



# DISTRICT 4 NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS #63

February 12, 2004 · Lincoln's Birthday · Black History Month

1. Staff Changes
2. The District 4 Local Heroes Nominees

## 1. Welcome Claudia, Thank You Arturo !

After screening over 100 resumes, interviewing a dozen applicants, and working with several finalists during the last weeks. We are pleased to announce that another Berkeley Bear (sorry Stanford), **Claudia Jimenez**, has joined our staff. Claudia, originally from Santa Barbara, has made Oakland her home because of her love of the city's diversity. Since her graduation from UC Berkeley, she has worked with students and parents to reduce alcohol and drug abuse in the schools and with the Richmond Police Department to develop new policies and protocols for responding to Domestic Violence calls. For her contact information and assignments:

[http://www.jeanquan.org/the\\_staff.htm](http://www.jeanquan.org/the_staff.htm)

**Arturo Sanchez** has started his duties as Assistant to the City Manager, Nuisance Enforcement Unit, City of Oakland, 1 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Oakland, CA 94612. Office: (510) 238-4982  
 Fax: (510) 238-7084 Email: [asanchez@oaklandnet.com](mailto:asanchez@oaklandnet.com)

**Please join us this Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 10 am to Noon, at our District Office, 4173 MacArthur Blvd, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor to celebrate our Local Heroes, to thank Arturo for his work in our community, and to welcome Claudia.**

## 2. The District 4 Local Hero Nominees

We hope you are as impressed with the nominees for District 4 Local Heroes as we are. We know that there are hundreds of others out there and we apologize in advance for the many who were not nominated but also deserve our thanks. We hope that this will inspire us all to do something, small or large, for our community. **On Saturday five of these nominees will be named to designate \$1000 of my office's capital improvement funds for a community improvement project in District 4 or for a project of citywide significance.** Please join us to meet these incredible community leaders on Saturday. We apologize that we don't have photos for everyone, yet. These are all residents of District 4 or individuals who work in our district...ALL have improved the quality of life in our neighborhoods. In alphabetical order:



**CAROL BERNAU:** The chair of Friends of the Last Wild Canyon Neighborhood Association, Carol and her neighbors have joined together to preserve Butters Canyon. In these times of limited public funding they have developed a Land Trust, combined private and public efforts to purchase and preserve the canyon. <http://www.butterslandtrust.org/> Walking along Butters Road at tree top level, it is not unusual to see Turkey Vultures, Golden Eagles, and other wildlife. It is an area worth preserving for our grandchildren

**BOBBY BOND,** Laurel-Redwood Hts Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council chairperson, is a tireless advocate for the rights of seniors and member of the Mayor's Commission on Aging. Her personal outreach has steadily increased participation in the NCPC. She has worked to reduce crime and blight throughout Laurel, specifically 39<sup>th</sup> Ave.

*Bobby (in blue) at the Laurel-Redwood Hts Picnic this summer,*



**JILL BROADHURST:** A newcomer to Oakland and busy new mother, Jill has jumped into making the community safer. She is the secretary of the new Montclair Safety and Improvement Council, and played a major role in the Wildfire Prevention District Advisory Committee and campaign.



**The BOSTON STREET NEIGHBORS** for their tireless commitment to stopping a 20 year crime and blight problem at the Hillcrest Motel. Their coordinated small claims actions led to the first Deemed Approved hearing for a motel in the City and its eventual closure and demolition.

**BEN CHAVIS:** One of the hardest decisions I had to make as a school board member was about the American Indian Public Charter School in the Laurel. The test scores were among the lowest in the district, there was in fighting on the board and between parents, teachers were not certified and only 40 students remained. Ben Chavis, a board member, volunteered to serve as Principal without pay. He assembled educators and others to save the school. We gave them one more year. Last year the school improved its scores by over a hundred points, the best improvement in the state. The middle school students, of diverse ethnicities with a core of about forty percent Native American students, have nearly nearly perfect attendance in some grades.  
[http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/news/assignment7/011404\\_assign7\\_oakschools.html](http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/news/assignment7/011404_assign7_oakschools.html)



*Summer picnic celebrates Champion Street.*

**THE CHAMPION ST NEIGHBORS:**

**Carolyn Vallerga**, a Highland nurse, led an effort to resolve the noise issues caused by scooters. She organized a meeting to educate and inform young people of the impacts their scooters were having on the neighborhood. Neighbors young to old came together and through mediation developed a pact which included: a curfew, a wider less repetitive route for riding, avoiding streets where neighbors were ill and strict adherence to traffic rules

**COURTLAND CREEK & HIGH HOPES NEIGHBORS** have worked to restore Courtland Creek, obtaining new landscaping and organizing clean-ups and neighborhood alert groups against drug dealing.

*(Right) 2003 Earth Day Crew on Courtland Creek*



**PAUL DIMON**, a Redwood Hts resident, organized the Redwood Hts Crime Forum, a network of residents concerned about neighborhood crime

**JILL EULATE & the SHEPHER CANYON HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION:** A professional planner and Shepherd Canyon resident, volunteered her time to help facilitate a series of community meetings as the first step in developing a long term plan for Shepherd Canyon. The Shepherd Canyon Homeowners Association, chaired by **Mike Petouhof**, joined with our office to organize community input. Jill's summaries on the Shepherd Canyon Workshops can be found on my website: [www.jeanquan.org](http://www.jeanquan.org)

**DENNIS EVANOVSKY**, a long time contributor to the preservation of our City's Heritage and journalist. He leads walking tours for the Oakland Heritage Alliance and is a contributor to Bill Caldwell's book, **Oakland: A Photographic Journey**, a great compilation of "then and now" photos of Oakland. <http://www.oaklandphotojourney.com/pages/home.html> He is also a columnist for the **MacArthur Metro**.



**CHUCK HARRISON:** Last January Chuck Harrison came by our office hours with clippings and documents of a 10 year effort to get a drive by mail box in Montclair. Every morning cars double parked or made u-turns on Mountain because there were only mail boxes outside of the Montclair Post Office. He reasoned if we could get a drive by box farther down on the other side of the street, it would make driving safer and less congested in the village. Thanks to Chuck's persistence, Richard Cowan's year of negotiating with several bureaucracies, and Dave Green, a former Montclair mailman, we celebrated the installation of the mail box last month.

**JAN HETHERINGTON & THE MAXWELL PARK NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL:**

Joined by other stalwarts including **Jane Stallman**, **Suzanne DuPont** and **Colette Simmons**, Jan has lead the beautifications efforts at High Street and 580. (Second from right) They have adopted the Cal Trans entrance to the freeway, planted the area next the freeway and recently landscaped the median strip behind Walgreens. The next project is a mural on the freeway. I credit their efforts, showing that the community cares, with the reduction of crime in this spot.



**WENDY JONES:** I think of Wendy as the mayor of Crane Way, but her passion is improving Joaquin Miller Park next to her neighborhood. She led the efforts to build a play structure (almost completed) accessible from Joaquin Miller Road. Her next project will be landscaping and restoring the beautiful art deco Cascades area and she is looking for volunteers.

*(Left) The back side of the Woodminster Theatre in Joaquin Miller Park has little of its original landscaping.*



**DAVID & KATHY KAHN:** Some parents are so much a part of a school that you would think they are on staff. The Kahns, who have theater backgrounds themselves, have organized support for every aspect of the Skyline High School Performing Arts Academy. From painting the dressing rooms to raising nearly a quarter million for the restoration of the Farnsworth Theater, making it one of the best high school theaters in the state.

*(Left) Dave & Kathy introducing Skyline alumnus Tom Hanks at theater dedication.*



**SALLY KILBURG & THE FRIENDS OF SAUSAL CREEK:** Sally is the current chair of the Friends of Sausal Creek. Every Saturday the Friends work restore Sausal Creek, cleaning debris and planting native plants. A model for creek projects throughout the city, <http://www.sausalcreek.org/>

*(Left) Sally in the center registers volunteer for Earth Day 2003 in Dimond Park.*

**VIRGINIA LEW & the OAKMORE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION:** Her neighbors credit her long standing efforts in the success of one of the district's oldest neighborhood associations. The group takes pride in the historic homes of the district and has great history on its website <http://www.oakmorehomes.org/> Most recently they are working on the retrofit and beautification issues of Leimert Bridge, the preservation of Dimond Canyon, and restoration of the public stairs.

**TONI LOCKE** the founder, editor, and soul of the **MacArthur Metro** has been a leader in the Laurel to Dimond area on projects too numerous to mention. The paper has been the glue to opinions and projects in our diverse and rapidly changing area for 16 years and is now available on line <http://www.macarthurmetro.org/> Toni also finds time to volunteer and tutor at Fruitvale Elementary and helped in our campaign to stop library closures.

The **MAYBELLE AVE NEIGHBORS** live in one of highest density neighborhoods in my district. Like many neighborhoods, they are worried about groups of teens hanging out on the streets of their neighborhood. Unlike some, while they have organized to discourage drug dealing and crime on their street, they have also advocated for a park and other recreation programs for youth in the neighborhood. This spring they will finally get the speed bump they petitioned for.

*(Right) Cynthia Jeeter and Judith Schott report on organizing for a speed bump and youth activities. Imani Cooley, chair, not pictured.*





Roger Vickery (r) demonstrates locking box the Montclair Wine & Jazz Festival.

**MONTCLAIR SAFETY AND IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL:** Several leaders of this group were nominated including the chair, **Nick Vigilante**, who organized this new and dynamic group, and the members of the Mail Theft Task Force, **Robbie Neely, Roger Vickery, and Jim Dexter**. Their work on Mail Theft and ID Theft is a model for the city.

<http://www.jeanquan.org/Files/MSIC/MailTheftFacts.pdf>

**Jim Dexter** also deserves much credit for leading efforts to improve the public stairs in the Thornhill area. The restoration of these stairs have encouraged students and other residents out of their cars to walk down to Thornhill schools and shops.

**KARL OSTERLOH** has volunteered for over 30 years at Children's Fairyland. He is the current president and 20 year member of the board. As a retired contractor, his volunteer work has saved this perennial children's favorite more than a \$150,000 in construction management fees. The family tradition continues with his daughter who is planning a fundraiser and his grandchildren who are appearing in Fairyland theater productions.



**SUE PIPER** has worked on many projects in District 4 for the public schools as the chair of the Friends of the Oakland Public Schools, leading several campaigns for school bond and parcel taxes. She was PTA president at both Kaiser and Oakland Tech. A firestorm survivor, her leadership on the Firestorm Memorial project and the Wildfire Prevention District was key to their success.

**CESAR SAN MIGUEL:** My husband and I met Cesar when he was 7. At that time his mother told us he was cleaning his street every Saturday. He made his own posters and the We Mean Clean Program regularly picked up his trash.

*Cesar on High Street, Earth Day 2003*



**MARJ SAUNDERS**, 95, is one of the most energetic women I know. Past president of the Piedmont Pines Club, she has been a leading advocate for the preservation of the natural beauty of the Oakland hills for several decades. She personally leads the work at Sulphur Springs (The Rock) and along the creek below it each Earth Day.

**PENELOPE SEATOR** is an immigration attorney who has volunteered with the International Institute program that serves immigrants, with a special focus on helping undocumented women gain legal status if they have been abused by a permanent resident or US citizen spouse. Penny "volunteered a huge amount of time training and mentoring our staff and taking the lead representing clients with challenging cases."

**CHARLES SELK** is everyone's favorite neighbor on Brown Street. For years he has swept and picked up trash on the block in front of Laurel School, lobbying for more garbage cans and working with the students.

**DARRYL STEWART** on the opposite side of the Laurel School on Patterson Street is an aide to County Supervisor Nate Miley. He is a valuable community resource as liaison to County programs at many community meetings. Many know his wife Kaye, who was former NCPC chair and Laurel PTA president. Our staff nominated Darryl for his simple but effective effort with neighborhood kids. The Stewart porch faces the Laurel School playground and for many years he purchased balls, bats, and other sports equipment. Any kid in the neighborhood could borrow them as long as they returned them. Oakland was once famous for it's after school playground supervisors who provided much the same service plus supervision and friendship.

**LEASE WONG** is the owner of Komodo Toys and immediate past chair of the Laurel Merchants Association. During her leadership of the merchants association, she has helped develop consensus on the many details of Laurel Streetscape Project scheduled for next month (weather permitting) and on the formation of a business improvement district. Lease has been a model employer of young people and is the organizer of the Laurel's developing Lunar New Year activities.

*About 30 inspiring neighbors and neighborhood groups....to us they are all heroes. We hope you'll join us Saturday to meet and thank them.*

*We know there are hundreds of local heroes in our district...we hope to make you will help us make this an annual tradition.*

*Jean Quan  
Richard Cowan  
Linda Wong  
Claudia Jimenez  
Susan Sanchez*