox has been busy, too. Her short story "It Comes to This" appears in the California Writers Club anthology, *West Winds Centennial*. Anne is a member of CWC's Berkeley Branch. Her story was one of 35 accepted for publication out of 300 submissions. Anne is a freelance copyeditor for writers of fiction and nonfiction. She also co-hosts a support/critique writers' group on the third Saturday of the month at Oakland's Rockridge Branch Library.

Neighbors and members of several listservs are reporting an increase in gang-related illegal graffiti. Call the OPD nonemergency line to report. Contact Public Works, 615-5566 or [www.oaklandnet.com](http://www.oaklandnet.com). Let your NCPC know, too. Your neighbors may have a graffiti-busting team or may be able to help you remove graffiti on your private property. ♦

## Celebrate Older Americans' Month

BY BEVERLY KARNATZ

May is Older Americans' Month.

The Lincoln Court Center at 2400 MacArthur Blvd. is celebrating by joining the staff of the Dimond Park for a Resource Fair and Picnic, Dimond Park, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, May 21.

There are approximately 336 units of senior housing within a 10-block radius: Lincoln Court Senior Apartments (82), Beth Asher (50), Adel Court (30) and the Altenheim (174). One hundred sixty-three of these units, Lincoln Court and the new wing of the Altenheim have been built since

2006. Many residents patronize nearby local businesses.

Young people are often advised to set aside funds for their own retirement or for their children's college. Few realize that they may become responsible for their parents' care or for securing services that allow their parents to remain independent within the community.

At the Resource Fair information about programs and the agencies that provide services for older adults will be available.

For more information, contact Beverly Karnatz at the Lincoln Court Center (510-336-1952) or Michelle Doppelt at the Dimond Recreation Center (510-482-7831). ♦

## Dimond News

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

expecting a fourth, my mother was thrilled. So she named me after the country. Later, when I had my own daughter, I named her Ceylon, which is the former name of Sri Lanka. And my store is named after my daughter."

Ceylon's is airy and full of light. There are sun hats, sunglasses, everyday fashion and accessories. Check out the chic dressing rooms. A bit of Rodeo Drive comes to Dimond. ♦

Email [CarrieLCampbell@hotmail.com](mailto:CarrieLCampbell@hotmail.com), or [krussell@russell-gordon.com](mailto:krussell@russell-gordon.com).

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## Maxwell Park News

BY **BRYAN FARLEY**

For about four years, Maxwell Park neighbor Nancy Karigaca has steadily been improving Maxwell Park's neighborhood park. The mosaic and mural project has also led to increased safety and better hygiene at the local park,

including a new working water fountain. On Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., the next stage of the improvement plan continues with a children's tiling day. All children are encouraged to attend Saturday's event to make tiles for the mosaic. Those who have participated in the past have been proud of their contribution.



Maxwell Park mosaic.

Since the improvements, local groups have been meeting in the park, including a regular Sunday play group for Melrose Leadership Academy, the neighborhood Spanish Immersion public elementary school near Mills. Before the bathroom project had been started, much of the park was unusable.

MLA will be starting its third year of the Spanish Immersion program. Because of coming budget cuts, the MLA administration has predicted that the school is facing a \$244,000 budget shortfall next year. To deal with the shortfall, the MLA fundraising committee will have the school's first annual dance-a-thon. The school is also continuing its tamale sales. ♦



Nancy Karigaca examines a future mosaic site.

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