

North & East Newsletter

April 2006

Newsletter of the North & East Neighborhood Council

P.O. Box 254, Richmond, CA 94808 (510) 237-5670 www.northandeast.org

Dear Neighbor,

Something a bit different for the North & East and for most of the residents of Richmond: in the past the City Council has held hearings on the budget for the upcoming fiscal year (July through June) and, while residents are welcome to attend and even to comment, the meetings have not always been well publicized and are often held during the day when many residents cannot attend.

This year, the Finance Committee of the City Council has decided to hold five city-wide meetings to invite residents to have input on the 2006 - 2007 budget before the Council takes it up in early May.

One of these meetings will be at the regular N & E meeting on April 20. We will hold a brief business meeting at 7 p.m. and then turn it over to the members of the Finance Committee.

If you have something to say (Why can't the City fix the streets? When will the Library branches open? Is the Police Department going to enforce the noise ordinance?) this is the time. Or maybe you just need to know more about the City and how it works; how we are not going to have a financial crisis like we had in 2004.

For more info: contact Finance Committee Chair Jim Rogers at (510) 867-5725 or elirapty@aol.com.

Also on the April agenda is a report from Elisa Scarborough, our representative to the Parks & Recreation Commission's hearings on the future of several Richmond Parks, on the plans for Humphrey Playlot.

GENERAL PLAN COULD HELP FIX PROBLEMS

The city is beginning an ambitious revision to its General Plan, which looks at many things that make for a good quality of life in Richmond, ranging from noise and traffic to street repairs and trees. As part of the revision, there will be many opportunities for community input.

Why do we care? What do we want this Plan to include?

Meet a Planner who knows the answers at the May 18 North & East Neighborhood Council meeting.

Meanwhile, to be notified about the events and receive other General Plan information, go to the website at cityofrichmondgeneralplan.org

Darrell Hoh
of Marvins Gardens Real Estate
is once again sponsoring this issue of the
N & E Newsletter.
Thank you, Darrell. (and thanks for
March, too.)

THE NORTH & EAST ALWAYS NEEDS YOU!

May Barbano has volunteered to be the back-up for new N & E Secretary Julie Freestone. The Secretary takes minutes at our monthly meeting. We try to have two to make sure that one can be there at all times. Thank you very much to both Julie and May for volunteering.

There are many ways that you can be involved. Please call or email me to talk about it.

Sandi Genser-Maack
President
(510) 237-5670
northandeast@comcast.net

N & E Calendar

Thurs., Apr; 20 -- N&E Meeting, Senior Center, 7 p.m.,
Sat., Apr. 22 -- Good Neighbors Delivery Day, 10:30 a.m.,
950 32nd St., (510) 235-5696.
Mon., Apr. 24 -- Planning & Zoning Committee, 7 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: THURS., APRIL 20, 7 P.M., AT THE SENIOR CENTER

ART CENTER -- TREASURE IN TROUBLE

The Richmond Art Center, a nationally-known treasure right here in the heart of the North & East, is having financial problems. The following is a message from Suzanne Tan, Acting Director, on ways we can help:

We thank you for your past support and interest. Here's how YOU can help support the Richmond Art Center during this time:

-Our greatest need is **financial support**. Your tax-deductible contribution will be used immediately to help us survive through 2006, our 70th Anniversary year, and beyond. Please call **(510) 620-6772** or visit our front desk to make contributions in any amount.

-**Consider volunteering!** The Center is an ideal place to learn about the visual arts while helping us through a period in which we are short on staff due to our financial situation.

-**If you are a Richmond resident**, call or e-mail the mayor, council members, and/or the City Manager, Bill Lindsay, at bill_lindsay@ci.richmond.ca.us. Urge them to support the Art Center.

-If you have a **special skill** you can bring to the Center and believe you could **contribute in a professional or advisory capacity**, please call us and ask to speak to Acting Executive Director Suzanne Tan.

-If you are interested in learning **how your business can contribute** financially and/or with goods and services, please

contact us to discuss sponsorship opportunities.

-When you visit our galleries, **contribute our suggested gallery donation** of just \$3.

-**Remind everyone you know that the Richmond Art Center operates on its own**, without direct financial support from the City or the State. The Center must raise a large part of its operating budget without committed support from year to year.

-**Encourage others to become members, take classes, and visit our exhibitions**. Of course, become a member yourself if you are not one already! There are great benefits, and we even offer a special category just for artists.

Above all, please know that we are committed to keeping our doors open and serving the community as we have for the last 70 years. But we cannot do it without your support. Please act now to help us preserve and sustain the valuable and dynamic community organization that is the Richmond Art Center.



Jasmine Hart-Poindexter, Flower, watercolor, 29 x 37, El Cerrito High School

YOUNG ARTISTS TO RECEIVE AWARDS

The N&E Neighborhood Council voted at its March meeting to recognize five student artists who participate in the annual WCCUSD art show at the Richmond Art Center.

The show opens April 11 and runs through May. A committee, led by Bridget O'Keefe, will select five deserving artists from local middle and high schools to receive \$25 prizes. The N&E is covering the cost of four of the awards and Caroline Rone generously donated the fifth. Watch this newsletter for a list of the winners! Call Bridget at (510) 882-5076 for more information or to help.

INSTEAD OF TELEVISION --READING, FRESH AIR AND IMAGINATION

"When you turn off the TV, a world of possibilities becomes open to you — you can open a book or look out the window or talk to your kids," says ArtsChange associate director Toni Tabora Roberts. A new exhibit, "Books Open, TV Off: Windows, Worlds and Fresh Air of Imagination," is on display from April 7 - May 15, 2006, at the Richmond Health Center.

"Books Open" promotes reading and interacting with the world, as well as turning off the television, and coincides with the national Turn off the TV campaign. The exhibit, curated by ArtsChange artistic director Ann Schnake, features large digital posters promoting books and imagination; an installation by Kelly Finn suggesting a variety of activities that are available when you turn off the TV; artworks by children inspired by the West County Reads program, and a series of posters from the Women Infant Child (WIC) program about turning off the TV during meals and as background noise.

"We want to use the public space of the health center to promote healthy activities and to identify TV as a significant health hazard for both youth and adults. The average American loses nearly 30 hours to TV each week, increasing their risk of obesity and decreasing time for reading and physical activity," commented Tabora Roberts. "We've also lost time for quiet contemplation, fresh air and the fertile grounds for imagination."

ARTEXHIBIT: "Books Open, TV Off: Worlds, Windows and Fresh Air of Imagination"

WHERE: Richmond Health Center, 100 38th Street (enter at 39th and Bissell), Richmond

DATES: April 7 -- May 15, 2006

ADMISSION: Free

HOURS: Mon/Wed/Fri 8 a.m. -- 5 p.m.
Tue/Thu 8 a.m. -- 8:45 p.m.
Sat 9 a.m. -- 5 p.m.



Michelle Ly, Jellyfish, colored pencil, 18 x 12, Hercules High School

MEDICARE PART D WORKSHOPS

Assemblywoman Loni Hancock Presents “A Large Pill to Swallow: Navigating the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Coverage Program”

The deadline for enrolling in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan is May 15th! Everyone needs to make a decision, or risk being penalized for late enrollment. Should you enroll in Part D? Are you confused about figuring out which plan is right for you? Are you being overcharged for premiums and co-pays? Have you already signed up for a plan but are having trouble accessing your necessary medications?

Help is on the way!

Please join Assemblywoman Hancock’s office, with the participation of Congressman George Miller’s office and Congresswoman Barbara Lee’s office, for one of three Medicare Part D workshops scheduled in April (see details below).

Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) counselors will be on hand to answer your questions about Part D, assist you with beginning the enrollment process and offer information on what to do if you run into problems with your plan or if you would like to switch plans.

Tuesday, April 18th: 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m., San Pablo Senior Adult Center, 1943 Church Lane, San Pablo

Thursday, April 20th: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley

Friday, April 21st: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., Center for Independent Living, 2539 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley

PLEASE BE SURE TO BRING A LIST OF YOUR MEDICATIONS AND DOSAGES WITH YOU!

For more information, call Melissa Male at (510) 559-1406.

NORTH & EAST PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE REPORT

March 27, 2006

The committee convened at 7:08 p.m. with members Sandi Genser-Maack, Martha Seymour, James Johnson, Felix Hunziker and Dolores Hembree, (pro-tem Chair) present.

1. (Return) Single family dwelling at 2368 Humphrey Ave. 2-story addition.

Action — passed.

The rear of the house has been changed with a setback, adding a small deck and an overhang at the back exit. Instead of wood siding, recommended use of “Hardy Plank” siding and aligning the second floor bedroom window over the 1st floor window. Add 1 street tree, if possible.

2. Single family dwelling at 2318 Emeric. Add 1400 sq. ft. two story addition & single car garage. Action — passed.

Keep existing house and add two-story addition with attached garage. Add a fixed frosted-type window near front door and lighting on each side or in center over the garage door.

3. Add second dwelling on 60 x 100 sq.ft. lot to the rear of existing house, 3234 Moran. Action — passed.

This will be a two-story building with garage and storage below. Finish will match existing house.

4. Install cellular antennas at 820 23rd St. Action — approved.

T-Mobile will be installing 3 units on the roof of the West County Recovery Center. (North Richmond Neighborhood House)

5. Add 2-story dwelling to the rear of 445 – 29th St. Action — approved

Add a new two-story unit with attached garage at the rear of the existing home. Modify upper 10” wood band to follow the line of the roof at both eave and rake. Wood trim only. Add window in laundry room and have a smooth stucco finish, no dash finish.

6. This item was postponed until further notice. 3817 Macdonald Ave. National Remedies Health Collective.

The Committee adjourned at 8:45 p.m., to meet again on April 24, 2006.

NEWS FROM WILSON SCHOOL

Great News!

After further recalculation by the State, Wilson School met its State and Federal API & AYP Targets. We have an Academic Index Score of 694 and we are shooting for 700 this next testing round which is in the Spring.

STAR Testing window for grades 2-5 is April 12 through May 12, 2006

Spring Break is April 17 - 21, 2006.

We still need monetary donations, approximately \$1500, to update our Earthquake kits.

The PTA is planning a flea Market on the playground on Saturday, May 6. If you

are interested in buying a space, please contact Wilson School at (510) 232-6852.

We are still accepting Registration for Morning and Afternoon Kindergarten through June 9, 2006, the last day of School. Registration will resume on August 21, 2006, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Summer School will be held at Wilson School. The dates are June 19 - July 14, 2006 from 8:15a.m. to 1:45 p.m. We are still accepting applications!

Sonja Neely-Johnson
Principal

CINCO DE MAYO PLANNING UNDERWAY

There is a plan for Cinco de Mayo that includes a parade and festival on 23rd Street on Saturday, May 6, and a festival in San Pablo on Sunday, May 7.

The Richmond Police Department is working with the California Highway Patrol and other agencies to provide high levels of enforcement on Friday, the actual day of the celebration. The Police Department's policy will be "zero tolerance."

At the February Neighborhood Council meeting, members voted to write the City Council and express concern that no positive family-friendly events have been scheduled for Friday.

Below is the letter we sent. In response, N & E President Sandi Genser-Maack was invited to a planning meeting with the Mayors and City Managers of both Richmond and San Pablo, the Police Chief of San Pablo and two of the Police Captains from Richmond.

In spite of an impassioned plea for a family-friendly event for Friday, the night of Cinco de Mayo, the officials of both cities decided that it was a police action and that the only activities planned for that night would be a strong police presence and street closures.

February 20, 2006

TO: Richmond City Council members
FROM: North & East Neighborhood Council
SUBJECT: Cinco de Mayo celebration

We understand there are a number of efforts underway to try to make Cinco de Mayo a safe celebration in Richmond. While we applaud those efforts, we are quite concerned about the direction they are taking.

In September, our neighborhood council convened a meeting to brainstorm with neighbors what they would like a Cinco de Mayo celebration to be. The group agreed that it should be fun, family-friendly and peaceful. Some of the suggestions made at the meeting included a car parade, live music, food, chalk garden and other activities for children, performances by local groups and more.

We hoped that our effort would lead to a participatory effort by the whole community to develop appropriate activities. We hoped to include the faith community and parents at Grant Elementary and other local schools.

Instead, there is apparently planning going on in a number of ways. We were told last week that the Richmond Police Department is adopting a zero tolerance policy (we're not sure for what) and plans to have many officers from not only Richmond but also other law enforcement agencies on hand in 12-hour shifts. We were told that in advance, officers will be distributing flyers and doing press work to be sure the community knows about the heightened enforcement (but not necessarily about any positive activities).

While we understand the need to have sufficient law enforcement personnel on hand in case problems occur, we believe it is critical that there be organized and family-friendly events on Friday, May 5, when we expect many people will gather on 23rd Street and the surrounding area.

We ask you as civic leaders to work with us and other community members to plan something for Friday that will, as one resident said, "Bring out the grandmothers and children." Threatening to arrest people and bringing in outside riot control officers is not what we had in mind. Richmond is working hard to rebuild its reputation. The City Council and City Manager, Police Chief and others need to work together to be sure Cinco de Mayo contributes to that effort.

SINGLE MOMS OF THE N&E

Join a Single Mother's group for the moms of N & E Richmond to talk about issues we face raising kids on our own AND to have fun.

Please call me at (510) 235-3148.

Karen -- single mom of N & E

VIGIL, PARADE SET FOR CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATIONS

Our neighborhood council may not have been successful in getting plans rolling for a safe and family-friendly Cinco de Mayo celebration, but fortunately some others have stepped up to help plan some festivities.

Martha Anguiano, chair of the parade committee, filled us in on the details at the March N&E council meeting. Her children's soccer coach at St. Cornelius School suggested a parade for Saturday, May 6, and the idea won a lot of support among sports clubs and school teams. The "Peace and Unity" event will begin at 24th and Barrett at 10:30 a.m. and continue to San Pablo City Hall. There will be dancers, the Black Cowboy posse and hopefully a Chinese dragon and other features to show the rich diversity of the area.

"Parents want something constructive, no drinking or hanging out," she said. Since Cinco de Mayo is on Friday, church members are also planning to be out in force, with a candlelight vigil, distributing flyers on 23rd Street to invite people to participate in Saturday's events and to discourage rowdy behavior. Residents of the North & East are invited to join in the Friday night efforts and turn out for the parade.

POLICE AND CRIME UPDATES

Police Chief Chris Magnus, who seems to be everywhere these days, gave a report to the Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council last month describing new initiatives at the Police Department. Magnus has reorganized the city into three geographic areas, increased the motorcycle officers from two to four or five and launched "Operation Tow," to get rid of abandoned cars. On the first day of the towing effort, 201 cars were hauled away.

Magnus will be the featured speaker at the regular Crime Prevention meeting on April 19 at 7 p.m. at 330 25th Street. The public is invited.

HOME SALES IN NORTH AND EAST FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

As of this writing (March 24th), there have been nine sales for the month of March. The trend has continued from the previous months where sales have been relatively flat. You may have seen more "For Sale" signs in the neighborhood. Buyers have been more selective and discriminating with their purchases, yet we are still seeing homes sell, just at a much slower pace. Sellers should anticipate pricing at market value and not attempt to set new "highs" in a market that is stabilizing. The inclement weather during most of March has not helped in bringing more consumer traffic through homes for sale. As we enter the Spring season, we will be able to see what direction the market takes in the next month.

<u>Address</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Sales Price</u>	<u>BR/BA</u>	<u>Sq. Ft.</u>	<u>Lot Size</u>
3500 Block of Maricopa	\$299,000	\$310,000	2/1	834	3800
2500 Block of Lowell	\$349,950	\$349,950	1/1	748	3040
700 Block of Wilson Ave.	\$375,000	\$350,000	2/1	1194	4700
2700 Block of Humphrey	\$395,950	\$400,000	2/1	729	2500
2700 Block of Humphrey	\$429,000	\$429,000	2/1	929	5000
2900 Block of Howard	\$455,000	\$475,000	3/1.5	1062	2250
3800 Block of Clinton	\$474,900	\$480,000	3/2	1205	5000
900 Block of 31 st St.	\$475,000	\$495,000	2/2	1653	5000
2900 Block of McBryde	\$479,000	\$488,000	3/1	1004	4032

Darrell Hoh and Marvin Gardens Real Estate believe all material to be correct but assume no liability for its accuracy.

TREES IN RICHMOND

Corrections to last month's article about how to get the City to plant a street tree in your yard:

HOW DO I GET A STREET TREE?

1) Call Steve DeLucchi, City of Richmond gardener, at (510) 231-3001. He will come and let you know if you qualify (there are certain restrictions re: distance from utility lines and driveways) and whether you qualify for one or two trees. He also has a book with photographs and can show you pictures of what's available and appropriate.

2) Get an application form from Steve to send/fax to the city.

3) While the city provides the tree without charge, it's your responsibility to remove any concrete necessary to make a spot for the tree(s). There's a landscaper who does this for people around the neighborhood at a reasonable cost: Javier Casanova, (510) 375-5125.

4) What do you need to do? Just water!! Also, keeping weeds away from the base of the tree helps it grow faster.

The City will provide the trees they have available. Some neighbors simply choose and pay for their own selections.

The city arborist is Carroll Holthaus and he should be contacted for problems with mature trees. His phone number is (510) 231-3075.

Diane Bloom, Tree Lover of the N & E
dibloom@norcov.com

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

PROJECT LAUNCHING

Richmond had the worst pedestrian safety record for a city of its size in the U.S. in 2002 for children 15 years and younger. In 2004, Richmond improved its ranking to No. 16.

Contra Costa County and the City of Richmond have received a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration grant to start the Richmond Pedestrian Project, nicknamed PEDS.

The PEDS project has identified and mapped five pedestrian collision "hot spots": 23rd Street just north of Macdonald Avenue, 23rd near Richmond High School, Macdonald and 37th Street (these three are all in our neighborhood!), Macdonald between Second and Fourth streets, and Cutting and Carlson boulevards. The project will increase enforcement of pedestrian-oriented laws, improve signage and crosswalks, and conduct school and community workshops on pedestrian safety. Small grants - which we are hoping to apply for - will be available for school and community groups to implement pedestrian safety activities. PEDS will also develop pedestrian safety messages in English and Spanish.

More information is available online at <http://www.cchealth.org> or by contacting Shannon Ladner-Beasley at sladner-beasley@hsd.cccounty.us or phone (925) 313-6813.

GETTING READY

If Hurricane Katrina photos didn't scare you and the threat of a major earthquake doesn't worry you, try considering the thought of a pandemic flu outbreak that would close schools, stores and businesses, leaving us on our own for days on end to treat the sick and feed our families.

Disaster planners say every household should have supplies that will help them survive on their own for three to seven days. Those supplies include water, food, battery operated radios and more. For information about how to get ready, go to www.72hours.gov.

The Good Neighbors

visit new homeowners on Saturday, April 22, this month. If you haven't joined us yet, this would be a great time to do it.

Just one hour is all it takes and it's fun to welcome new residents to the N & E with baskets of information and goodies.

Call Ronnie at (510) 235-5696 or meet at her house, 950 32nd St., at 10:30 a.m.

Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council

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The North & East Newsletter

The North & East Neighborhood: West to 23rd St., East to San Pablo Ave., North to the City limits, South to Macdonald Ave.

<p>I support my Neighborhood Council! _ I enclose dues (voluntary) of \$10 for the 05 - 06 year. _ I enclose a donation of _____ _ I enclose a donation for the newsletter _____ Name _____ Address _____ City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____ email _____ _ I do not want to remain on the mailing list</p>	<p>Mail to: Ronnie Marty 950 32nd St. Richmond, CA 94804</p> <p>make checks to: N & E</p>
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North & East Neighborhood Council Meeting

Thursday, April 20, 2006

Third Thursday

7:00 p.m.

**Richmond Senior Center
2525 Macdonald Avenue**

The North and East Neighborhood Council and the City of Richmond Finance Committee invite you to a neighborhood budget hearing at 7:30 p.m. following a short business meeting on Thursday, April 20, 2006, at the Richmond Senior Center, 2525 Macdonald Avenue.

“Having budget hearings in the neighborhoods will help us get neighborhood specific recommendations on the budget while staff and Council are still developing this budget.”