

# Views

## Richmond Heights Neighborhood Council

Visit us at [www.richmond-heights.org](http://www.richmond-heights.org) Rock Brown, President • P.O. Box 5253 • Richmond, CA 94805

### quick-takes

#### Talk to the Library

The Richmond Public Library is undertaking a Needs Assessment to guide the building of a new library. The Assessment includes community meetings, individual interviews, and a citywide survey. That's where you come in. If you believe a strong Library is a critical part of our city's future, please take a couple minutes to complete this on-line survey.

The survey internet address is too long to print here, but there is a link to it on the RHNC website at <http://www.richmond-heights.org/>.

#### Masquer's Playhouse

New Production from June 8<sup>th</sup> to July 14<sup>th</sup> will be "Ring Around the Moon," written by Jean Anouih, the renowned 20th century French dramatist. The play concerns Frederic, who is shy and sensitive, and his twin brother Hugo, who is heartless and aggressive. Frederic is in love with a hussy who is in love with Hugo. To save Frederic from an unhappy marriage, Hugo tries to distract him by bringing to a ball a beautiful dancer who masquerades as a mysterious personage and becomes the triumph of the occasion. She is a susceptible maiden in her own right. She not only breaks up all the cynical romances that have been going on before she arrived, but loses her own heart as well. Tickets are available at 510.232-4031 or online at <http://www.masquers.org/>.

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## Code Violations: What They Are and What They Mean

Code violations will be the topic of our next neighborhood council meeting on April 2, with discussion to be led by Sgt. Monahan from Richmond Police's code enforcement dept.

Code violations occur when the following areas do not conform to published standards. In Richmond, the most common code violations occur in the areas of yard maintenance, fences, outside storage, parking, junk, litter and debris, open and vacant buildings and structures.

**Yard Maintenance:** Overgrown weeds, bushes, trees, grass and vegetation are fire and safety hazards. Yard maintenance is the responsibility of every property owner and includes the maintenance of any right of way abutting the property. Grass must be maintained at six inches or less.

All shrubs in the right of way and on the right of way must be maintained. The branches of any tree extending over any public sidewalk, street, and any other public way should be trimmed so that they do not obstruct vision or the travel of motorist and people, all dead trees and vegetation must be removed and disposed of properly.

**Fences:** Fences and screening walls must be sound and made from the same materials. They also must be weather tight and free from deterioration and blight. Fences in residential zones cannot be higher than three and a half feet in the required front yard. This rule also applies to fences on street corners or areas adjacent to driveways. A wrongly placed fence could prevent a car driver from observing an oncoming vehicle or pedestrian traffic.

**Outside Storage:** Outside storage that can be seen from beyond the bounds of the property line is not allowed. Generally, any equipment, building or landscaping materials; parts/auto parts; appliances; or any scrap items may not be visible. No inoperable vehicles may be visible from beyond the property boundaries.

**Open and Vacant Buildings and Structures:** The property owner is responsible for maintaining building, structures and grounds of property, windows, doors, and other openings must be kept secure so they cannot be opened from the outside.

A property owner is required to board up a building/structure if it becomes vacant and is not secure. Accessory buildings/structures on the property; such as storage sheds and garages, also must be secured to city specifications.

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**next meeting**  
See back page for agenda

## quick-takes

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### Education Fund Banquet

The Ed. Fund Teaching Excellence Awards Banquet will take place on Saturday, May 19. This is the major fundraiser of the year for the Ed. Fund, providing major support for its many programs for district students.

Since its founding in 1983 as a non-profit, public education fund, The Ed. Fund has been dedicated to inspiring student achievement, encouraging commitment to lifelong learning, and building community partnerships committed to public education in the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD).

At the banquet, six exceptional district teachers will be honored, as will the individuals receiving the 2007 Distinguished Citizen and the Non-Certificated Employee awards. Tickets are \$50; make checks payable to Ed. Fund Banquet and send to The Ed. Fund, 5 Alvarado Square, San Pablo, CA 94806. For more information see the Ed. Fund web site at <http://www.edfundwest.org/>.

### Richmond General Plan

Many citizens and neighbors have taken part in the Richmond General Plan workshops, and there are still chances to discuss how Richmond should grow and where. The next workshop will be April 4, 6:00 to 9:00 pm in the Hilltop Mall Community Room, inside the mall at Hilltop Drive. Refreshments will be available. For more information, call 620-6706, or visit [www.cityofrichmondgeneralplan.org](http://www.cityofrichmondgeneralplan.org)

## Code Violations:

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**Parking:** There are limits to the amount of yard area that can be used for a drive way or parking. Parking vehicles anywhere other than these designated areas may be a violation. Vehicles parked on streets must be in running conditions, must have current license and registration, and can only park for a maximum of 72 hours. Commercial trucks and trailers cannot park on the street in a residential neighbor-hood except when loading or unloading campers, trailers, boats, etc. can be parked in the driveway if they are in running condition (no flat tires) but not on grass, dirt, or other unpaved areas. For further information call the vehicle abatement officer at 510-621-1278

**Junk, Litter and Debris:** Junk, litter and debris cannot be left in the yard. It must be disposed of properly. This includes junk auto parts, appliances, furniture, building and landscaping material; and tires; litter such as discarded paper, cardboard, plastics, etc; debris such as tree trimmings and fallen tree limbs; or any other items that have been discarded. Persons seen dumping trash, junk, or littering in public or private places can be prosecuted. For further information call the Code Enforcement Sergeant at 510-621-1279.

## New Charter School

Another middle school option will soon be available for West County, now that the Contra Costa County Board of Education has approved the Making Waves Education Program's petition to open a fifth-through-eighth-grade charter school in Richmond's Hilltop neighborhood, tentatively scheduled to open in the fall. The school will be on Technology Drive at the former Pacific Academy location. Making Waves signed a two-year lease agreement for the property with an option to buy in the third year.

A charter school is a publicly funded school that, in accordance with an enabling state statute, has been granted a charter exempting it from selected state or local rules and regulations. A charter school may be newly created, or it may previously have been a public or private school; it is typically governed by a group or organization (ie, a group of educators, a corporation, or a university) under a contract or charter with the state.

Making Waves middle school will begin accepting enrollment applications for fifth-graders over the next couple of months and will add grades to the curriculum in phases as students move on to the next level. The school eventually will serve 400 students, 100 per grade.

Making Waves several other charter schools in Richmond, including Richmond College Prep, Manzanita School and Leadership Public School. Fundraising and planning is currently under way for another proposed area charter school, the West County Community High School.

## contacts



You'll find many more phone numbers, as well as e-mail links for public services at our website, [www.richmond-heights.org](http://www.richmond-heights.org)

### Emergency 911

Crime in progress, medical

### To report suspicious activity

Richmond Police 233-1214

Unincorporated area 925/646-2441

Anonymous tips 232-TIPS

### Community Police Officer

Officer Joe DeOrian 620-1212

ex 7068

e-mail for Lt. Mark Gagan

[mgagen@richmondpd.net](mailto:mgagen@richmondpd.net)

### General security concerns, other police services

RP Watch Commander 620-6643

### Neighborhood Council issues

Gina Swirsding \*82-232-1675

### Report blight and graffiti

Richmond 231-3010

CalTrans 925-926-6112

And as always we are looking for community events for the Newsletter if you know of an event coming up in the future let us know at least the first week of the month before. Just drop a line to the Editor at [APASTER@jbp.com](mailto:APASTER@jbp.com) with any requests or suggestions. If you have something you would like to write yourself, we are also all ears. This is your newsletter.

## Calls for service to the Richmond Police

Calls made to the Richmond Police from September 1-30. Statistics are provided each month by Perry Austin of RPD, whose support and assistance we continue to appreciate.

**Suspicious person** 30  
**Suspicious vehicle** 7  
**Abandoned auto** 12  
**Recovered stolen vehicle** 4  
**Vehicle tampering** none  
**Disturbance** 21  
**911 Disconnect** 10  
**Dogs** 1

**Stolen vehicle** 11  
 2/4 7XX Lassen  
 2/9 6XX Sonoma  
 2/11 50XX McBryde  
 2/12 49XX Clinton  
 2/13 49XX Clinton  
 2/16 Barrett / San Pablo  
 2/20 56XX Sierra  
 2/21 125XX San Pablo  
 2/22 90XX Ventura  
 2/23 125XX San Pablo  
 2/25 7XX Yuba

**Hit/Run property damage**  
 2/06 7XX McLaughlin  
 2/06 Nevin / San Pablo  
 2/09 4XX Wilson  
 2/22 Barrett / San Pablo  
 2/23 Macdonald / San Pablo

**Burglary from residence**  
 2/5 53XX Esmond  
 2/15 52XX Garvin  
 2/19 7XX Lassen  
 2/21 8XX Ventura  
 2/25 8XX Kern

**Burglary from auto**  
 2/7 6XX Key  
 2/14 55XX Sierra

**Burglary from business**  
 2/4 48XX McBryde

**Hold up alarm**  
 2/15 126XX San Pablo  
 2/22 126XX San Pablo

**Robbery**  
 2/3 122XX San Pablo  
 2/7 48XX McBryde  
 2/24 Macdonald / San Pablo

**Petty theft/stolen property**  
 2/1 4XX Dimm  
 2/4 6XX Amador  
 2/4 6XX Kern  
 2/7 6XX Amador  
 2/14 6XX McLaughlin  
 2/21 50XX Clinton  
 2/23 126XX San Pablo  
 2/27 54XX Solano

**Calls related to juveniles**  
 2/3 5XX McLaughlin  
 2/4 50XX Barrett  
 2/6 7XX Amador

**Vandalism**  
 2/5 56XX Solano  
 2/5 121XX San Pablo  
 2/8 6XX Yuba  
 2/11 52XX McBryde  
 2/11 5XX Cliff  
 2/14 55XX Esmond  
 2/21 I 80 / San Pablo

**Battery**  
 2/7 6XX Ventura  
 2/26 7XX Ventura

**Brandishing a weapon**  
 2/12 Barrett / San Pablo

**Assault w/ deadly weapon**  
 2/21 Barrett / Wilson

**Shots fired**  
 2/13 53XX Clinton

## **quick-takes**

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### **Richmond Police Department Crime Prevention Resource Home Security Checklist**

From the Web Page Core Connect

Use this guide as you check your home for safety measures. Boxes you do not check indicate areas where you could take action to improve your home security.

These are just some of the simple steps you can take to decrease the likelihood that you or your home is targeted for crime.

#### **Exterior Doors**

1). All doors are locked at night and every time we leave the house (even if it is just for a few minutes).

2). Doors are solid hardwood or metal-clad.

3). Doors feature wide-angle peepholes at heights everyone can use.

4). If there are glass panels in or near our doors, they are reinforced in some way so they cannot be shattered.

5). All entryways have a working, keyed entry lock and sturdy deadbolt lock installed into the frame of the door.

6). Spare keys are kept with a trusted neighbor, not under a doormat or planter, on a ledge, or in the mailbox.

#### **Protecting Windows**

1). Every window in the house has a working key lock or is securely pinned.

2). Windows are always locked, even when they are opened a few inches for ventilation.

## **West County Women Honored**

Contra Costa College and the West County Chapter of the American Association of University Women recently presented the 7th Annual CCC National Women's History Month Program. Honorees in 2007 include a dozen women who have made a difference in their West County communities.

Among those honored: Wendy Gonzalez of Richmond is being honored for her work in equity in education. Gonzalez, a teacher at Ford Elementary School in Richmond, was the 2005 recipient of the Ed. Fund's Teaching Excellence Award. She co-founded an after-school program of free tutoring and alternative classes, organized a march of supporters to Sacramento in 2004 to demand equal treatment for schools in poor neighborhoods.

Also honored was Maricela Navarro of North Richmond, recognized for community service. Navarro served on the Head Start Policy Council and the Verde Elementary School VIP program, attends meetings of the North Richmond Municipal Advisory Council, is a member of the county Health Department's Healthy Neighborhoods Project "Action Team" and was appointed to the North Richmond Municipal Advisory Council by county supervisors in 2005.

## **Richmond Thinking of Growing**

The City of Richmond may be considering annexing or implementing land-use options on some or all of the square-mile unincorporated territory of North Richmond and its 4,500 residents. This newsletter acknowledges that annexation is a controversial topic and takes no position except that tends to raise taxes but also increase the quality of services provided.

Those wishing to follow this development can attend the monthly meeting of the North Richmond Municipal Advisory Council.

Meetings are held at 5:00 pm the second Tuesday of every month at 515 Silver Avenue in North Richmond.

## **Parks Commission Back to Back Awards**

The Richmond Recreation and Parks Commission received two separate "outstanding achievement" awards from two prestigious national and state recreation organizations, respectively.

On Thursday, March 8, the "Citation of Merit" awarded from the Pacific Southwest Regional Council of the National Recreation and Park Association on behalf of the Commission in Sacramento. Richmond was one of two cities recognized for this award category (Stockton was the other). The Pacific Southwest Regional Council Area includes participation of cities from the states of California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah and Hawaii.

On Friday, March 9, the "Outstanding Commission" awarded from the California Association of Park and Recreation Commissioners and Board Members in Sacramento on behalf of the Commission. Richmond was the only Commission in the State of California to be recognized for this award from this organization.

These awards were based on a variety of initiatives undertaken by the Commission over the past three years. This may very well be the first time that a Richmond city commission has been so honored.

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## quick-takes

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### Home Security Checklist Garage and Sliding Door Security

1). The door leading from the attached garage to the house is solid wood or metal-clad and protected with a quality keyed door lock and deadbolt.

2). The overhead garage door has a lock so we do not rely solely on the automatic door to provide security.

3). All garage doors are locked when we leave the house.

4). The sliding glass door has a strong, working key lock.

5). A dowel or a pin to secure a glass door has been installed to prevent the door from being shoved aside or lifted off the track.

6). The sliding door is locked every night and each time we leave the house.

### Outdoor Security

1). Shrubs and bushes are trimmed so there is no place for someone to hide.

2). There are no dark areas around our house, garage, or yard at night that would hide prowlers.

3). Every outside door has a bright, working light to illuminate visitors.

4). Floodlights are used appropriately to ensure effective illumination.

5). Outdoor lights are on in the evening – whether someone is at home or not, or a photocell or motion-sensitive lighting system has been installed.

## Security When Away From Home

1). At least two light timers have been set to turn the lights on and off in a logical sequence, when we are away from home for an extended time period.

2). The motion detector or other alarm system (if we have one) has been activated when we leave home.

3). Mail and newspaper deliveries have been stopped or we have arranged for a neighbor or friend to pick them up when we go away from home for a period of time.

4). A neighbor has been asked to tend the yard and watch our home when we are away.

5). We report our vacation to our beat officers through the RPD website to request extra patrol or a security check.

## Outdoor Valuables and Personal Property

1). Gate latches, garage doors, and shed doors are all locked with high security, laminated padlocks.

2). Gate latches, garage doors, and shed doors are locked after every use.

3). Grills, lawn mowers, and other valuables are stored in a locked garage or shed, or if left out in the open, are hidden from view with a tarp and securely locked to a stationary point.

4). Every bicycle is secured with a U-bar lock or quality padlock and chain.

5). Bikes are always locked, even if we leave them for just a minute.

6). Firearms are stored unloaded and locked in storage boxes and secured with trigger guard locks.

## From the Richmond Police Department

### Crime Prevention Resource How Can I Prevent Graffiti?

From the Richmond Web Page Core Connect

What can be done? Many areas have prevention measures in place including the aggressive and timely removal of graffiti, as well as policy banning gang symbols. What can you do personally? There are several ways you can help:

1). Report any graffiti you find immediately to the appropriate agency. This is important for two reasons: to identify trends in type & location of graffiti and to get it cleaned up promptly.

2). Remove any graffiti immediately to show that you care about your property. This will dissuade the graffiti vandal because it doesn't give the recognition they are looking for if you remove it quickly.

3). Visually discourage graffiti vandals from using your property by choosing darker paint colors. This makes their monikers stand out less, contradicting their goal of quick and easy recognition.

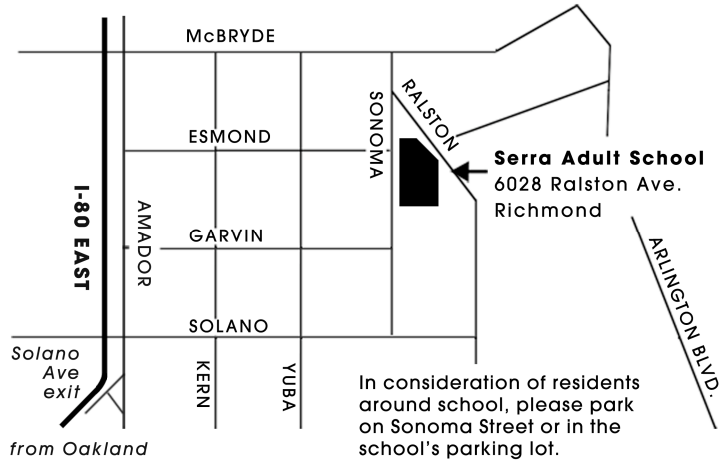
4). Install motion-activated lights or security cameras on your property to scare them away.

There are more, check out the web site.

**at the next RHNC meeting**

**Topic of next meeting**

Sgt. Monahan of the Richmond Police Department Code Enforcement Division will be our guest speaker. Talking about yard maintenance, fences, outside storage, open and vacant buildings and structures, parking, junk, litter and debris and how to file a complaint.



**Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7 PM**  
Serra Adult School  
6028 Ralston Avenue

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