



**OAKMORE  
HOMES  
ASSOCIATION**

# Oakmore Homes Association

Fall 2004 Newsletter

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## *Mission Statement*

***“The Oakmore Homes Association is a community of Oakmore neighbors committed to promoting and enhancing safety, beautification, community and property values in our neighborhood.”***

## **PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

Greetings to all of our neighbors in Oakmore. My year as president of the board is winding down and it has been a blur. The summer was filled with excitement about the stairs project- completed after years of lobbying, spearheaded by board member **Virginia Lew**. The results have been well publicized and this public works project was a reminder that in these times of difficult national politics and polarization, it becomes even more satisfying to act locally and volunteer one’s time to the community. Virginia is going to become the association’s administrator for 2005 and her vacant seat on the board will need filling. We are actively recruiting a new board member for 2005. Will it be you? Contact us...

The board is currently gearing up for the **Annual Meeting** of the Members on **Wednesday November 3rd**. Please mark your calendars now and plan to attend this important and enjoyable event at the Montclair Women’s Cultural Art Club, a local, historical, Mediterranean gem. Watch your mail for the invitation and also for your annual voting proxy. Please don’t forget to sign (all owners of your property) and mail the voting proxy. It is very important to return the completed proxy to us by the deadline.

Our board member **Cindy Haines** has been handling the annual meeting logistics and has arranged for noted East Bay historian Dennis Evanosky, the Special Sections editor at Hills Newspapers (Montclarion), to present a historical talk. He will feature the 1850 to 1930 period of Oakmore and the surrounding area, from the early history of the Indians and Sausal Creek, to the logging of the Redwoods and the development of the area in the 1920’s and 30’s. The presentation will cover landmarks such as the Leimert Bridge and the Sacramento Northern Railroad.

Rocky’s Market proprietor, Gabe Dib, has been busy making improvements in the commercial district. In the article below, board member **Nona Smith** gives us more insight. Gabe asks to hear from residents about what they want in their neighborhood store. I have long believed that ‘voting with your wallet’ is equally important to voting at the polls. So I urge you to participate in our local economy by shopping at Rocky’s and supporting this valuable Oakmore resource.

We have teamed up with Rocky’s to provide a new bulletin board in the commercial district. We plan to continue our posting of the historical news clippings and old real estate ads. Our historical collection is maintained by board member **Terry Kulka** when she is not busy managing other association projects, like this summer’s curb painting venture.

A special ‘thank you’ goes to former board member **Bev Thomason** for welcoming our newly arriving neighbors.

There’s more to tell...so join us at the annual meeting....  
~ Kurt Lavenson ~

## *DID YOU KNOW?*

*Excerpted from an Architect and Engineer Magazine Article, December 1935, titled ‘With the Architects’:*

**“STORE BUILDING - Messrs. Miller and Warneke, Financial Center Building, Oakland have been awarded contracts for the construction of a one story frame store building on Leimert Boulevard, Oakland for R. Mitchell. ”**

*....The building at 1500 Leimert became Bakers’ Drugs and also housed a Cleaners. Though vacant today, the charm of the original building is still quite evident.*

## *ROCKY'S MARKET- AN OLD FASHIONED NEIGHBORHOOD STORE*

It was the week before Thanksgiving, 1998. Paint sprayer in hand, standing amidst empty shelves, Gabe Dib, new owner of Rocky's Market, answered the phone. The elderly woman at the other end of the line wanted to place an order for her Thanksgiving dinner. "We're not open yet," Gabe tried to explain to her. The woman would hear nothing of that. She was used to buying her Thanksgiving groceries at Rocky's, and having it delivered to her door. She was glad to hear a voice at the other end of the phone so she could place her annual order. "But the store isn't open," Gabe tried to tell her again. The woman insisted that it must be open, he had answered the phone. And so, being the kind of guy he is, and being new to the business, Gabe took her order over the phone. Then he drove to Safeway to pick up what she needed, and delivered it to her.

It's that "customer is always right" neighborly attitude that Gabe exudes which makes Rocky's Market a true neighborhood market. And that's what Gabe is striving for. "I like people. I enjoy being able to call my customers by name. I like having a place where parents feel safe to send their kids. I like being part of a neighborhood."

Before becoming part of our neighborhood, Gabe was an environmental specialist, managing industrial clean up sites for corporations. Looking to get out of the corporate grind, he decided to take the planning, predicting, troubleshooting and people skills he had acquired in that field and put them to a different use. He canvassed our neighborhood, knocking on doors, talking with homeowners about how they perceived Rocky's Market and what they wanted the store to provide for them.

When he had completed his survey, Gabe decided that he wanted a store that would reflect our changing neighborhood. He wanted his stock to reflect both the standard brands that people knew and felt comfortable with, as well as a new inventory that would appeal to the younger families who were moving to the neighborhood. That new inventory includes environmentally conscious, recyclable, healthy choice brands and lots of organic products.

Rocky's Market currently uses the same produce supplier as Berkeley Bowl. In the near future, there may also be the possibility that Montclair Produce will move into Rocky's produce section, bringing with it a fresh fish and poultry counter, as well as made-on-the-premises sushi.

Other changes to look for at Rocky's will be the addition of more "ready food," food that's ready to be heated and served, such as gourmet soups and pizza. Gourmet sandwiches, made on the premises and all kinds of fresh salads from green to pasta will also soon be available. "I'd like to be able to have neighbors find whatever they want here," Gabe says. And that includes a job.

Gabe says that he is always accepting job applications from neighborhood kids. He remembers that he grew up with a neighborhood store, and it was a right of passage to work there. He hopes the teenagers in Oakmore will feel that way

about working at Rocky's. And besides, he notes, they can walk to work.

Gabe is always attentive to improving his store, whether with product or appearance. Recently the parking lot was re-striped and the old 50's style Rocky's sign in the parking lot was removed. Gabe is now pressure washing and repainting the front of the store. A new community bulletin board has been purchased in partnership with the Oakmore Homes Association and installed near the front door. Some space in the new board is available to the community to post houses for rent, cars for sale, listings of lost animals and other community notices, with permission from the Association and from Rocky's. Contact Gabe if you have something to post.

And about those hanging kayaks? They belong to Gabe. He built some of them, and yes, they are sea worthy. They've been in every body of water in the Bay Area.

Come down to Rocky's on Saturday morning for coffee, about 9:30, and you can join the informal coffee klatch, hang out with your Oakmore neighbors, and discuss everything from world events to where to sail your kayak in the East Bay.

~ Nona Smith ~

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### *SEARCHING FOR ORIGINAL BROCHURE*

We are searching for a copy of the original 1926 brochure used by the Walter H. Leimert Company to advertise their new subdivision "Oakmore Highlands". The brochure was a folded booklet advertising the 150 acre development "...immediately adjoining Piedmont to the east and adjacent to Lakeshore Highlands..." The brochure contains our original crest on the back. Please contact us if you have a copy that you would consider lending to us or gifting to the association



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### *TREES & VIEWS*

All of us love the trees that share the Oakmore neighborhood and we want to preserve them. We also value our vistas across the hills and out to the bay. Please keep in mind that when trees on your property grow and block the views from other homes, they might require trimming. In most cases around here, you and your neighbors have a right to the views that existed when you each bought your homes. Neighbors can insist on tree

trimming or cutting to preserve their views. However, that is counter-balanced by the prohibition of certain lethal trimming, topping or removal, especially when Oaks and naturally occurring Redwoods are involved. Oakland has revised the View Ordinance to remove confusion about protected trees and protected views. Check with the Association and with the City before cutting trees, or before refusing to cut them. Please cooperate with your neighbors to balance the preservation of both views and trees. Reasonable compromises are usually attainable.

## MEMBERSHIP IN THE OAKMORE HOMES ASSOCIATION

So, often we hear, "What do you get for being a member of the Oakmore Homes Association?"

Membership provides the Association with leverage as a group specifically committed to issues which directly affect Oakmore in importance, but the Association has a deeper purpose, to protect the "essence" of what today makes up the Oakmore neighborhood. The 1926 Walter Leimert development, which we call Oakmore, is more than just a grouping of beautiful homes of the 1920', 30's, and 40's, in a lovely Mediterranean setting. It is the unique package of streets laid out by a master of early housing developments; our classic homes; the bridge (A City of Oakland Historical Landmark); commercial village and the 4 sets of romantic hillside steps. The Walter Leimert Company was honored in 1984 by the California Historical Society for its contribution of over 100 years to outstanding residential neighborhoods in California, and for its careful handling of land division and quality living.

The Association of Members is primarily responsible for keeping this neighborhood from losing its unique character. There is strength in numbers and with this strength comes the ability to draw upon the individual talents of each member to help preserve this wonderful legacy for future generations. Remember, in just twenty-two years we will be 100 years old! Keep Oakmore, Oakmore!

Encourage non-members to join the Association, it's worth it!

~ Cindy Haines ~

## A CONTINUING WISH LIST.....

Like most nonprofit groups, the Oakmore Homes Association relies on volunteers to help us achieve our goals. We are hoping that interested members of the Association will join these neighbors, who have committed to helping us with:

- ❖ Artistic skills to manage and update the Oakmore Homes portion of the community bulletin board in front of Rocky's Market (thanks to **Bill McGee**)
- ❖ Pro bono legal advice (thanks to **Jonathan Klein**)
- ❖ Association insurance advice
- ❖ Website design & maintenance (thanks to **Scott Leary**)
- ❖ Holiday lighting in the commercial district (thanks to **Bev Thomason**)

## BOYSCOUTS IMPROVING THE TRAILHEAD

Troop 1 Life Scout **Mark Oehler**, of Bridgeview Drive, has offered to construct an informational kiosk at the Bridgeview trailhead, leading into the Sausal Creek preserve. For his Eagle Scout project, Mark has prepared a detailed proposal for the design and construction of a roofed, redwood bulletin board structure at the location of the current Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) kiosk.

Mark's project will benefit local residents, hikers and dog walkers who use the trail. Information available at the kiosk will consist of maps, native plant identification, park rules and the history of the creek and canyon. Mark is also raising money for the construction materials and coordinating the efforts of his fellow scouts who will build the structure. When he spoke at our board meeting we were very impressed. We are pleased to contribute funds to his effort.

~ Kurt Lavenson ~

## OAKMORE STAIRS WIDELY CELEBRATED

As many of you know, the Oakmore Homes Association began a campaign four years ago to get the public stairways rehabilitated. We lobbied through two District 4 City Council administrations, those of Dick Spees and Jean Quan. We invited the Public Works Agency to our community meetings. We discussed safety issues and the City's liability in the event of accident. We tried, politely and incessantly, not to take 'no' for an answer.

Gradually, our efforts paid off and this July the project was completed. To promote this accomplishment, we co-sponsored a ribbon cutting event with Councilmember Jean Quan. Afterward, neighbors **Ted Garrett** and **Dan Callam** sponsored a terrific party at their home (of Breuner's display house fame, c.1934). We are proud to have helped

not just our local neighborhood, but also the larger community of Oakland, by publicizing our restoration efforts and making sure that the City officials, Public Works employees and the neighbors received credit for collaborating to make something positive happen. Generous press coverage of the event appeared in the S.F. Chronicle and the Montclairion newspapers in mid July. The stair project was also recently noted in the Oakland Historical Alliance's fall newsletter.

The first three stairways ascend the hill from Arden Way to Bridgeview Drive, Bridgeview to Leimert Boulevard, and Leimert to Oakview Drive. A fourth set ascends from Hoover Avenue to Oakview Drive.

~ Kurt Lavenson ~

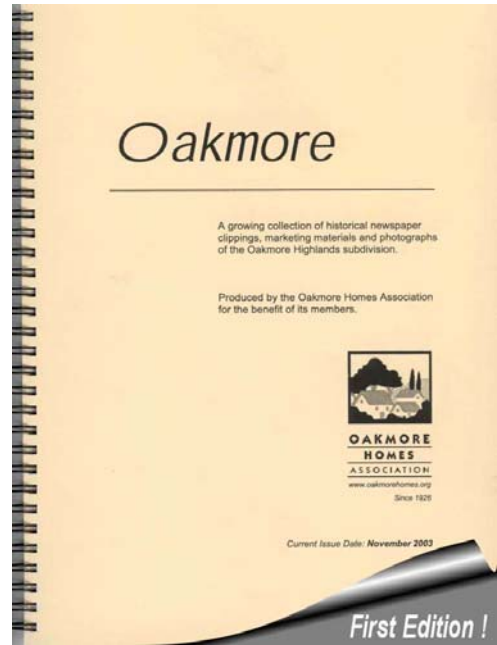


## *ASSOCIATION MEMBERS GET FREE HISTORY BOOK*

For many years the dedicated members and directors of the Oakmore Homes Association have been preserving copies of historical newspaper clippings, photos and real estate information about our neighborhood. Much of it is from the Oakland Public Library History Room, Courtesy of the Oakland Tribune. We have also received some great historical materials from the archives of Wells & Bennett and from Bosko Photography. We have now assembled a substantial collection of interesting articles and marketing materials dating back to the original opening of the Oakmore subdivision in 1926.

Many of the old clippings have been displayed on the bulletin board at Rocky's Market, in the commercial district near the Leimert Bridge. Due to strong and growing interest in the history of Oakmore, the Association is now offering a bound booklet of these historical materials to the membership. Reading through the materials inside, one gets a sense not just of Oakmore's neighborhood history but of the evolution of the real estate market in Oakland and Piedmont.

*ALL MEMBERS ARE ENTITLED TO A BOOK. IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED YOURS, PLEASE CLAIM IT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING*



**OAKMORE  
HOMES**  
**ASSOCIATION**  
*since 1926*

*SAVE THE DATE...!!*

**November 3, 2004 -7:00p**

*THE ANNUAL MEETING  
All members welcome*

*Montclair Women's Club  
1650 Mountain Boulevard  
(at Thornhill)*

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