

PANIL Notes

Volume 28 Issue 1—Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League, PO Box 20375, Oakland, CA 94620—January 2003

PANIL MEETING

Thursday
January 9
Sky Room
110 41st Street
7:30 pm

Topic—
What's happening
with the Oakland
Unified School
District?

Speakers—
Kerry Hamill
President/District 1
Representative
Oakland Board of
Education
and other local
educators

To place an item on the
agenda, call
Bess Ellinger
923.1748

Coming in February
Everything you need
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planning to
remodel your home

Thanks to the following
new and renewing
members—

Fred and Candace King,
Pat Cook, Peggy Kincaid,
Charles and Patricia Rzeszulko,
Cisco and Sara Davison Devries,
Ike and Helen Sofaer,
Nancy Henderson and
Kathryn Black,
Joyce Benna, Gayle Lenahan,
Irwin and Phyllis Luckman,
David and Gina LaRue

Kids, Cookies, and the Alameda County Food Bank

By Joanna Smith



Want to have a highly successful fundraiser? Take a group of enthusiastic neighborhood kids, a bake sale, a great location (Piedmont at 41st), and it's obvious why the PANIL/PAMA fundraiser December 7th was so great. Hannah and Haley Gandsey, Marina and Helen Woodbury, Corinne Vandagriff, Alon, Tal and Siona August, and Ely Johnson raised \$125 for the Alameda County Food Bank plus a barrel and a half of canned and boxed foods was collected from Avenue shoppers. In addition, another \$125 was received in contributions, making the grand total \$250! Thanks to St. Leo's for providing storage space, the PANIL members who manned the barrels, and to all of you who made donations.

Piedmont Avenue History

(From a series by local historian Ted Wurm, which first appeared in PANIL Notes in 1977.)

Nels Carlson, who has contributed so many of his memories to our Piedmont Avenue area history, attended the original Piedmont Avenue School, which was at practically the same location as the school of today, but what a difference! The old school was a wooden, three-story building with peaks and towers, built

in 1891 and named "Piedmont School" because it served children of the whole area before Piedmont became a separate city in 1908.

After graduating from grammar school in 1917, Carlson started at the new Oakland Technical High School, then only five years old, on nearby Broadway. He remembers that the school was built on the former circus grounds, where he and his pals once watched a real bull fight. Sometimes Nels would walk over to Tech by way of Bilger Quarry at the end of McAdam Street (partly filled in, this is now the site of Rockridge Center). The kids would watch a chain gang of city prisoners working in the quarry there and at the small city quarry across the road.

Among the sights were two dinky steam locomotives, shoving dump cars up to the quarry face, and gravel-filled gondola cars up to meet Key Route ballast trains. It was quite a sight watching electric railway dump cars coming up Broadway from 40th Street with ballast for use on Oakland's streetcar and inter-urban railway lines.

There were operating reservoirs at the top of 40th Street hill and higher up between Kingston and Oakland Avenues. But many neighborhood homes, gardens, and nurseries still got water from wells pumped by windmills. A 1902 map at Oakland Library shows windmills beside the creek off Echo Avenue (near then No. 121), one at the rear of Gratiot's nursery on Glen and Panama, one at the rear of the Keller rose gardens on Montell, and two on Laurel (now known as Yosemite). Another operated across Piedmont Avenue from Montell.

Continuing down the Avenue, Nels Carlson pointed out that Bill Williams had an auto repair garage at 4365 Piedmont around 1930, and there was another at 4135 operated by A. F. Miller. Fred Tyng, whose home was at 47 Echo, operated a bike shop at 4260 Piedmont. From the

(Continued on page 3)

**Piedmont Avenue
Neighborhood
Improvement League
PO Box 20375
Oakland CA 94620**

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PANIL Notes

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An Interview with the Principal

By John Woodbury

Three months into the academic year, the wisdom of Superintendent Chaconas' choice of Bill Nownes as the new principal for Piedmont Avenue School is readily apparent.

He won the loyalty of my fifth-grade daughter when, within the first week of school, the girl's bathroom was fully repaired and clean (though she tells me it *could* use a bit more daily attention, considering how much it gets used). He earned the appreciation of PANSA's Reading Partner coordinators when he instituted a master calendar for the use of shared school facilities, making the scheduling of reading partner volunteers a manageable task. And he's managed to change the after-school traffic created by parents' picking up students from being a frustrating free-for-all to a fairly orderly operation.

Mostly, though, Bill Nownes is good for our school because he is focused on providing the support our team of faculty and staff need to deliver a quality educational experience.

For a seemingly low-key person, he's always on the move. When I arrived to interview him for this article one recent afternoon, his uneaten lunch on a paper plate went to the top of the file cabinet. Considering that our interview ended when he left to talk to parents and direct traffic at the end of the school day rush, followed by a faculty meeting, I doubt he ever got back to his lunch.

When asked the usual questions about goals, challenges, and management style, Mr. Nownes good-naturedly groaned. However, in our conversation, a few themes came through very clearly:

- focus on the job at hand: provide a good education to our children
- gather good information, set benchmarks, and evaluate results

- anticipate what is coming, and prepare ahead of time
- expect good behavior, and set up systems that support the outcomes you want
- do what makes sense
- respect the opinions of faculty and staff
- no secrets

None of this is revolutionary, and it's not what makes the six o'clock news. It is basic good management, however, and it appears to be working. When combined with a motivated professional staff (only one teacher out of sixteen changed this year), and an array of special programs and resource personnel well above the norm for an urban public school—extra teachers for science, art, music, and computers, the Ann Martin Center counselors, Sports for Kids, junior coaches, and a peer-based conflict management program—this is turning out to be a very good year for our neighborhood public school.

Unfortunately, well-publicized budget woes at the state and the school district level are quite threatening to the progress we've been making. There's probably not much we can do as a neighborhood about those problems. What we can do, however, is to be more involved. The Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood School Association (PANSA) has played an important role in our school's improvement over the past eight years. It will be needed more than ever in the next few years. Get involved. Call me at 654.6591.

Correction: Last month we failed to indicate that the author of the "Farms at Kaiser?" article, Jennifer Scanlon, is a Community and Government Representative with Kaiser's Public Affairs office. Comments regarding the proposed farmer's market should be directed to Valerie Winemiller at 653.4552.

Count me in!

I love this neighborhood and want to help keep it the wonderful community it is.

_____ Here's my check for \$ _____ (minimum \$15.00) to join PANIL.

_____ I will distribute PANIL Notes to my neighbors.

Name/s _____

Address _____

Phone/email _____

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**Mail to: PANIL
P.O. Box 20375
Oakland, CA 94620**

On the Beat

By Bill Manley

Leading up to the holiday season, crimes of theft rose sharply in the PANIL area (Beat 9X). In November, 8 autos were stolen, and there were over 20 burglaries from autos and 20 incidents of petty theft—overall, more than twice as many crimes as reported in October.

In related news, Chief Richard Word was again on stage speaking at Jane Brunner's monthly meeting in early December. The chief and the department have been under fire for Oakland's high homicide rate this year. Chief Word maintains that the average citizen can feel pretty safe in Oakland. He said that OPD statistics show that "eighty percent of the homicide victims are felons, and most of these crimes are drug-related." While that was somewhat comforting, Jane commented on an increased number of murders in the MLK, Shattuck, and Telegraph corridors. The highly publicized murders, armed, and strong-arm robberies have injured and traumatized many and have created an implicit threat of greater violence. Several District 1 residents gave their personal accounts of crimes they'd recently experienced. To OPD's credit, the area commander, Lt. Lawrence Green and the Neighborhood Service Coordinators in attendance followed up on each of the incidents described. Lt. Green and his staff have been very responsive to citizen concerns and trouble spots. Jane was effusive in her praise for the lieutenant as were many members of the audience.

Some in the audience asked for more officers walking the beat. Chief Word replied that had the funding measures passed in the November 2002 election, the neighborhoods would have more walking officers. The Chief also said that the mayor was planning to submit a new measure to the voters that would complement the request for police funding with increased social services.

In 1998, the community agreed that PANIL would also act as the Neighborhood Community Policing Council (NCPC) for Beat 9X, and that NCPC matters would be

the first item on the agenda of every PANIL meeting. Our Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Angela Davis-Lincoln, OPD beat officers, and often Lt. Green, attend this portion of the meeting. If you or your part of the neighborhood are having problems with criminal activity, you are invited to air your concerns during this section of any PANIL meeting.

One of Angela's goals for the coming months is to increase Home Alert participation for Beat 9X. The hope is to build a more cohesive neighborhood using the Home Alert system as a natural feed into the NCPC with the Home Alert Captains as neighborhood representatives. If you are a Home Alert Captain and cannot make the PANIL meeting but have an item you wish presented, please call Angela at 777.8720 and she will make sure your concerns are part of the discussion. If you are not sure who the Home Alert Captain is for your block or wish to start a Home Alert group on your block, call Angela for assistance. The goal is to have a Home Alert group representing every block throughout the beat.

(Piedmont Avenue History continued from page 1)

1930's up into the 60's, this location was known as Ted's—a renowned candy and comic book emporium beloved by all of us kids and by our kids in turn. Carlson once entered a bike race promoted by Fred Tyng. The contestants rode up Moraga Road to the fire house in Montclair and back and very few ever repeated.

The PANIL History Group will meet:

January 11, 2 pm
Rooz Café
4252 Piedmont Avenue

to discuss the following items:

Spring Tour
2004 Calendar
History Project

If you would like to participate, please call
420.0570 or 655.1723

Calendar PANIL

General Meeting

01/09, Thursday, 7:30 pm
Sky Room
Piedmont Gardens
110 41st Street, 655.1723

Steering

Committee

01/23, Thursday, 7 pm
655.1723

Glen Echo Creek

Work Day

01/11, Saturday, 9:30 am
Monte Vista Avenue, 654.1930

History Group

01/11, Saturday, 2 pm
Rooz Café
4252 Piedmont Avenue
420.0570

PANSA

General Meeting

Book Care Night

01/07, Tuesday, 7 pm
Piedmont Avenue
School Library

First Friday

Night Out

01/03, Plymouth Church, 7 pm
Music, Board Games, Food
424 Monte Vista, 654.5300

Public Meeting

The Global School
(a charter middle school in development for North Oakland)
01/08, Wednesday, 7 pm
5366 College Avenue
theglobalschool@yahoo.com

Piedmont Avenue

Branch Library

160 41st Street
597.5011

www.oaklandlibrary.org

Family Storytimes

Toddlers

Wednesday, 10:30 am

Preschool

Wednesday, 11 am

Lawyers in the Library

1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 5:45 pm

PLAY GROUP: Interested in forming a play group for children six months to one year? If you are, please call Wendy at 650.8801.



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Ruby Long at
595.9514 or
Donna Bersaaglieri
at 482.6802.

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|||||
Neela & William Manley
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General Meeting and Book Care Night
—first Tuesday of each month, 7 pm

Call 510.654.6591 for more information

