

PANIL Notes

Volume 33

Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League - PO Box 20375, Oakland 94620

April 2008

ASKED ON THE AVENUE

What's the Best Way to Celebrate Spring?



Joe Joe Scott
Gilbert Street

I love to be outside, walking, enjoying the sunshine.



Bara Kocaman,
Crescent Street

I like to go to the ocean when the weather's good. Play volleyball on the beach in Sausalito.



Yusuf Auletta
38th Street

This is my second spring here, and the allergies are killing me. Back east I liked to plant flowers, get dirty in the garden. I'll have a garden here someday.



Jason Hofmann
Howe Street

I don't really change my routine much, but I notice that there seem to me more women out and about, and I always enjoy that.



Ignacio Aceves
Kingston Avenue

I like warm weather sports like swimming, especially in the big lakes: Berryessa, Comanche.



Bill Harper
John Street

Buy Flowers!

RESIDENTIAL PERMIT PARKING (RPP).

Public Streets, Private Vehicles and RPP

By Bill Manley

Do you think you should be able to park in front of (or at least near) your home? What if all the parking spaces are taken by people who don't even live near you? What can you do?

On Wednesday evening, February 20, about 30 residents congregated in the Rockridge Branch of the library to hear Oakland Parking Administration staff explain proposed increases to fees for Residential Permit Parking (RPP).

Much of the PANIL area has RPP in place. This program gives residents (virtually) unlimited parking rights on the streets of their neighborhood and imposes fines for cars without RPP permits that park for more than two hours (four in some places) during work hours.

Proposed fee increase brings Oakland to same level as Berkeley pays now.

About 25 years ago, around the Rockridge BART station, neighbors petitioned the City to institute the first such program in Oakland. The main source of the problem was San Francisco-bound commuters from areas as far away as the Berkeley Hills,

Continued on page 2

Candidate Nights April and May PANIL Meetings

Wednesday, April 9

7:30 p.m.—Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council
7:45 p.m.—9 p.m. — City Councilmember-at-large
Candidates: Kerry Hamill, Charles Pine,
Clinton Killian, Rebecca Kaplan, Frank Rose

Wednesday, May 14

District 1 Councilmember
Candidates: Jane Brunner, Patrick McCullough
District 1 Director, Board of Education
Candidates: Jody London, Tennessee Reed, Brian Rogers

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

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

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**Public Streets, Private Vehicles
and RPP**

Continued from page 1

Orinda, or other far-away places, looking to avoid Bay Bridge delays, tolls, and pricy SF downtown parking. The solution: drive to a place close to casual carpool stops, Trans-Bay Bus stops, or BART stations (if the lots were full), park your car free all day, and come back at 6 p.m. via bus or BART to retrieve your car and drive home. Understandably, this practice greatly inconvenienced residents who counted on the spaces in front of their homes, as many of us do.

There was a time, maybe 70 or 80 years ago, when people would buy a house without worrying about a triple, double, or even single-car garage. They knew there were ample busses and trolleys to take them long distances, and they could always walk to the corner grocery for a loaf of bread. As we well know in the Piedmont Avenue area, many older houses were built without garages or even driveways.

But after WWII, all that changed. Zoning came to Oakland in the 1930s. Big auto and big oil, flush with war profits, wanted to keep up the demand for cars and gasoline. So they worked through national, state and local politics to dismantle public transit and convince politicians that auto ownership was as fundamental as clean water and sewers. Minimal parking standards were introduced, and public money poured into road construction and public parking lots. Suburbs mushroomed, and cities decayed. While cities remained hubs of employment, they lost residents. Only those too poor or not permitted in suburbs remained behind. Retail establishments moved away, and trolleys disappeared. The suburbanites still demanded access to cities, so freeways and expressways were built through urban neighborhoods. But when freeways weren't enough, commuters also turned to BART, AC Transit, and "casual carpooling" to cross the bay. Rather than pay \$20/day to park in San Francisco, commuters could park free on Oakland streets and in 15 minutes be in downtown San Francisco.

Commuters aren't the only ones use our streets for all day parking. Employees of

large local establishments, such as the post office and the hospitals used "our" streets for parking.

The Kaiser Hospital expansion spawned RPP programs in the PANIL area. Berkeley has instituted permit parking around Alta Bates.

In the past, to get the Residential Permit Parking program on a particular street, residents would have to submit signatures from 60% of the households on the block. Then residents would have to pay \$25 for each car they wanted to park on the street. That fee covered the first year. For renewals, it was \$15 annually. Renewals require that the resident mail in proof of registration and residence (e.g. utility bill) each year.

The city's new proposal does not change the process, but it increases the cost substantially. To register initially, the cost will jump from \$25 to \$60, and renewal will jump to \$50—an increase of 333%!

The explanation, according to Parking Administration officials, is that the City was losing money on the operation. This seemed unfathomable to many in the audience who felt all the City did was deposit the check and send back a paper sticker. While some in the audience were already aware of the proposed increase, others shouted "What?" or "Are you kidding?"

No one in the audience was satisfied. One resident asked how much the clerks were paid. Others asked why so much



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evidence had to be sent in by residents each year "Can't you just check the DMV records?"

Shala Azimi, a revenue analyst for the department, attempted to provide answers. The clerks were paid about \$22/hour. She explained that the DMV was very protective of its data, and proof of residence cannot be easily obtained. While most of the work is now done manually, the fee increase will help pay for automation. "Will we get a reduction when that happens?" quipped one man. Amizi said that none of the ticket fees go directly to pay for the program; all go into the general fund.

The outrage was dampened when the administrator noted that Berkeley and San Francisco fees have been at the \$50 level for a few years already. A member of the audience suggested that even if the fee is justified the increase should be phased in over several years.

A decision will be made in March on the increase. The City Council will have to approve the increase, but given the cash-strapped circumstances of the City as a whole, chances for stopping the increase are dim.

That bicycle is looking better every day.

Letter to the Editor

Piedmont Gardens Construction May Call For RPP

When Piedmont Gardens begins construction of the five storey building to be located on the corner of Glen and 41 Streets, residents of the surrounding neighborhood can anticipate increased competition for the limited number of unmetered spaces. Piedmont Gardens employees, as well as construction workers will be needing parking. Residents of the area who need daytime street parking may face traffic congestion and parking shortages. The city of Oakland has established a Residential Parking Permit program for the residents of neighborhoods where there is competition with non-resident parkers. This is accomplished by establishing parking limits in the area and exempting those vehicles which display a residential parking permit. To have the blocks around the Piedmont Gardens construction area so designated, the city requires a signed petition from residents. Anyone wishing information about a petition can contact me at 510 655 8743.

Jackie Hackel
Linda Avenue

Calendar

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

PANIL Meeting

2nd Wednesday of the month
7:30 to 9 p.m.
Piedmont Gardens
110 41st Street
11th Floor Sky Room

PANIL Steering Committee

email contact@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 a.m.
654-1930

Mt. View Cemetery Tour

Docent led tour
2nd Saturday of the month
10 a.m., FREE

Events at the Chapel of the Chimes

4499 Piedmont Avenue
654-0123

Historical and Botanical Tour

3rd Saturday of the month
10 a.m. to noon, FREE

Jazz at the Chimes

3rd Sunday of the month
\$20/children under 12 FREE
2 to 4 p.m.

Oakland Heritage Alliance Lecture Series

2nd Thursday of the month
7:30 p.m.

\$5 OHA members/\$10 non-members/\$5 low income
For more information contact:
www.oaklandheritage.org,
763-9218

Piedmont Avenue Branch Library

160 41st Street, 597-5011

Storytimes

Toddlers
Wednesday, 10:15 a.m.
Pre school
Wednesday, 11 a.m.

Saturday Knitting Club
Every Saturday 3 to 4 p.m.

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

Summer Art Camps

Draw-Learn-Sculpt-Create-Enjoy

Half-Day and Full-Day Art Camps

- Africa Adventure
- Art About Me
- Cartoons & Clay
- Horse Camp
- Myths & Magic
- Ocean Exploration



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Spring Fashion Forecast

by ShopGirl

Closet looking a little drab? Shop locally for fresh and colorful spring styles.

Open since November 2007, **McMullen** offers sophisticated, feminine styles in sizes 0 to 12 from fashion-forward designers such as Diane Von Furstenberg, Loeffler Randall, Rag & Bone and Robert Rodriguez. Most of the pieces in the shop can be worn together, says owner **Sherri McMullen**, a former buyer for Neiman Marcus, who says she chooses styles “that are fun and timeless—and make you feel happy when you wear them.” Case in point: a Loeffler Randall silk flutter jacket with flattering ruffled neckline, in a creamy shade of pearl (\$520), perfect when paired with sleek black trousers. Gray pinstripe trousers in lightweight wool from Rag & Bone (\$300) combine two spring trends: higher waist and wider leg. Casual essentials in the back of the store include Goldsign jeans in dark washes and clean silhouettes (\$198 to \$210) and soft cotton-modal knit tops from Splendid (\$42 to \$58). Sign up for notices of monthly trunk shows where you can preview and pre-order next season’s styles.

Your search for the perfect pair of pants is over:

Abigail now carries its own design, a great-fitting style in stretch woven rayon with a flat front, no pockets, invisible front zipper, and a slight bootcut silhouette (\$125). “We’ll always have black,” says owner **Gail King**, “and we’ll rotate in other neutrals.” In sizes 2 through 14, the pant can be paired with many of the other pieces in this elegant, light-filled salon. Start with a bold black-and-white checked blazer from Max Mara in washable stretch cotton-rayon (\$575; matching slim skirt is \$245) or a cropped basketweave jacket from German designer Bianca, in camel with a subtle golden thread (\$435). For a summer wedding, Abigail offers a dressy but unfussy suit in a subtle, lightweight champagne print: the trumpet-shaped knee-length skirt and soft tie-front jacket are \$295. And for casual weekends, check out the reversible cotton/poly knit sets by Maralyce Ferree of Portland, Maine: top and pants are \$265 for the set. Underneath it all, add some color with Simone Perele lingerie in a luscious new shade of coral.

“Trendy, up to date, and affordable” is how store manager **Patricia Fernandez** describes **A Step Forward**, which specializes in casual, comfortable footwear, accessories, and separates. She predicts “a lot of color” for spring and singles out a short cotton/nylon trench-coat from Tulle in aqua or yellow with playful tulip-patterned lining (\$79) and open-toe leather flats from Blossom in orange, yellow, or green (\$39.99). The store now carries several styles of the well-known

Naturalizer brand of shoes, including the very popular “Creston,” a soft leather flat with an elasticized collar for a secure fit (\$69.95). As always, you’ll find a great selection of Dansko clogs and shoes as well as handbags from Hobo International and Ameribag. Top off your look with a woven fedora (\$24) or a wide-brim cotton canvas hat in bright coral, aqua, or walnut (\$39.95).

Fun, flirty and girly are the keywords this season at **Bee’s Knees**, where you’ll find a colorful array of short sundresses from Angie (\$42 to \$45; try wearing them over leggings or pants) and a basketful of sassy tights and sox from Betsey Johnson—pink fishnet leggings with rosette trim; red lace tights; patterned ankle sox (\$10 to \$25). The store recently began carrying romantic, vintage-look dresses from Young Essence (\$72 to \$92): one beautiful style, in black chiffon with an ivory-embroidered bodice and button-trimmed sleeves, looks fantastic with a pair of Remix retro-style bow-trimmed slingbacks in matching black and white (\$148). Also noteworthy: 100% cotton jackets and shirts from Peru, in white or black with trapunto and fretwork details (about \$67 to \$79). And don’t miss the loose-fitting

JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH LECTURE/PERFORMANCE SERIES

Sun 4/6 **The John Santos Quintet**
4 pm *What IS Latin Jazz, Anyway?*

Jovino Santos Neto & Harvey Wainapel **Fri 4/11**
7:30 pm *Brazilian Music ~ Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow*

Sun 4/13 **The Grassroots Composers Workshop**
2 pm *Creating Jazz*

Chelle! & Friends **Sat 4/26**
2 pm *The Queens of New Orleans*

This series is part of PAMA’s April
“Piedmont Avenue Tulip & Art Festival “
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Chapel of the Chimes
4499 Piedmont Ave FD#1254

kimono jackets in sheer patterned silk (one size fits all; \$58.95)—float one over a little black dress or floaty pants. Co-owner **Jan Kunkler** says she even sold one to a male friend who wears it under a sport coat!

Britches is celebrating its 22nd year in business by offering customers a Britches reward card: make five purchases of any amount and take 25 percent off your sixth purchase. Get started with Sandy Starkman dresses (\$125 to \$148)—perennially popular because of their flattering silhouettes—long, full skirts and shapely waists—and colorful floral and ethnic prints. New this season are ingenious shoes that come with three interchangeable snap-on fabric uppers. For just \$120 you get three looks! Lingerie continues to sell well at this fun and eclectic shop. Owner **Dorothy Griffin** says customers love the “astrology” panties embellished with ruffles and a zodiac sign.

Abigail
4167 Piedmont Ave.
985-0446
abigailpiedmont.com

A Step Forward
4018 Piedmont Ave.
339-0500

The Bee’s Knees
4024 Piedmont Ave.
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THROUGH APRIL 26

Piedmont Avenue Tulip and Art Festival



The third annual, month-long Piedmont Avenue Tulip and Art Festival continues with Mountain View Cemetery's Tulip Extravaganza. It features artists sponsored by Piedmont Avenue merchants, music and many other activities every weekend at Key Route Plaza—all culminating in a merchant fair the last weekend of April.

For full information about events and schedule, go to www.PANIL.org and click on Tulip and Art Festival Schedule.

LEGENDARY POET AND ACTIVIST

Nikki Giovanni Reads From Her Works

Oprah Winfrey calls her one of America's living legends. Nikki Giovanni--poet, writer, activist, and educator--will make a rare West Coast appearance at the Oakland Museum on April 24, reading from and discussing her most recent books, including *Acolytes*, *Rosa*, *On My Journey Now*, and *The Grasshopper's Song*.



The **Oakland Public Library**, in conjunction with the Oakland Museum of California and the Friends of the Oakland Public Library, invite you to "join the circle of knowledge" on Thursday, **April 24**, 7:30 p.m. at the James Moore Theatre, Oakland Museum of California (1000 Oak at 10th

Street). This event is free, but seating is limited (first-come, first-served). Doors open at 6:45 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. KTOP-TV, the city of Oakland's Cable station, will be taping the program for a later broadcast.

Ms. Giovanni is the author of nearly 30 books for both adults and children. She was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, and grew up in Lincoln Heights, a black suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio. Her first book of poetry, *Black Feeling Black Talk*, was



published in 1968. Since then, many of her titles have received awards and honors.

Her autobiography, *Gemini*, was a finalist for the National Book Award; *Love Poems*, *Blues: For All the Changes*, and *Quilting the Black-Eyed Pea*, were honored with NAACP Image Awards; and her children's picture book, *Rosa*, about civil rights activist Rosa Parks, was named a Caldecott Honors Book. Ms. Giovanni currently teaches at Virginia Tech University.

SAFETY AT LAST AT 40TH AND BROADWAY?

\$800,000 in Grant Funds for Major Improvements to 40th and Broadway Intersection

PANIL member Joanne Black lives near the 40th and Broadway intersection. Last year (April 2007) her article in PANIL *Notes* described "an accident scene waiting to happen." She wrote about the stream of pedestrians and bicyclists heading toward the MacArthur BART station, the bus passengers crossing the street to catch a transfer bus, competing with busy auto and bus traffic.

She offered several ideas for improvement, such as bulb-outs, left-turn-only lanes. She suggested that readers communicate their ideas to the city's Public Works Department.

Recently, Councilmember Jane Brunner sent the following announcement to her constituents.

I am so pleased to give you the good news that we have been successful in winning an \$800,000 grant from the State "Safe Routes to School Program" to pay for major improvements to the intersection at Broadway and 40th Street. A portion of the grant also goes to improving safety for students at Castlemont School in East Oakland.

The money will allow the City to improve the intersection for residents and Oakland Tech students who transfer buses at this intersection on the way to and from school.

Motorists will enjoy new left-turn signals at the intersection. For pedestrians, we will install bulb-outs (also know as curb extensions) at the corners and median refuges to make it easier and safer to cross both roads.

The grant application was a partnership between community members, my office, and the Transportation Division of the City of Oakland. We look forward to seeing the results!



Jane Brunner
Councilmember,
District 1



**PIEDMONT AVE
PHOTO GALLERY**

**A View of
the Avenue**

Our neighborhood is filled with characteristic sights. This one, Wild Turkeys spotted on Rio Vista Avenue was captured by Edmund Gee.

We invite photographers to send pictures taken on the Avenue or in the neighborhood to www.panil.org.

INTEREST CONTINUES

A Senior Village

A Senior Village is a membership program which provides support and services to enable people to stay in their own homes as they age. A small group of Piedmont Avenue neighbors has been meeting to explore the development of a Senior Village in the PANIL area.

If you would like to become involved or would like information on what a Senior Village could mean for you or members of your family, contact Judith Coates, at jdcoates13@yahoo.com, or call her at 510-653-1183.



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Kaiser Construction

By Valerie Winemiller

Community meetings continue on Kaiser's Phase 2: hospital replacement, clinics and other related buildings on the block of the MacArthur Broadway Center.

In the drawing below, the view is from roughly in front of Cybelle's Pizza on Piedmont Ave, looking southwest across MacArthur Blvd. The corner of Piedmont Ave is on the left.

The proposed massing of the complex is depicted, color coded for interior functions and proposed surface materials. The architects plan to break up the massive structure

and hint at interior uses with different exterior treatments. Much of the ground level will be public functions such as cafeteria, gift shops, pharmacy and hallways, with storefront-style glass. On March 3, Kaiser's architects showed photos of other buildings' windows and wall articulation ("in and out" shapes) and invited neighbors' comments about how to make the hospital's tower more visually interesting.

One more community meeting is expected to look at drawings, then the project will be scheduled for a hearing before the Planning Commission's Design Review Committee in April. A color PDF of the full presentation from March 3 is available on www.oaklandnet.com. Jump to a Department: Planning and Zoning> Major Projects> Kaiser Hospital Design Review.

