



Can you name two local institutions celebrating major milestones this month? Find the answers on pages 4 and 5.

Connecting the neighborhoods from Fruitvale Avenue to Seminary Avenue and from Foothill Boulevard to Warren Freeway since 1989

Volume 25 Number 1

February 2013



DENNIS EVANOSKY

Urban Green Investments wants to convert the former Methodist housing on Tompkins Avenue into apartments.

Standoff Brewing over Tompkins Avenue Plan

BY DENNIS EVANOSKY

Urban Green Investments has plans for the now-closed Methodist home for the elderly that stands on Tompkins Avenue. The company has purchased the property and now wants to put 48 apartments in the buildings there.

"We want to breathe new life into the property," said Urban Green's Kevin Skiles. Skiles said that his company plans to put high-end apartments on the site.

Urban Green is also looking at ways to open up the property and make it more neighborhood friendly. When the company met with the neighbors, people came away with mixed emotions.

"The Urban Green people gave no guarantee that it was not going to be a low-income housing project or whether they would rent to Section 8 tenants, but have stated there would be a veterans' living space," one neighbor wrote.

"Which of these sound appealing to young professionals?" that same neighbor asked.

Another took a more positive view of the meeting. "I felt that the Urban Green folks were really trying to work with

"We are united and organized as a neighborhood to stop Urban Green."

— Tompkins Neighbor

the neighborhood," this second neighbor wrote. "I certainly have reservations about how many extra folks their renovation might bring to the neighborhood, but depending on the renters it could add to the neighborhood or create more problems."

A third neighbor sounded the bell to unite the neighbors to stop Urban Green in its tracks.

"We are united and organized as a neighborhood to stop Urban Green from converting 4690 Tompkins into apartments, this neighbor wrote. "There is no doubt that apartments will greatly affect the quality of life, the crime rate and traffic in our neighborhood."

However, instead of taking the fight to Urban Green the neighbors should turn to a different arena, the Planning Commission. The first step these neighbors can take is to sit down with the commissioners at dinner. And they're already invited. All Planning

Commission meetings get started, not formally at City Hall, but informally at the Saigon Restaurant, right around the corner from City Hall. "Did you hear what they want to do on Tompkins Avenue," they can ask a commissioner or two over noodles and greens.

Once dinner is finished and the meeting has convened, the neighbors can ask that question (and more) during the meeting's open-comment session. This more formal setting will open all the commissioners' ears, especially when the neighbors tell them that the

See *STANDOFF*, page 7

City Hall Endurance Contest Must End

BY BRUCE NYE

If you have attended a City Council meeting to be heard on a controversial issue, or if you have been there for hearings on gang injunctions, curfews, budget cuts, dog parks or some of the other issues that stir Oaklanders' passions, you've seen how a Council meeting can become an endurance contest, with scores of speakers barraging the Council with opinions on public safety, on community services, on the arts, on staff furloughs and layoffs, on public employee compensation, Lake Merritt, or whatever is the subject of the day. A stranger to the process could be forgiven for believing that public policy in Oakland is based on the opinions of whatever group can turn out the largest, loudest group at a City Council meeting.

The Jan. 22 Council meeting was a pretty good example of the dysfunction that plagues Council's management of public speakers. Council considered four public safety measures. Hundreds of people filled out speaker cards. The clerk at one point lost track of who had and who had not filled out cards, so that speakers presented testimony even though their names had not been called and there was no indication they had submitted cards

Many speakers use a rule that allows "ceding time." A speaker who submitted a card goes to the lectern, announces she has time ceded by certain named individuals who have also submitted cards. Those individuals confirm their presence and the speaker gets to use both her allotted time (two minutes for most matters, one minute for some) and one minute for each ceding card-holder, up to five minutes. When Council chambers are crowded, much administrative time is consumed making sure that the ceding card-holders are in the room.

But even more time-consuming is the "cede-as-you-go" method. A speaker goes up with his card, is allowed his one or two minutes and speaks until the buzzer sounds. He turns around and cries out for someone to cede him another minute. Someone does, and the clerk gets that person's name. Another minute of speaking. Buzzer goes again. Speaker turns around to get yet another minute ceded. Wash, rinse, repeat. Calling speakers, enforcing time limits and managing the ceded time can take almost as much time as the testimony.

There is even a larger problem at busy meetings like the one in January. That problem results from

See *END*, page 6

Fight Blight

DENNIS EVANOSKY

This abandoned Cheese & Coffee shop stands on MacArthur Boulevard, across the street from the Food Mill. The storefront serves as an example of the many empty commercial properties along the boulevard. The Metro will be investigating many of these properties as part of a series of special stories that will begin appearing in the March issue.



The Metro needs your support! Become one of the Thousand Friends.

Recent Thousand Friends include: Helen Lore, Jane Barbarow, James Barr, Vera, Callendar, Len Montalvo-Intervention Group, Jason & Kim Martin, Sunan Runyan, Nancy Benson, Constance De La Vega, Adrienne Debisschop, Rhonda Edwards, Robin Goodfellow, Wilbur McEachin, Querida Primas, Phillis Robbiano, William R. & Helen Shyvers

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

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metro

ISSN 1091-1111

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Printing by Southwest Offset
Printing, San Jose, California
(408) 232-5160

Opinions expressed in the
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Opinions & Editorials

Bring on more
senior housing

Editor:

As a long-time resident and business manager in the Laurel, I would like to make some important points about the senior housing complex that will be built on the corner of High Street and MacArthur Boulevard.

Laurel District residents want senior housing built in our neighborhood. A poll by Manos Home Care indicated that 67 percent of Laurel residents are for building senior housing in the Laurel on MacArthur Boulevard, 22 percent are undecided and 11 percent are opposed. Clearly, the Laurel is behind building senior housing in our neighborhood.

The only place to build senior housing in the Laurel is on the corner of High and MacArthur. The only place that has enough space to build senior housing is the proposed site. Nowhere else in the Laurel has the space to provide enough units to make the complex self-sufficient.

The only company that can build it on time is AMG, which owns the property. Any construction within the next five years must involve AMG as the developer; there simply isn't enough time or ability to shift developers.

AMG has a good design now. AMG had a flawed design at the start of the project; they have a good design now. It could be improved (where is the solar power?), but the project is beautiful and feasible. Virtually all community opposition has ceased regarding the design.

Building senior housing at High Street and MacArthur Boulevard will reduce crime and increase commercial activity on the Laurel commercial strip. The Lincoln Senior housing has radically reduced crime in the neighborhood due to the increased presence of the over-55 population in the building.

Don't we want that reduced crime in the Laurel?

If senior housing is not built on the site, a fast food

See *LETTERS*, page 7



CARTOON BY JOE HELLER

The Metro Will Live On

BY DENNIS EVANOSKY

The *MacArthur Metro* has new life and a new plan. The *Metro's* board of directors held a meeting last week and passed the responsibility of running *The Metro* to a new board. Thanks to David Finacom and Councilwoman Libby Schaaf's efforts, new board members will be running *The Metro* by the end of February.

David and Libby recommended and contacted some prospective members for the new board; others stepped up after reading David's letter in the December edition of *The Metro*.

As of last week's meeting these new members — Jody Berke, Elizabeth Callaway, Bena Currin, Helen DaSilva, David Finacom, Toni Locke and Elizabeth Preston — have consented to take their seats. We await the first official meeting, which had not yet taken place at press time.

My business partner at the *Alameda Sun*, Eric J. Kos, and I will work with the new board to not only to edit and publish *The Metro*, but to keep a careful eye on the

paper's financials as well.

The *Sun* is an 11-plus-year-old weekly newspaper that distributes 23,000 papers in Alameda. Eric has been involved with the *Sun* since the start. I joined the *Sun* as a writer in 2006, became its editor in 2009 and stepped in with Eric to take over as owner and co-publisher in July 2011.

Many of you know me as the writer of history books about the Laurel District and Mountain View Cemetery. Eric published both these books, and one more about Alameda, for me.

Last October, *The Metro's* first editor, Toni Locke, alerted me to the fact that we could possibly breathe new life into the paper. Libby also contacted me and I offered to attend a meeting about *The Metro's* fate. I spoke at the meeting and offered to put out a December issue to see if — in the words of the *Alameda Sun's* financial advisor — *The Metro* was "financially viable." We decided at the time, it was in need of some help, but in the long run, we could make *The Metro* a financial success.

This means, of course, taking in enough money each and every month to pay for

all the publishing expenses and make a small profit. *The Metro* will continue to operate as a nonprofit. The paper depends not only on advertising dollars, but on help from the community. All of you can help *The Metro* survive by becoming a "Money Honey" or by joining the list of the paper's "Thousand Friends" (see coupon below).

Eric and I have expanded *The Metro's* community into Glenview and Oakmore, as well as into Fruitvale. Instead of depending on volunteer distributors we hired All Bay Counties ("ABC") Home Delivery to distribute the paper. ABC also delivered some 2,800 December *Metros* door to door in Allendale and the Laurel. A professional delivery service will add credibility to *The Metro* and help attract advertisers who

See *EDITORIAL*, page 7

THE METRO
LETTERS POLICY

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the *MacArthur Metro*, its advertisers or staff.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from the community. Letters must include a name and phone number for verification purposes. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

Letters are subject to editing for length, clarification and legal considerations. Please try to limit letters to 250

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High Street Neighborhood News



Bill Delucchi teaches English as a second language to a group of Fremont High School parents.

Community and Campus: Bill Delucchi at Fremont High

BY ADELLE FOLEY

When I first heard Bill Delucchi invite other neighbors to join his work at Fremont High School I was intrigued. After finding out more, I was impressed.

Fremont High School on High Street and Foothill Blvd is a large and somewhat daunting site, but Bill Delucchi wanted to support the school and bring the campus and the community together. So he went onto the campus. Fortunately, he met Carlos Rojas, the parent liaison, who was trying to bring parents onto the Fremont campus. Rojas had started parent patrols around the campus each morning, on the lookout for unwelcome activity. He had the space to do more, and even some computers, but no funds to pay instructors. So Bill stepped in. Last November he began to teach English as a second language for an hour, three days a week. Then his friend David Franklin came down from Richmond to offer computer classes twice a week.

Bill looked around the school and found that the library had become a store-room, since the school could no longer afford librarians. He recognized the potential of the Julia-Morgan-like space and he and Judit Korosmezei,

another volunteer from Melrose-High Hopes NCPC, joined Mikel Calderon's effort to get the books organized and back on the shelves. They hope to reopen the facility for the spring semester and to keep the library space in tact as Fremont is reconstructed with funding from the bond issue approved in November.

Despite the challenges at the high school Bill told me that he is very impressed with the dedication and energy of the staff, many of whom are Fremont grads. In time he hopes that volunteers will work in the classrooms, and the staff will become more comfortable with outside support. A first step is principal Daniel Hurst's first Tuesday 9 a.m. meetings, which are open to parents and the community. Bill stressed that volunteers don't need years of experience. His own professional life was at Kaiser's business office, although he did volunteer at an after-school program at his son's middle school. To find out how you can help, contact Bill at 535-1923.

Max Park Mosaic 4.0

Nancy Karigaca gave me a broad schedule for the fourth year of mosaic work in Maxwell Park. The planning meeting will be on Feb. 23. Preparation,

including smashing tiles, will begin in March and tiling itself will start in April. The goal is to celebrate completion on June 29. Anyone willing to pitch in, experienced or not, should email Nancy at nkarigaca@comcast.net.

Good News Bites

Congratulations to District 4 Policy Analyst Shereda Nosakhare on the birth of Osarieme Nia and Osamede Aniyah. The twin girls arrived on Feb. 6.

Welcome Michelle Rosenthal, Melrose Branch Library Manager. Michelle joined the branch in January from the Sacramento Public Library. While the ink was drying on my last column, voicing frustration that the branch had been without a permanent manager for far too long, I discovered that Michelle had been hired.

Look for the new traffic light near the Boys and Girls Club on High Street and Porter to be operational in April. The community has raised concerns about the safety of the youngsters crossing High Street, so we're delighted to see the new light.

Oakland's Chinatown Bright sunshine. People smile and Shout "Gung Hay Fat Choy."

You can reach Adelle Foley at jandafoely@sbcglobal.net.

Leona Heights Neighborhood News

Your Neighbors, Don and Brenda LeBoa

BY LARRY LAVERTY

Their story is inspiring and uplifting, as is the way they live their lives.

Don and Brenda LeBoa were each born in Oakland. Don grew up in Brookfield Village, Brenda in Fruitvale. and when you're around them, you can't help but feel uplifted yourself.

Don worked at a young age, starting with a paper route delivering the Oakland Tribune. He later worked as a janitor and in a butcher shop. He was active in the Boy Scouts.

Brenda was active in the Girl Scouts and studied piano. By the time they met, Don was established in his career as an iron worker and Brenda was completing her education in preparation for a nursing career.

Their beginnings as a couple were as humble and challenging as anyone's. Together, they traveled the state of California, going from job to job, wherever Don could find construction work. Resolved to the nomadic lifestyle, they lived in a one-bedroom trailer that moved with them from one job to the next. In those early years, their family quickly grew to include four boys. Somehow the family of six managed to live together, at first in the single-bedroom trailer and later in a slightly larger one.

The first nine years of their marriage and family life were spent in this fashion until Don found their wonderful home here in Leona Heights. The LeBoas settled here knowing

that the location would be central to just about any jobs that would come his way and Brenda would have easy access to work as well.

This period of time was very eventful in Don's career as he took part in high-profile projects like the construction of Interstate 5, San Francisco's Bank of America building, the TransAmerica Pyramid, and numerous other high-rise buildings throughout the Bay Area.

Meanwhile, Brenda added to her earlier education from the Highland School of Nursing by completing a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing. She worked more than 10 years at Vesper Hospital in San Leandro and then an additional 10 years at Summit Hospital here in Oakland.

In addition to their demanding work schedules, Don and Brenda provided a loving and supportive family life for their four boys. For a number of years, one of the boys worked the paper route serving Leona Heights. He delivered the Oakland Tribune from the back of one of the family ponies.

Each of the four sons worked to achieve the honor of Eagle Scout. Don acted as scoutmaster for Oakland's Troop 455 for four years. Brenda was involved in leading Boy Scout activity for six years. Later, Brenda worked for several years as a docent at the Oakland Museum of California.

Don and Brenda have been retired for a number of years now

continued on page 6



COURTESY PHOTO

The LeBoas

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COURTESY PHOTOS

The Food Mill has set up a small museum to remind its customers how things were done in the pre-digital age.

Eighty and Going Strong

The Food Mill has offered all-natural foods since 1933

During the Great Depression, John Denis opened a general store on what was then Hopkins Street near Maple Avenue. In 1939, when his business was six years old and World War II was looming on the horizon, Denis needed more space. He moved his store one block up Hopkins closer to the Laurel District. In 1942 Hopkins Street became MacArthur Boulevard.

Denis produced and sold all-natural foods. His family owned the store until just after Denis passed away in 1991. Two years after Denis's death, Art Watkins and his brother Kirk took over. They continue Denis's Food Mill tradition, offering more than 800 bulk foods, including spices, herbs, maple syrup and honey, nut butters, nuts, and dried fruits. The store also offers supplements like vitamins and antioxidants, protein and muscle builders.

"The original building included a three-story stone grinding mill with a grain elevator, bakery, juicer, and equipment for the manufacture of peanut butter — only made with peanuts, made fresh weekly, both for in-house and retail," Madeline Smith-Moore wrote in a *Metro* story when the Food Mill was only 75 years old. "While the mill has been replaced, the bakery is still in action as is peanut butter production," Smith-Moore wrote.

Over time, the Food Mill has tripled

in size to its present 15,000 square feet. Experienced, knowledgeable, and friendly staff members contribute to the store's warm and relaxed ambiance. ♦



John Denis founded the Food Mill in 1933.

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February 2013

Happy Birthday, Head Royce

School celebrates 125th Anniversary of its founding

By DENNIS EVANOSKY

The Head-Royce School on Lincoln Avenue recently celebrated its 125th birthday. Anna Head founded the school in Berkeley in 1887. Anna arrived in Oakland with her parents, Judge Edward and Eliza Head, in 1861.

The judge opened a law practice; his wife started a school to instruct young

ladies in the finer points of English and French. Eliza retired and sold the school in 1887. She gave the profits to Anna to help her start an expanded educational institution to provide solid and comprehensive training for girls.

Anna opened the school at 2538 Channing Way in Berkeley to accommodate both boarding and day students. She retired in 1909, and sold her school to one of the teachers at the school, Mary E. Wilson.

Wilson ran the School until 1938, when it was sold to T. R. and Lea Hyde. The Hydes owned Anna Head School for 12 years. Daniel and Catherine Dewey purchased the institution in 1950. Five years later, the University of California told the Deweys that it needed the Channing Way property. Cal then acquired the property by writ of eminent domain. The site is now home to the Anna Head Residence Hall.

The Deweys could not afford to relocate the school, so they donated it to the Anna Head School, Incorporated with a board of trustees to administer it.

Trustees and
FILE PHOTO
Anna Head inherited her mother's passion for education.

Anna Head founded the school in Berkeley in 1887.

friends of the school raised capital and planned for the school's new campus. They searched for a new location, and found it in the Oakland hills at the site of the old Easton & Wilson Quarry. According to the state mining bureau, in 1906 the quarry was "on Lincoln avenue, 1 mile from Diamond (sic) P.O. [Post Office.]" The quarry opened about 1899 and was worked intermittently for two years.

In 1964, the school completed its relocation to the abandoned quarry. In 1971, the board of trustees established a boys' school, which they named for Anna's brother-in-law, Harvard professor and philosopher Josiah Royce. The school was situated in a small leased building across Lincoln Avenue from the girls' school.

By fall of 1979, the schools had joined as The Head-Royce School, completely coeducational at all grade levels. Today's school has three divisions. The lower school (kindergarten to fifth grade) offers a firm foundation in learning skills, concentrating on a low student-teacher ratio to best serve the needs of each developing student.

The middle school (sixth to eighth grades) is designed to meet the developmental needs of this transitional age group, and has an activity period to supplement the basic curriculum. The Upper School (grades nine to 12) offers a strong college preparatory program with a variety of supplemental activities.

Find out more about Anna Head and other prominent Oaklanders in Mountain View Cemetery, a 120-page book by Dennis Evanosky on the history of Oakland's historic cemetery. Send a check made out to Alameda Sun for \$30 to 3215J Encinal Ave., Alameda CA, 94501 to receive a copy.



TIM CHAPMAN

Rejoyce Stovall-Moss

In Memory of Rejoyce, Jay

By CARRIE CAMPBELL AND KATHLEEN RUSSELL

Rejoyce Stovall-Moss will be remembered as a strong voice in Oakland and in our Dimond community. She not only had a powerful singing voice but also a straightforward voice on the Dimond list, where she usually ended her posts with the phrase "just my thoughts."

Her postings often included comments about youth in the Dimond, as she had a particular interest in youth having raised two sons. Rejoyce posted this last May 8: "You good parents out there, hold your head up high and move forward. You parents that have given up on your kids, seek help. They are still your children or should I say, our children. Just my thoughts. Blessings, Rejoyce"

Rejoyce died suddenly last Dec. 10. Her memorial celebration was held at the Leona Lodge on Sunday, Dec. 16, when her family and community gathered to remember her remarkable life. Her sons, Tony and Jason, led the memorial.

Many family members and friends spoke of Rejoyce's unique life and accomplishments. Mayor Jean Quan brought sentiments and condolences from Rejoyce's "other family" — the Dimond community and all of greater Oakland who loved her.

Rejoyce served as a board member of the Dimond Improvement

See LOSS, page 8

Get Informed, Stay Informed

Oakland city government is divided into seven council districts and one at-large district. The city website is www2.oaklandnet.com. The phone number for each council district ends in the district number. Council District 4 (238-7004) covers most of the Metro readership area. Elected in 2008, Libby Schaaf is the current District 4 councilmember. Councilmember Schaaf keeps constituents informed through her newsletter.

If you'd like to contribute items to the newsletter, email Lisa Rushland at lrushland@oaklandnet.com.

Schaaf holds four monthly meetings in the Metro readership area:

- Dimond: first Thursdays, 9 to 11 a.m. at Caffe Diem, 2224 MacArthur Blvd.
- Laurel: first Saturdays, 9 to 11 a.m. at World Ground Café, 3728 MacArthur Blvd.
- Woodminster: third Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Woodminster Café, 5020 Woodminster Lane.
- Melrose: fourth Wednesdays, 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Melrose Library, 4805 Foothill Blvd.

A portion of *The Metro* readership area is served by District 5. (238-7005). Noel Gallo is the incumbent. The at-large councilmember, Rebecca Kaplan, serves the entire city. (238-7008).

Besides knowing your councilmember, one of the best ways to keep informed is to join your Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council and get to know your Neighborhood Service Coordinators:

- Ariana Richards covers Allendale, Melrose and Maxwell Park. Call her at 238-7619 or arichards@oaklandnet.com
- Renee Sykes serves Dimond, Woodminster, Bret Harte, Oakmore, Joaquin Miller, Lincoln Highlands, Redwood Heights, Crestmont and the Laurel District north of 35th Avenue. Call her at 238-7929 or email rsykes@oaklandnet.com.

We also suggest you investigate your local neighborhood listservs, and go outside and meet your neighbors.



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Your Oakland City Councilmember Libby Schaaf invites you to visit her and her staff during her monthly Office Hours.

First Thursdays, 9am at Caffe Diem in Dimond (2224 MacArthur Blvd. near Fruitvale)

First Saturdays, 9am at World Ground Cafe in Laurel (3726 MacArthur Blvd. near 35th Ave.)

Third Saturdays, 10am at Woodminster Cafe (5020 Woodminster Lane)

Fourth Sundays, 9:30am at Montclair Farmers Market or in Colonial Donuts (6126 La Salle Ave)

Fourth Wednesdays, 3:30pm at Melrose Library (4805 Foothill Blvd.)



End City Hall Shenanigans

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

organized or semi-organized groups clogging the system. By signing up hundreds of speakers, opponents of a measure can keep the discussion going until well after midnight. Those residents who work the next day, or who take BART to get home, will be outlasted by those who have no higher priority than to clog the system until 2 a.m. or later. So it happened that the Jan. 22 meeting continued until after 3 a.m. on Jan. 23.

California's Brown Act gives the public a right to be heard at City Council meetings, and well it should. But it also allows a Council to impose reasonable limitations on hearing length and the number of speakers. Oakland has not done this. It needs to.

Make Oakland Better Now's Ed Gerber and Paula Hawthorne have put together a slate of possible reforms designed to bring rationality and order to the public hearing process while respecting the rights of the public to express all views at Council meetings. Here are some of their proposals:

1. Hear major issues at a set time and for a set amount of time.
2. Provide equal time for supporters and opponents with some provision made for those who are neither. Speaker cards have a "for" or "against" box to check, but most people don't use it.

3. Rotate time between supporters and opponents with priority determined by time of signup. (i.e. If there is a two-hour hearing and two minutes allowed per speaker, the first thirty to sign up would be heard.) Or select an equal number of speakers on each side at random.
4. Display speaker order on the screen above the Council.
5. Reform the process for ceding time. The current process is very disruptive to the flow of witnesses, and can substantially prolong the amount of administrative time during public speaking. Council rules could provide that all ceding must be arranged for in advance, with the names of the ceding speaker-card holders provided to the clerk. In addition, all ceding speaker-card holders must appear at the podium with the speaker. The process of having speakers continually appeal to the audience for more time needs to be curtailed or, preferably, stopped.
6. Consider allowing Committee hearings to be the public hearing on some, or all, of the calendar. Under the Brown Act no public hearing is required at regular meetings if there was a public hearing in a committee composed only of Council members. Since working people should be allowed to speak on issues before Council, and most Committee meetings are during the day, the Council should consider having special committee meetings at night for major issues.

We believe the Council needs new rules that are respectful of the time of Oaklanders who come to speak, impose reasonable limits on hearing time, while ensuring that all points of view are heard.

Bruce Nye is an Oakland resident and a board member of Make Oakland Better Now!, a citizens group advocating for public safety, transparency, accountability and budget reform. For more information, visit www.Oaktalk.com and www.MakeOaklandBetterNow.org

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Laurel Neighborhood News

Poo Bags Coming to a Street Near You

BY RENAIIS WINTERS

Spotting first at the Laurel Village Art Garden at 35th and Delaware and now on other streets in the Laurel neighborhood you will find pink containers filled with plastic bags for use by local dog walkers.

Leona: News from the Heights

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

but they've stayed just as busy and productive as ever, now supportive of their three successful grandchildren. And, having both grown up with parents who gardened, their garden today is a thing of beauty. Vegetables, berries and fruit trees cover their property. They travel extensively, having visited Europe, Central America, and they have a particular love for our country's national parks, especially Yosemite. Ten years ago, following the encouragement of a good friend, they began volunteering year-round at the Oakland Museum's hugely successful fundraiser, the White Elephant sale. Here, they've become legendary. The sheer amount of time spent and hard work processing donated goods can only really be appreciated if you've visited the warehouse where the sale takes place.

The LeBoas boundless energy and dedication to others, through every organization or person they've come in contact with, well, it's just beyond words.

Don and Brenda LeBoa may have started their family life with next to nothing, carving out an existence in a one-bedroom trailer, but their lives today represent a passion for life and a knack for embracing others. We can all find inspiration here.

Larry Laverty continues a family tradition of writing for The Metro.

Installed by anonymous neighborhood do-gooders, these pink beacons of community spirit grace posts and poles, promoting cleanliness while providing a place to put those used but still serviceable plastic bags.

The path toward the Poo Bag container at the Art Garden also features poetry, parsed out on wooden stakes to gently lead conscientious dog owners toward the pink plastic treasure trove while encouraging them to stoop to conquer unwanted waste.

One such poem, reminiscent of the old Burma Shave signs found on rural roads a long time ago, reads:

If your pet has left a pile
Try to make your neighbors smile
Use a free Poo-Bag
Then none would nag!

You could perhaps call these a new assortment of pick-up lines. Don't be left out of the loop. You too can join the ranks of the stealthy community activists and put up your own pink plastic poo-bag receptacles.

The plastic bag containers are available at Ikea for \$1.99. The poetry, of course, is priceless.

Laurel Art Garden awarded grant

This grant will allow the Laurel Village Association of neighborhood volunteers to add a raised bed to the Art Garden; to place a mosaic tiled planter at the



COURTESY PHOTO

Poo bag poles like these can now be found around the neighborhood.

median and to cover the city garbage can located nearby with mosaic tile.

The Art Garden will soon feature a lovely sign created by John Donivan who built and donated the new bench in the garden. The LVA welcomes volunteers to help design and build these projects. Volunteers are also encouraged to join in on the third Saturday of every month for clean up, weeding and planting at the Art Garden.

Contact the Laurel Village Association by email through laurelvillage@gmail.com.

Learn about Genealogy

The East Bay Genealogical Society was founded in 1978 for the purpose of promoting interest in genealogy. The society meets on the second Wednesday of each month in the Family History Library in Oakland. Meetings run from 10 a.m. to noon and feature informative speakers on all things "Genealogy."

Upcoming programs include:

March 13 Nancy Thompson speaks on Turner Family History. She'll share methods and aids to creating interesting family

trees and clues to gathering family oral histories.

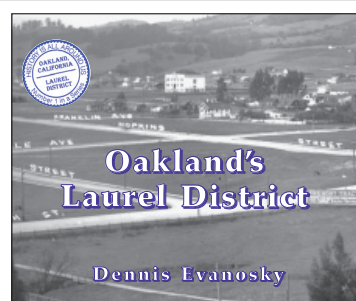
April 10 Ralph Severson, Director of the Oakland Family History Library speaks on what's new at the library and how to navigate their website. Access to the massive number of records in this library is free and docents are there to help.

The Family History Library is at 4766 Lincoln Ave. in Oakland.

There is ample free parking and all meetings are free.

For more information, call 522-7469.

A Guide to the Laurel District's History



Oakland's Laurel District by Dennis Evanosky

The comprehensive overview of the Island's domestic architecture. To order this 88-page book send a check for \$25 made out to Alameda Sun to 3215J Encinal Ave. Alameda CA 94501

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 263-1472

Libraries to Present Free Business Talks

A two-hour seminar, "Accessing Capital for Your Business" has been scheduled at the Dimond Library for any business owner interested in securing debt or equity financing. Learn how a wide range of banks and other lending organizations evaluate your loan application and the types of funding they can provide. You will also learn the difference between debt and equity and why equity might be better for you.

Information in this seminar will help you stand out to capital providers in a tough economic environment. There will be a panel discussion as part of the program and time for networking at the end.

The seminar will take place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 26, at the Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave.

A second program in

this series "Developing a Website for Your Business" will be held from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 13, in the Bradley C. Walters Community Room at the Main Library, 125 14th St.

A small business's web presence can range from a single web page in plain text to complex web-based applications, e-commerce, or social network services. Learn which is right for you.

See how to integrate a website into normal business operations and familiarize yourself with the best practices for web development. Get an overview of the building blocks that challenge small business owners to further research, understand, utilize and master emerging technologies.

To learn more about upcoming events happening at Oakland's libraries, visit www.oaklandlibrary.org ♦

Letters

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

operation will build on the site. If we don't get senior housing, we will get fast food. If McDonald's decides to build on that lot, the Laurel community can't stop it because McDonald's doesn't need a special use permit. So it is senior housing or junk food. What do we want?

— **Kevin Rath**
Executive Director
Manos Home Care,
Owner-Operator,
Laurel Office Center

Editorial

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

frequently ask about distribution.

We assigned Janet Crandall, the *Alameda Sun's* sales representative the task of not only keeping *The Metro's* current advertisers on board, but of bringing new advertisers into the fold. (Janet took the extra step and played the instrumental role in almost tripling the paper's distribution points — see the list on page 4).

We've also discussed revamping *The Metro's* copy style to be able to cram even more good stuff (including revenue-producing ads) into each and every issue of *The Metro*. Look for next issue to have even more articles packed in for your enjoyment. We welcome your input on our evolving redesign.

On behalf of the new board of directors, Eric and I would like to thank everyone who has helped *The Metro* since the paper's inception: all the advertisers, writers, photographers, distributors and board members. We hope to help the new board of directors continue *The Metro's* tradition of remaining what *San Francisco Chronicle* East Bay editor Chip Johnson called "a gutsy little newspaper."

Please write us with your letters, comments or complaints any time at: thetacmetro@gmail.com.

Standoff on Tompkins

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

building is more than 50 years old. The age of the building will raise even more issues and drive later discussions when the project formally comes before the commission.

The neighbors also need to learn how the Planning Commission works (Urban Green Investments certainly knows). They can start by staying for the meeting and seeing how projects and issues unfold.

They should also study how parties are handling other "local" issues — those in the Laurel and Dimond districts — before the commission. There are two for starters. They can whet their appetites with the senior housing project at 4317 MacArthur Blvd. (at High Street and MacArthur Boulevard), and then dig into the fate of the firehouse at 3455 Champion St. in the Dimond District. All the documents about these cases are available online on the Planning Commission's website.

Visit the page, scroll

down and click on the two addresses. The computer will unfold all the documents about both cases.

Neighbors should also get to know Urban Green Investments. What do they really stand for? What do they do?

When it comes time to face off with Urban Green at the commission, these neighbors will be much better prepared.

I know this works. I was once very angry about a drug house on Redding Street. We learned that the landlord was going to spruce up the place and make it into a nicer drug house. He started building without permits. I got angry I wanted to face off with the landlord, but I learned a better way from then-Councilman Dick Spees and his right-hand person, Chris Ralls.

I followed their advice and organized my neighborhood. Then we followed the steps outlined here. Drive by and have a look at the result at 39th Avenue and Redding Street. There's not a stick standing of the old drug house. ♦

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Loss: Neighborhood Mourns Passing of Beloved Singer, Musician

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Association and recognized as a District 4 Local Hero in 2012.

Rejoyce was well known for gospel singing as one of the Stovall Sisters, and sang with her sisters Lillian and Nettie (who are also Dimond residents) at many events in Oakland and beyond. YouTube segments feature the Stovall Sisters, and a history about Rejoyce, the Stovall Sisters, and family has been written by Oakland resident Opal Louis Nations. (This history, including many family photos, can be viewed at his website: www.opalnations.com/Articles.html; scroll down to Stovall Sisters.) Barbara Dane, jazz singer, commented, "Things just won't be the same around here (or on the planet!) without the warm smile, the beautiful voice of Rejoyce."

Local resident Richard Reineccius posted "Rejoyce has passed from us, but we really need to rejoice in the fact she shared her humanity with us, here in our humble community ... a true Humanist ... and always full of hope."

And Gen Katz wrote: "She was our local hero — our eyes on the street, a soft voice to tone down anger, a constant presence on this site." Julie Johnson from Fruitvale Senior Center wrote that Rejoyce's voice "filled every corner of the hall and every heart and rang up to heaven and if God did not know about the Fruitvale Presbyterian Senior Center before, he sure knew about it when Rejoyce sang."

Rejoyce was remembered at the Oakland City Council meeting on Dec. 18 with a proclamation read in her honor. This proclamation can be viewed at the

Dimond Branch Library. Rejoyce, her talent, presence and voice in the community, will be missed and we close this tribute in her words. "Just my thoughts. Peace, Love and Blessings to you all from me! Rejoyce."

Jay Rose Passes; Memorial Service March 10

BY DENNIS EVANOSKY

Longtime Laurel resident and founder of Acme Music, Julio "Jay" Rose, passed away quietly on Dec. 15, 2012, at the age of 88. In his 43 years at Acme Music, Jay had a remarkable influence on the community in which he made his home.

"I will be adjourning (the Dec. 18, 2012,) City Council meeting in honor of Rejoyce and Jay... Losing two creative lights in the same week is indeed sad."

— Libby Schaaf, District 4 city councilwoman

Several generations of musicians had their start at Acme under his benevolent management. "It's been a good gig," Jay told *The Metro* in 2008, summing up his experiences at the shop. "I've been good to people. I still love people.

In my mind that makes me a success."

There was no mistaking Jay along MacArthur in his leather cap, dark sunglasses and African-beaded bracelet. Jay offered "a special



PHOTO BY NICK LOSTRACCO

Jay Rose at the drums in Acme Music.

gift to his customers and neighbors — he's been helping them keep time," *The Metro* reported in 2008.

He prided himself in opening his shop punctually each day at 10 a.m. sharp "If you can't tell it's 10 o'clock then you can't tell time, and if you can't tell time you can't be a drummer," he told *The Metro*.

Jay was a self-made man born into a poor farming family in the Central Valley. His incredible love for jazz became the means through which he transformed himself.

He became a respected jazz drummer and upright bass player in his own right. He was a veteran who served in Korea. More than anything he was a gentle and open-minded individual who had many friends and few enemies.

In 2008 Jay told *The Metro* about dressing up in a black tuxedo and bow tie and playing in a jazz band at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

"When he first started the shop back in 1977, he worked three nights a

week in the City playing the drums and six days a week at the store, *The Metro* reported. "Back then, the store was doing well. He had 70 students, and people would come to his store to buy instruments, sheet music, and lesson books."

Until 1994, Acme Music was twice the size it is now, with pianos and records and instruments. That was before the fire. "I can't believe I survived that. It was heartbreak," Rose told *The Metro*.

Jay's legacy lives on. "We took Jay's drum set, a Camco jazz ensemble from the 1940s, and mounted it up on the wall at the front of the store," said John Middle and Annette Loveless, Acme Music's current owners.

"The set was his pride and joy. We hope that those of you who visit with us at

Acme will appreciate this permanent memorial to Jay."

There will be a memorial service for Jay from 3:30 to 5 p.m., Sunday, March 10, at The Altheim, 1720 MacArthur Blvd.; all are invited. A music scholarship for local students has been started in his name and donations can be sent through Acme Music.

Stop by Acme Music, 3715 MacArthur Blvd. and see Jay's drum set.

John Middle and Annette Loveless contributed to this story.

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