

PANIL Notes

Volume 32 Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League - PO Box 20375, Oakland 94620 Nov/Dec 2007

ASKED ON THE AVENUE

What's Your Favorite Holiday Tradition?



Cherie Carter and Bill Wedemyer, El Dorado Ave.

Cherie: We spend all Christmas Day at the movies, usually starting at the Jack London Cinema. We see a couple of films in Berkeley and end up—

after dinner at a Chinese or Japanese restaurant—at the Grand Lake or the Piedmont. *Bill:* We don't own a car, so we have to plan our route on public transportation. It's all part of the fun of the day.



Annette Stearns (with husband Roman), Ramona Ave.

In Uganda, where I'm from, Christmas is the biggest holiday of the year—often one of the few days when villagers eat meat. Everyone gathers at one person's house: the women cook enough for two days, the little kids sweep the compound, and the men drink a local brew,

mwenge pigere, and tell stories. There's a beautiful feeling of community.



Perry Trautner, manager Vino! 4027 Piedmont Ave.

In November and December I usually work 10-hour days, nine days in a row. After we close on Christmas Eve, I walk up the hill to my house, where my girlfriend sets out hors d'oeuvres. We open a bottle of Champagne—I prefer a rosé made from Pinot Noir grapes—and toast the season.



Shelly Lowe, owner Piedmont Stationers 4171 Piedmont Ave.

Here at the store the holidays can be absolute insanity. So before it all starts—usually in November—we have an employee gathering with food, gifts, and sometimes a movie. Some years we've gone to a restaurant, and a couple of times we had a potluck.

North Oakland Talks with Mayor Dellums

By Bill Manley

A packed multipurpose room at Peralta School greeted the tall, dignified congressman-turned-mayor to North Oakland on Saturday, October 13. Jane Brunner hosted this get-together in the same room where she has hosted monthly meetings for ten years. The mayor has made very few public appearance since he was elected.

Dellums began with a passionate 40-minute speech without notes announcing a series of big initiatives:

- Light Up Oakland—a partnership with PG&E to improve street lighting for public safety
- Redevelopment of the Oakland Army base to mixed use residences and a regional shopping center, providing 10,000 new jobs. Past efforts have been project driven, he said, instead of strategy driven.
- Citywide Health Services—a five-year program to put a health clinic in or near every public high school and middle school
- A new World Trade Center to position Oakland as a truly international business center for West Coast and Far East trade
- An Office of Public/Private Partnership to bring in industry and philanthropy to

Continued on page 2

November PANIL Meeting Wednesday, Nov. 14, 7:30 p.m.

7:30-8 Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council

8-9:00 City housing policy:

How changes in the works could impact us.

Condo conversion: will renters be able to live here?

Density: what's coming next door?

Speakers will include Norman Hooks from the Mayor's Land Use Task Force

December PANIL Meeting Wednesday, Dec. 5

CORE Emergency Preparedness

Piedmont Gardens, 110 41st Street
11th Floor Sky Room

Continued on page 3

**Piedmont Avenue
Neighborhood
Improvement League
PO Box 20375
Oakland CA 94620
www.panil.org**

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Mayor Dellums (continued from pg. 1)

help solve Oakland problems

- A targeted, block-by-block revitalization of troubled areas of the city, similar to a 70-block effort in Los Angeles
- Zoning update to reconcile the codes and the General Plan, the city's land use policy document. Recent zoning has been based on projects, not broad vision and planning.
- Crime prevention strategies, including outreach workers to prevent violence, and collaboration with the warden of San Quentin to improve preparation for independent living for parolees. Nearly 3,000 parolees are released into Oakland every year, and they account for 40-50% of our crime and violence.
- Police recruitment and retention strategies to reach the full authorized staffing level of 803 officers.

In explaining how he plans to pay for these projects, the mayor described very positive meetings he had with philanthropic groups, such as the California Endowment and the Atlantic Foundation, as well as county, state and federal funding sources.

He then turned his attention to crime—a hot button in North Oakland—and described the difficulties of hiring and retaining new police. While the academy has graduated many new officers, there have been a large number of retirements and police simply moving to different—maybe less challenging—communities. The mayor talked of his intention to work with Peralta colleges to prepare more high school

graduates for work in law enforcement.

“I’m prepared to fail trying to do something *big*, rather than be successful tinkering at the edges,” said the mayor. “I didn’t come home to tinker at 71 years of age; I’m doing this because there’s ‘unfinished business.’ Oakland is big enough to be significant and small enough to be successful. Oakland is the nation’s future: multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual.”

Forty speakers came to the podium, and each got a one-minute audience. PANIL was well represented by three current and former steering committee members and other neighbors.

Three topics dominated the comments to Mayor Dellums—who appeared to look every speaker in the eye and listen intently:

- the need for more police services
- the expansion of Children’s Hospital and its detrimental effects
- the need to improve education

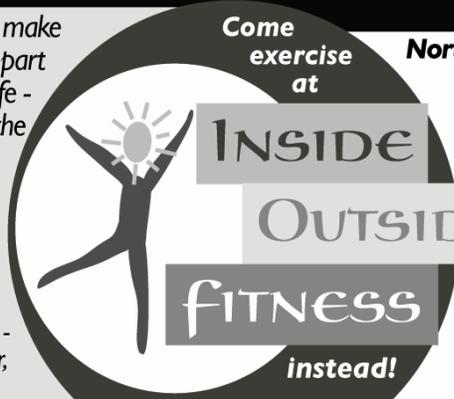
But with 40 speakers, comments touched on everything from deteriorating parks, a foreclosure moratorium, condo conversion prevention, the need to stop buying plastic water bottles, and accessibility of administration staff to many other important (or sometimes trivial) issues.

The speakers and the audience were well behaved and respectful of the mayor and each other’s often divergent views. The mayor seemed to charm the audience, but there was nonetheless evidence of some impatience and healthy skepticism.

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Kaiser Revises M/B Center Site Plan

By Valerie Winemiller

Kaiser unveiled revised site plans on Oct. 22 for the new clinics and hospital replacement slated for the MacArthur Broadway Center site. The community meeting at Mosswood Recreation Center was the third with Kaiser regarding plans for the block bounded by Broadway, MacArthur, Piedmont and the 580 freeway. The series has been a platform for strong advocacy and creative suggestions from neighbors, including several architects from the area.

At earlier meetings, neighbors had objected to plans which put all the "back alley" functions on Piedmont Ave.: the truck loading docks, emergency and ambulance entrance and parking lot, the mobile tech dock (trailers for medical imaging and other high tech equipment), and an oxygen tank storage structure. Kaiser project managers had cautioned that reversing the layout would put all the main entry traffic onto Piedmont Avenue (projected to be 13,500 vehicles a day).

Project architects presented the following revisions:

- Semi trucks (100 a day) will enter from Broadway; a driveway between the parking garage and the freeway will lead to docks under the hospital.
- The mobile tech dock has been hidden underground.
- The Emergency Department entrance (60 ambulances and 600 cars a day) would remain on Piedmont, but exit routes are being reconsidered.
- The oxygen tank storage structure has been hidden between the central utility plant and the freeway.
- A landscaped plaza has been created at Piedmont and MacArthur.

Meeting Dec. 3

A fourth meeting has been added on Monday, Dec. 3, also 7 p.m. at Mosswood Recreation Center, to consider aesthetic concerns and improved pedestrian-friendly street level designs. The formal city application process and related public hearings would follow soon afterward.

What's Your Favorite Holiday Tradition?

(continued from pg. 1)

Margitta Gardner, Ramona Ave.

I celebrated Santa Lucia Day (Dec. 13) when I was a child in Sweden. About 6 years ago I threw a Santa Lucia party here. It was such a hit that I've done it every year since. I wear a white dress and the traditional candle crown. Saint Lucia was an Italian martyr. No one knows how her legend came to Sweden, but it's a nice way to brighten one of the darkest nights of the year.



All photos by Joyce Benna

FIELD OF DREAMS

Christmas Tree Sales Benefit Oakland Tech Baseball Program

By Paul Brekke-Miesner

Your Christmas tree purchase can help a young pitcher develop skills in Oakland Technical High School's baseball program or support the team's new Field of Dreams at 45th St. and Telegraph Ave. Coach Eric Clayton will be selling trees to raise funds for the new field.

To order a tree, contact Coach Clayton at 867-0917.

Read the full story of the Field of Dreams in Chip Johnson's column in the Oct. 26 San Francisco Chronicle. Go to www.sfgate.com and search for "Field of Dreams."

Calendar
(for more neighborhood events go to www.panil.org/calendar)

PANIL Meeting
2nd Wednesday of the month
7:30 to 9 pm
11th Floor Sky Room
Piedmont Gardens
110 41st Street

PANIL Steering Committee
email info@panil.org for time, date and place of monthly meeting

Glen Echo Creek Work Day
2nd Saturday of the month
Monte Vista Avenue, 9:30 am
654.1930

Mt. View Cemetery Tour
Docent led tour
2nd Saturday of the month
10 am, FREE

Events at the Chapel of the Chimes
4499 Piedmont Avenue
654.0123

Historical and Botanical Tour
3rd Saturday of the month
10 am to noon, FREE

Jazz at the Chimes
3rd Sunday of the month
\$20/children under 12 FREE
2 to 4 pm

Oakland Heritage Alliance Lecture Series
2nd Thursday of the monthly
7:30 pm
\$8 OHA members/\$10 non-members/\$5 low income
Further information:
www.oaklandheritage.org or
763.9218

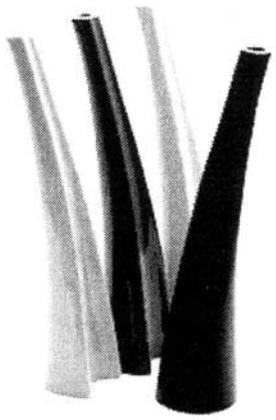
Piedmont Avenue Branch Library
160 41st Street, 597.5011

Storytimes
Toddlers
Wednesday, 10:15 am
Pre school
Wednesday, 11 am

Saturday Knitting Club
Every Saturday 3 to 4 pm

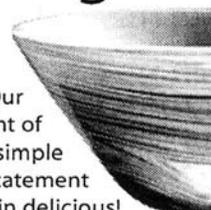
To place an item on PANIL's calendars, send e-mail to: info@panil.org

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PERMITS APPROVED

Cafe Trieste Coming to Piedmont Avenue

Cafe Trieste will open at 4043 Piedmont, next to Cesar and J's Hamburger.

The original Cafe Trieste is in North Beach in San Francisco. Two additional locations are in downtown San Francisco; others are in Sausalito and Berkeley.

Under zoning codes, a conditional use permit was required to convert a retail use to a food use. PANIL has long sought to maintain a balance of goods and services on the Avenue and opposed the cafe application at this address because of loss of a retail space. PANIL urged the applicant to find a space that is not zoned for retail. The city approved the application Oct. 22, but addressed that and other concerns raised by PANIL in the Conditions of Approval. Such permits run with the address and not with an individual business, so PANIL suggested conditions which may be needed for future restaurants operating at this site.

Cafe Trieste will be required to feature retail items for sale, as they do in their other locations (cappuccino machines, CDs, Cafe Trieste "gear" including caps, shirts, cups, aprons and "many other products," according to their attorney). Trash storage must be in the building basement, and standard requirements have been applied regarding litter control, noise and other issues. Cafe hours will be 7 a.m. to midnight. Food must be available any time alcohol is offered.

There were no drawings for facade changes or signage included in this paperwork, so the cafe may be hoping to apply for design review separately under the Small Applications process, which does not have public notice or public comment. PANIL submitted public comment on design anyway, urging that any changes retain the sense of a unified building facade. The cafe is also expected to apply separately for a sidewalk encroachment permit for outdoor seating (in the rear), a liquor license, and a cabaret permit for live music and poetry readings. The latter two permits will allow public comments.

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Piedmont Gardens Design Review

By Valerie Winemiller

Oakland's Design Review Committee will consider Piedmont Gardens' expansion plans on Wednesday, Nov. 7 in Hearing Room 1 at City Hall at 4 p.m. The committee will look at both the new building proposed for the corner of 41st St. and Glen Ave. and at the proposed remodel of the existing tower at 110 41st St. (where PANIL meets). The committee could ask for modifications to the plans before forwarding the case to the Planning Commission. Upgrading the tattered tower is desired, but efforts to integrate its 1960s modern design with the more traditional new building presents design dilemmas.

PIEDMONT AVENUE MERCHANTS SPONSOR ACTIVITIES

Halloween 2007



All photos by Phil Laing



REPORT FROM THE OCTOBER PANIL MEETING

What Happens to Your 911 Call?

Just about everyone knows to dial 911 in an emergency. But what happens next? Oakland Police Department Communications Supervisor Regina Harris-Gilyard answered that question and many others in her presentation at the October PANIL meeting. Among her revelations:

- Oakland's 911 line receives about 100 calls an hour, 17,000 calls a week, 73,000 a month.
- About 30 percent of 911 calls are medical emergencies that get transferred to the Oakland Fire Department (OFD).
- To save time when reporting a medical emergency or a fire, use the OFD's direct number: 444-3322.
- If you're reporting an emergency from your cell-phone, don't call 911: your call will go first to the California Highway Patrol—an intermediate step that may cost precious minutes. Instead, call the direct local line: 777-3211.
- If you get a recorded message when you dial 911, don't hang up! Similarly, if you change your mind after dialing 911, stay on the line so that your "incident" can be cleared. Dispatchers are required to call back every incoming number that results in a hang-up, which diverts them from urgent calls.
- DO call 911 if you or someone else—or your property—is in immediate danger.
- DON'T call 911 if you've come home to a burglary scene, if you witness a dispute or loitering in the street, if you're in a car accident in which no one is injured, or if there's a car blocking your driveway.

Oakland's emergency communications center is suffering an emergency of its own, said Harris-Gilyard: only 57 of its 72 positions are currently filled. Several dispatchers have retired and others are on disability or medical leave. Job candidates must be 18, have at least one year of previous public-service experience, and be able to type 55 words per minute. They must pass written and oral examinations and undergo 40 weeks of on-the-job training. The starting salary is \$32 an hour.

To tour the emergency communications facility at 7101 Edgewater Drive, contact Harris-Gilyard at 777-8805.



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In Stitches

BY SHOPGIRL

Cold, rainy evenings are tailor made for needle crafts like sewing, knitting and crocheting. With the arrival of two new stitchery stores, Piedmont Avenue offers just about everything a craft-lover needs.

If you're disappointed by clothing that fits poorly (and what woman isn't?), **Sew Images** has the solution: MyLabel 3D pattern-making software, a new release from Bernina, the sewing-machine manufacturer. Store owner **Cecilia Franklin** is enthusiastic: "Input your own measurements, select one of the 10 basic styles, choose a fabric and trim, and dress your virtual mannequin," she explains. "You can rotate the model to see how the pattern will fit from all angles!" The software even tells you how much fabric you'll need. The program costs \$499, but as Cecilia points out, it will quickly pay for itself in a perfectly fitting wardrobe. Sign up for a free in-store demonstration Nov. 14, Nov. 16, or Dec. 7 (call for times). On the avenue since 1994, Sew Images sells an extensive range of Bernina and Baby Lock sewing machines (\$199 to \$8,000) and offers classes for kids and adults in basic sewing, serging, quilting, and hand sewing. There's also a twice-monthly open studio (\$45 per session).

It was a sad day for many of us when Poppy Fabrics closed its doors on Broadway after 36 years in business. But here's good news: **Lan Nguyen**, a longtime supervisor at Poppy, has opened her own store, **Piedmont Fabric**. Lan is stocking lots of the Mexican oilcloth patterns that were a hit with Poppy customers (\$7.50/yard; perfect for tablecloths and other home décor), as well as sumptuous silk ribbon lace (\$42.95/yard), Italian wool-cotton challis (\$10.95/yard), stretchy flower ribbon for dressing up a sweater or T-shirt (\$10.90/yard) and distinctive clothing patterns from Oakland designer LaFred (\$10-\$18 each). Grab a handful of colorful rubber thimbles for stocking-stuffers (\$1.95 each). An expert seamstress herself, Lan is available for coaching, advice and troubleshooting.

Thuy McElravy learned hand-embroidery as a child in Vietnam. Now she brings her expert freehand embroidery skills to customers of **Eclipse Collection**, which shares retail space with **V-Tex Fabrics**. Thuy and her staff create custom-embroidered silk pillows (14"-16", \$40), curtains and clothing such as traditional Chinese cheongams or contemporary silk sheath dresses. "Just give me a picture," Thuy says, "and I'll turn it into embroidery." Thuy also designs and sews much of the clothing sold in the store: cropped wool swing jackets with full lining are \$120. Or select your own fabric from the bolts in stock and make your own designs—or have Thuy do it. Alterations are another specialty at this eight-year-old store.

Before opening **Piedmont Yarn & Apparel**, **Bente Petersen** spent 12 years in Hawaii running a Chinese-medicine clinic. But before that she fell in love with knitting in her native Denmark. "All fourth-graders learn to knit in

school," she explains. Her new store—her first retail venture—opened Oct. 19 with shelves full of local, organically grown yarns: cotton from Guinda (Yolo County), mohair from Goat Hill Farm in Napa (\$15/skein) and lace-weight alpaca from Gilroy (\$19.99/skein). And the rest of the world is well represented, too: Mondial wool/alpaca from Italy, baby llama from Peru, mercerized cotton from Greece, ribbon yarn from Turkey and pastel bamboo/wool—perfect for baby sweaters—from England. Bente wants to foster an "active, urban" environment for beginning and experienced knitters; she's accepting knitted apparel on consignment (in November, she's featuring hats) and has plans for a knitting group in the adjacent lobby, where Piedmont Yoga students often gather.

Looking for company while you tackle that knitting project? Head over to **Piedmont Branch Library** any Saturday between 3 and 4 p.m. to join the informal knitting group. Experienced knitters help beginners.

Sew Images

4172 Piedmont Ave.
601-8739
sewimages.com

Eclipse Creations/V-Tex Fabrics

4299A Piedmont Ave.
923-9639

Piedmont Fabric

3858 Piedmont Ave.
655-1213
piedmontfabric.com

Piedmont Yarn & Apparel,

3966 Piedmont Ave.
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Hearing Set for 412 Monte Vista Development

A public hearing on the 40-unit condo development proposed for 412 Monte Vista will be held before the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on Monday, Nov. 5, at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, One Frank Ogawa Plaza. This hearing will focus on impacts to the historic mansion, designed by Walter Mathews. Download the city's staff report from the Planning Commission Meetings page at www.Oaklandnet.com; scroll down to Landmarks Preservation Agenda.

Later hearings before the Planning Commission will consider the entire project. For project description and house history, download the March 2007 PANIL Notes and the architect's renderings at www.panil.org.



View of proposed development from Monte Vista at Harrison. The historic mansion is lifted and moved to the lot's front corner.



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SEND NOMINATIONS NOW "Best of the Avenue"

In the January issue of PANIL Notes, ShopGirl will introduce Best of the Avenue, an appreciative hat-tip to the great stores and services in our neighborhood.

Readers, which stores/ services/ landmarks of our neighborhood do you rave about to friends?

She'd like to hear your nominations in any category you propose: most kid-friendly, most historic, most colorful, best alternative to a mall store, and so on. (Be creative!)

Send submissions to shopgirl@panil.org.

Deadline: Nov. 30.

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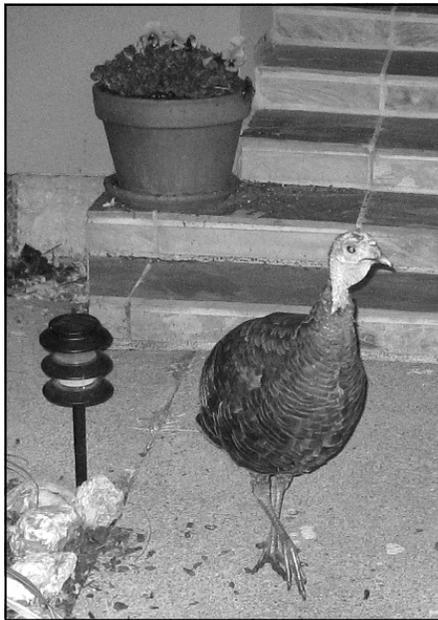
Nature in the City: Turkeys

By Valerie Winemiller

The Yahoo Group, PiedmontAve@yahoo.com, lit up with reports of "amazing and delightful" wild turkey sightings on Monday, Oct. 15. Elisabeth Kristen had seen some in the Rose Garden and David Cohen had seen one on Pleasant Valley up to a year ago.

This time, David Yusem photographed a pair of juveniles on Monte Cresta; Charlie Milgrim snapped them on Monte Vista, where Maggie Fedder also saw them. Mary Wand had seen a female strutting down Montel Street early Sunday morning.

Jessica Geich saw them at Harrison and Bayo Vista on her way to work on Tuesday. They were back on the lawn at Monte Vista Ave. and Wilda by noon that day.



Photos by Charlie Milgrim

Fossil evidence indicates that wild turkeys may have been native to California 10-12,000 years ago, mostly in Southern California. An ancient creature, turkeys diverged from pheasants 11 million years ago. Today's wild turkeys, *Meleagris gallopavo*, had a pre-Columbian range from central Mexico and eastern Arizona to Florida, southern Maine and Wisconsin.

This species was first introduced (or re-introduced?) to California in 1877 for hunting.

Turkeys are ground dwellers. They forage for berries, acorns and other nuts and seeds as well as some insects on foot, and nest on the ground, where they lay 8 to 14 eggs in spring,

often hidden in grass or shrubs. Young can begin to fly at two weeks; adults fly well enough to escape predators or roost in low trees together. They normally live 10 years, and are shy and wary of humans.

A small flock reportedly has lived in Mountain View Cemetery. A walk in the cemetery reveals recent significant denuding of previously rustic habitat in the unendowed areas and hilltops. These wanderers may be displaced refugees looking for new homes.

Donna Ryan warns that turkeys around the Lafayette Reservoir can be aggressive when protecting their harem or chicks. Geich was chased at Rossmoor when she tried to get too close to some chicks. Their 6-foot wingspan can be intimidating. So drive carefully, keep your dogs under control, and give them a wide berth.

"Long may they fly," wrote Cohen.



Do You Have a Story to Share with PANIL Notes?

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or drop us a line at

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