

# PANIL Notes

Volume 33

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

May 2008

## Kerry Hamill Speaks Up about Piedmont Avenue Elementary School

*By Ronile Lahti*

Kerry Hamill, the Director for District 1 on Oakland's Board of Education, held a press conference at Piedmont Avenue Elementary School on April 25 to discuss the events reported in the press about bullying among the students there. In attendance were members of the community, parents, OUSD administration employees and State Administrator Vince Matthews, Angela Haick, principal of Piedmont Avenue Elementary School and Alice Spearman, OUSD board member, as well as many members of the local media. In her opening statement, Director Hamill said:

We send our best wishes to seven-year-old Zachary Cataldo, a Piedmont Avenue Elementary student who just spent two nights in the intensive care unit at Children's Hospital after an incident at the school left him with a fractured skull this week.

We deeply regret that any child at any school in Oakland is harmed before, during or after school hours. When I read in the Chronicle today that the state administrator did not return phone calls on the matter, I decided to call this press conference and invite the dozens of community people who have been waiting to offer a comment as well.

I speak for everyone in this room when I say it is absolutely essential that Oakland schools provide a safe environment for our children. We want our children worrying about their next math test or English paper – not whether will be bullied or slapped while waiting to get picked up at school.

The district administrator heard from me and every other school board member within an hour after receiving an e-mail from the child's aunt Tuesday. I asked for an explanation – to be completed quickly and thoroughly. We have policies designed to protect students from repeated incidents of violence and we honor requests from a family member to move a child who feels legitimately unsafe at school.

I asked that the suspension rate at this school be reviewed because it seems out of sync with what is reasonable at a school of this size. This is a legal matter – the fact that lawyers have been brought in make it necessary for us to practice

Continued on page 2

## Candidate Night Wednesday, May 14

Candidates  
and  
Information on Ballot Initiatives  
for  
For June 3 Election  
at the  
May PANIL Meeting

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**

Are you a registered voter? Do you have a new address? Have you changed your name? Want to change your political party before the June 3 election? Register by May 19. Voter registration forms are available at the Piedmont Avenue Branch Library and at the PANIL meeting on May 14.

**Piedmont Avenue  
Neighborhood  
Improvement League**  
PO Box 20375  
Oakland CA 94620  
[www.panil.org](http://www.panil.org)

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**District 1 Councilmember**

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238-7001

[jbrunner@oaklandnet.com](mailto:jbrunner@oaklandnet.com)

**Maria Barra-Gibson**

238-7014

**District 1 School Director**

**Kerry Hamill**

879-8653

[kerry.hamill@ousd.k12.ca.us](mailto:kerry.hamill@ousd.k12.ca.us)

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238-6703

[atoribio@oaklandnet.com](mailto:atoribio@oaklandnet.com)

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Neighborhood Services Coordinator

238-3102

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Problem Solving Officer

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**Kerry Hamill (continued from page 1)**

restraint. I am not drawing any conclusions about what happened until I hear a full report. But what I know for a fact is that this school has a tradition of support that has been developed over the years through a partnership with PANIL (Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League), PANSAs (Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood School Association now the Walk-To-School/PANSAs group), an ever expanding PTA and a network of neighbors. I want Oakland to know that solid learning goes on here every day. Piedmont Avenue Elementary School was my home school for ten years. My children and I were here every day during those years and my children always felt safe.



Kerry Hamill

We will not sweep anything under the rug. We know that the only silver lining in a bad situation is the opportunity it presents to correct a problem so it never repeats itself. But we do not want the vitality and high quality of the learning at this school to get lost. We will keep you posted on the district's findings and the School Board responses."

Some parents have questioned the method OUSD administration used in arriving at 96 suspensions for the past year. One remarked that out of a student body of 360, there were only 9 students who were involved in "violent or extreme behavior," and 16 others involved in various other isolated incidents. Another, a Piedmont Avenue resident whose two boys have attended the school since kindergarten and are now in the first and third grades, said she felt very comfortable having her children attend the school and wanted to make sure the public was aware of the many positive programs taking place there.

PANIL echoes director Hamill's call for a quick and thorough investigation. A new page has been added to the PANIL web site ([www.panil.org](http://www.panil.org)) to track developments and list ways the community can become involved at Piedmont Avenue Elementary.

Note that PANIL's next candidate forum on May 14 will feature the candidates for the board of education for this district as well as for city council.

**District 1**

[Kerry Hamill](#), Vice President

Board of Education

Oakland Unified School District

Kerry Hamill, who joined the Board of Education in January 2000 and served as President of the Board in 2002, was elected Vice President of the Board by her colleagues on January 4, 2006. She is a founding member of the Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood School Association and board member of the Oakland Parent Organizing Project (OP2).

Ms. Hamill formerly served, from 1996-2000, as chief of staff and educational liaison in Sacramento and Oakland for State Senator Don Perata. From 1990 to 1996, she worked as a policy advisor for Oakland Mayor Elihu Harris; she handled education and media liaison from 1988 to 1990 for Assemblyman John Burton. She was a newspaper reporter from 1982 to 1988 for the Mill Valley Record, Leshner Newspaper Group, in the Richmond and Martinez bureaus.

Ms. Hamill holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Journalism from San Francisco State University. She is married and has two children, who attend Oakland public schools.

Her second term ends January 2009.

From

<http://bex.ousd.k12.ca.us/KerryHamill.asp>

## Letter to the Editor

I was so disheartened to arrive at Piedmont Avenue Elementary School (PAES) on April 24 for the scheduled "community campus clean up day" and to have a camera shoved in my face and such ugly accusations and statistics being thrown about. I have been active with the school since I moved here five years ago and more so since my oldest started attending Piedmont Avenue in 2005.

I know that PAES took a strong disciplinary stance last year and reported each time a student was suspended. Now we are paying the price because the numbers of suspensions appear to be higher than at most other schools in the district. I applaud the fact that the school is addressing the behavior of the students, suspending students when appropriate and reporting the incident. I applaud the fact that our school is not afraid of publishing the results of its disciplinary program. However we should remember that statistics can give wrong impressions. We have learned that incidents get recorded under multiple categories and thus the total number recorded (and reported) is greater than the number of incidents. The officials at Oakland Unified School District have acknowledged that fact and have said they are trying to change the recording/reporting to avoid that misperception.

That said, what can we do to help? Principal Angela Haick and the PTA have repeatedly asked for help with

yard supervisors over the years. Especially now with budget cuts, the school cannot pay for any additional help and in fact will be losing staff due to these cuts. You can help by:

- Writing our officials, saying "no budget cuts."
- Attending meetings of PTA. The next meeting is on Monday, May 12 at 6 pm in the school library. Childcare is provided.
- Volunteering your time.
- Joining the Piedmont Avenue School PTA Yahoo Group and finding out for yourself what is going on and what the school and the PTA are doing about it. Go to [piedmontaveschool-subscribe@yahogroups.com](http://piedmontaveschool-subscribe@yahogroups.com) and send us a message. Look at the calendar of events, and check out our photos.

The PTA is committed to making this school a safe and wonderful environment for all of our children to learn in, but the dozen committed PTA leaders cannot do it alone. Please be a part of the solution. Your voices are wonderful, but in these times we need more bodies. Please keep talking, but consider coming to our next school events and meetings.

No parent would ever knowingly put his or her child in harm's way. Piedmont Avenue School is not "harm's way."

**Amanda Aguilera**  
PTA President  
Piedmont Avenue Elementary School

## Calendar

(for more neighborhood events go to [www.panil.org/calendar](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:contact@panil.org)

## Student Art Show

Sunday, June 8, 2008

12 pm – 4 pm

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## It's a Gift!

By ShopGirl

Mother's Day, graduations, weddings: gifting season is upon us! Use this handy guide to find the present perfect.

### Mother's Day

**New mom?** She'll coo over *The First 1,000 Days*, an elegantly designed baby journal by woodcut artist Nikki McClure (\$12.95 at **Issues**).

**Green thumb?** She'll dig a trowel-and-spade set in an all-over William Morris floral print. Licensed by the Victoria & Albert Museum, the tools are made of sturdy coated aluminum (\$24.95 for the set at **The Bee's Knees**). If she's an indoor gardener, give her a nursery plant dressed up in an Italian ceramic cachepot with a charming cat design (\$80 at **Bella Ceramica**).

**Awww-some:** A petite penguin mother-and-chick figurine, in enamel, hinges open to hold a tiny treasure (\$28 at **The Bee's Knees**).

**Tea time:** A nesting teapot/cup duo in a pink-and-black cat motif is just right for a single serving (\$22.95 at **Surprise!**). Tea Forté—the tea in the silken pyramid-shaped infusers—is as pretty as it is delicious; give her an attractively boxed sampler (\$12.95 at **Make My Day**; stop by Friday afternoons and all day Saturday and Sunday for tea tastings).

**Spa day:** Give her a well-deserved break with an assortment of Zen Garden lotions and bath products in yummy fragrances like Tea & Oranges, Satsuma Blossoms, White Sage & Camellia, and Linden & Mimosa (mineral-bath packet \$4.45; foot-care kit \$24.95; at **Surprise!**). Set the mood with succulent-shaped tealight candles (\$9.50 for six at **Nathan + Co.**) and a jasmine-hibiscus reed diffuser that emits heavenly fragrance for up to a year (\$38 at **Nathan + Co.**). Then send her to nirvana with a made-in-Oakland buckwheat-hull meditation pillow of luxurious silk dupioni and brocade (\$72 at **Make My Day**).

### Graduation

**He finally got his PhD/MD/MBA:** Show him how proud/thrilled/relieved you are with the gift of a Ryser Kentfield mechanical self-winding watch, handmade by Swiss craftsmen and available in several strikingly contemporary designs (about \$1,700 at **Given Gold**).

**She's leaving home:** Remind her that the door's always open—give her a petite “graduation” key pendant (\$40 at **Philippa Roberts**). Or send her a non-text message via one of Thai-born Fremont resident Nathiya Prathnadi's beautifully eloquent necklaces, in sterling silver with white sapphires; available in “om,” botanical, longevity, and endless-knot designs (\$79 to \$119 at **Lireille**).

**He's still making play dates:** But at least you can upgrade his games. Taboo: The Game of Unspeakable Fun (\$39.99), Apples to Apples (\$29.99), and Wits & Wagers (\$23.95)—all at **Dr Comics & Mr Games**—are fun and challenging “get-to-know-you” board games. Before you leave the store, throw in a Worst-Case Scenario card deck (many versions; \$5.95 each) to prepare the kid for postgraduate life.

### Wedding

**They're skipping the Italian honeymoon:** But vibrant Italian ceramics from **Bella Ceramica** will fulfill their fantasies. A server for oil, vinegar, salt and pepper, from Deruda (\$225), instantly upgrades a table setting. And stunning plates, bowls, and platters with the emblems of the districts of Siena (\$80 to \$250; 20 percent off on a purchase of six or more) are almost as vibrant as the Palio itself.

**They're so “ironic”:** And nothing beats oh-so-retro mac 'n' cheese served on melamine dinner plates. Available in a raft of fabulous designs like faux-bois, wallpaper, or Japanese (\$50 for a set of four at **Issues**).

**They're so entertaining:** Assemble a gourmet collection for their delectation—an elegant cheese slicer (\$89), a handsome wooden cheese board (\$36), and a copy of *Cheese & Wine: A Guide to Selecting, Pairing, and Enjoying* by *Chronicle* food writer Janet Fletcher (\$24.95; all from **Philippa Roberts**). Round out the gift with a pair of über-clinkable mouthblown champagne flutes dipped in platinum (\$22 each at **Make My Day**).

**They're all about al fresco:** Set them up with a chic picnic set for four: melamine plates, corkscrew, stainless flatware, and wee cutting board in an insulated zippered bag (\$129 at **Nathan + Co.**).

**When one gift won't suffice:** Fruit-of-the-month is nice, but monthly deliveries of candles really light up their lives. **Make My Day's** Candle Club offers three membership levels, each available for three, six or twelve months (\$56 to \$740).

**Don't forget the attendants:** Groomsmen will appreciate fish-shaped bottle openers in pewter (\$21 each at **Philippa Roberts**). Give the bridesmaids lavender-filled silk “dream pillows” (\$22 each at **Nathan + Co.**). And have some prenuptial fun with the Bachelorette Party in a Box: it's filled with games, temporary tattoos, nametags, a tiara, and more (\$18.95 at **Nathan + Co.**).

**Don't forget the rings:** At **Lireille**, choose custom-made engagement and wedding rings in organically shaped rose gold with as many stones as you wish (inquire about pricing; the set ShopGirl admired was \$1,780). **Given Gold** has traditional ring sets as well as creative custom-designed rings; inquire about prices.

**She loves him:** For the groom: contemporary monogrammed cufflinks by Heather Moore in gold, silver, or combo (\$250 to \$1,220 at **Philippa Roberts**; allow three weeks).

**He loves her:** For the bride: If she's a true romantic, she'll swoon over a Butterfly Bracelet in sterling silver and freshwater pearls, from the Wish Collection (\$262 at **Philippa Roberts**). If her taste runs to the dramatic, wow her with metalsmith Monica Schmidt's spectacular leaf pendant in copper and enamel (\$2,400 at **Lireille**).

Where to Buy

The Bee's Knees  
4024 Piedmont Ave.  
601-7387

Bella Ceramica  
3982 Piedmont Ave.  
601-7938  
bellaceramica.com

Dr Comics & Mr Games  
4014 Piedmont Ave.  
601-7800

Given Gold  
4156 Piedmont Ave.  
652-4186

Issues  
20 Glen Ave.  
652-5700  
issueshop.com

Lireille  
3980 Piedmont Ave.  
547-3755  
lireille.com

Make My Day  
3850 Piedmont Ave.  
601-0608

Nathan + Co.  
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428-9638

Philippa Roberts  
4176 Piedmont Ave.  
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philipparoberts.com

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**Help Wanted at Oakland Tech's Field of Dreams**

The Field of Dreams Committee at Oakland Tech High School is looking for someone with free time to help with grounds-keeping at the new Tech baseball field. Duties include mowing the lawn and other related duties.

Time commitment would be approximately 4 hours per week. Small stipend possible.

Contact Coach Eric Clayton at 867-0917.

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*I love my church because it's sort of like the Wizard of Oz - it's about having a heart and a brain. And courage!*

## A Senior Village

*By Judith Coates*

When Jackie's kitchen ceiling light burned out, she had a dilemma. Neither she nor her husband, who has Parkinson's, can climb a stepladder to reach to the nine-foot ceiling to change the bulb. She could call a handyperson, but they usually charge over \$60 just to come out, and money is tight.

At 92, Sarah has no family nearby and had been doing well living alone in her house with the help of her neighbor, Ann. But Ann recently retired and is moving to be near her only daughter. Sarah doesn't know how she'll manage; it seems her only option is to sell her home and move to a nursing home.

Tom worked at staying fit and healthy. He didn't expect any problem staying in his home until an accident left him with a badly fractured knee. His son and daughter both work and his inability to climb stairs or get out to medical appointments led to a six-week stay in a nursing home. He got good care, but the whole experience made him more determined than ever to find a way to stay independent at home.

By 2030, a quarter of the population will be over 65.

Most of us want to stay in our own homes as we age. But without good support services, we can find ourselves unable to manage after an illness or injury in a house not designed for accessibility, or alone and isolated as spouses and friends die and neighbors and children move away. By 2030, people 65 and over will make up about 23 percent of the Bay Area population and there just will not be enough specialized facilities to support everyone. We must find ways to enable seniors to live well and access the services they need in their own homes.

One creative solution is the formation of a "senior village." Pioneered in Boston's Beacon Hill area, senior villages are membership organizations whose purpose is to provide the kinds of practical support and opportunities for social activities found at a good retirement community, for people who want to stay in their own homes. Members over a certain age, usually 50 or 55, pay an annual fee for a range of services that may include free transportation to medical appointments and grocery shopping, information, referral and coordination of services from the many public and private agencies serving seniors, caregiver support and shared caregiving, daily or weekly phone check-in, healthcare assessment and management, educational and social activities, exercise classes, volunteer opportunities and access to a network of screened vendors who provide services such as home repair and in-home care at a discount.

Most existing villages are nonprofit corporations, formed by a founding committee of residents in a particular area who wanted to plan ahead for their own needs as they age and, using surveys or focus groups, researched how many of their neighbors shared their concerns and what services

they required. Village fees currently range from around \$500 to \$800 per year for a single person and from \$900 to \$1,200 for a couple or family, depending upon the area. In comparison, a residential retirement community can cost several thousand dollars a month. A senior village typically has one to two paid staff and is supported by a combination of membership fees, grants from government agencies and foundations, and donations. Most offer discounted fees for low-income members.

Some PANIL area residents are exploring the possibility of a senior village in our area. If you believe that this could be a way to support yourself or your neighbors in remaining vital members of this great neighborhood, if you would be interested in being part of a founding committee, if you have ideas or expertise to share, or would just like to know more, we invite you to join us. The next meeting will be at 7p.m. on Wednesday, May 21, in the sixth floor conference room at Piedmont Gardens, 110 41<sup>st</sup> Street. For information contact Judith Coates, 653-1183, [jdcoates13@yahoo.com](mailto:jdcoates13@yahoo.com). For information about the Beacon Hill Senior Village, see their web site [www.beaconhillvillage.org](http://www.beaconhillvillage.org).

NEW CAFÉ NEXT TO J'S HAMBURGERS

## Cabaret Permit Granted

*By Valerie Winemiller*

Cafe Trieste is coming to Piedmont Avenue. A cabaret permit—allowing live performances—was granted on April 10.

The Cafe will occupy 4043 Piedmont, between Cesar and J's Hamburgers. Like its original in San Francisco's North Beach, the cafe will offer poetry readings, jazz, world music, flamenco, twice-monthly Italian opera, and "various forms of Americana." The permit allows performances Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 7 to 10 p.m. and Sunday afternoons from 2 to 5 p.m. There will be no live performances Wednesdays or Saturdays.

At the hearing, Cafe Trieste representatives agreed to several conditions. There will be patio seating in the back, but no speaker system to broadcast performances outside. If operable windows are installed on the building, they will be kept closed during performances. There will be seating for about 40 inside.

The standard permit restates allowable decibel levels from the city's noise ordinance, and also requires a designated manager to be on site with responsibility for adherence to the conditions of the permit.

The cafe anticipates opening in early October after a remodel of the space, according to their attorney Rina Rickels. The cafe is now applying for an alcohol license from the state's Alcohol Beverage Control Board.



PIEDMONT AVE  
PHOTO GALLERY

**A View of  
the Avenue**

Our neighborhood is filled with characteristic sights. This one is the design made by stacked flower holders in Chapel of the Chimes. It was captured by Richard Friedman and appears on his photo blog at [www.rchrd.com/photo](http://www.rchrd.com/photo).

We invite photographers to send photos taken on the Avenue or in the neighborhood to [contact@panil.org](mailto:contact@panil.org)...



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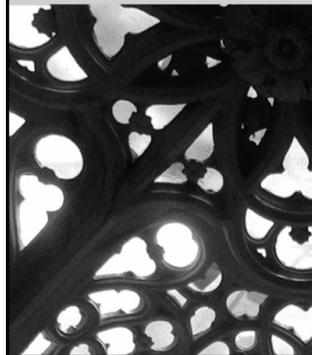
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## Piedmont Avenue Bids Farewell to a Neighborhood Institution



Karen Garcia, Rome Suess, Hedy Thompson, Becky Rosales, Barbara Neal, Jessie Caraveo, and Bea Jones

Photo by Phil Laing

*By Ronile Lahti*

Connie's Hair Salon opened 38 years ago and stayed in the same place with two generations of hairdressers and customers. Becky Rosales and Jessie Caraveo are daughters of Connie, the original owner. Becky joined her Mom when the shop opened. Jessie came a few years later, as did Bea.

Becky and Bea are still working on the Avenue. For several years, Becky, Bea and Jessie have been the notorious "Witches of Piedmont Avenue" on Halloween. They've promised to continue the tradition.

### PANIL Notes- Summer Schedule

The combined June-July issue will reach readers in time for the July Fourth holiday weekend.

### Count Me In

I want to support PANIL's work to keep the neighborhood informed and make our voices heard. **I want to be a member!**

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (minimum of \$15) made payable to PANIL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to PANIL, PO Box 20375, Oakland, CA 94620**