

# Views

## East Richmond Neighborhood Council

www.eastrichmond.org

Gina Swirsding, President • P.O. Box 5253 • Richmond, CA 94805

### quick-takes

#### Plan Van in gear

The Plan Van is a mobile work shop promoting and collecting feedback on Richmond's general plan update process. The van took off the weekend of May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, with appearances at Richmond Cinco de Mayo celebrations at the Richmond Civic Center.

Residents climbed aboard the van to learn more about the planning process and to get their first looks at the general plan update. Each visitor also had an opportunity to share visions for Richmond and to help identify issues and opportunities.

As the process moves forward, the Plan Van will continue to feature interactive activities that will allow residents to voice their concerns and dreams for the city's next 100 years.

To learn more about the general plan, the Plan Van schedule, or to sign up for e-mail updates, visit <http://www.cityofrichmondgeneralplan.org>.

#### Explore Latino presence

The Richmond Museum of History's newest exhibit, "Siempre Aqui" (Always Here), highlights the Latino presence in greater Richmond from the days of Mexican California to the present. The exhibit, in the Seaver Gallery of the museum, 400 Nevin Ave., runs during regular museum hours (1:00 to 4:00 p.m., Wednesdays through Sundays).

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## Simon Says Vote

So American Idol isn't satisfying your hunger for vote-casting? Don't worry, you get another chance this month to say, "Sorry, dog," or, "You're going to Hollywood!"

OK, seriously. This year's local and state ballot, on June 7, asks you to make primary choices for your party's gubernatorial candidate, your U.S. senator and representative, and a host of other important local and regional races. Between the Democrats and Republicans, there are 16 (count 'em!) gubernatorial candidates that need to be winnowed down. For lieutenant governor, the various parties will have a choice of six candidates – a bonanza for readers of candidates' bios.

At the Federal level, you'll get to select from 10 candidates for U.S. senator, and two candidates for U.S. representative.

Other races include secretary of state (5 candidates), controller (11 candidates), treasurer (7 candidates), attorney general (6 candidates), & insurance commissioner (7 candidates). There are numerous choices for the State Board of Equalization.

"Law and Order" junkies won't want to miss the chance to choose a county superior court judge (3 candidates). While you're in that part of the ballot, pick a state school superintendent (6 choices).

You're forgiven if it's a relief to know there is just a single candidate each for county supervisor, assessor, auditor-controller, clerk-recorder, district attorney, sheriff-coroner, and treasurer-tax collector.

Now for the big questions: 2 state-wide propositions and one county measure.

Proposition 81 asks you, the voter, whether the state should provide grants to local agencies for the construction, renovation, and/or expansion of local library facilities. The money would be raised by selling \$600 million in bonds.

Proposition 82 calls for the state to create and fund universal preschool programs for children to attend in the year prior to kindergarten. Funds would be raised with an income tax on incomes over \$400,000 for individuals (\$800,000 for couples).

Measure A asks whether the Contra Costa Community College District should renovate aging college facilities (and make them energy saving, safer, and handicapped accessible). The affected colleges are Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College, Los Medanos College, the San Ramon Valley and Brentwood centers. The price tag would be covered by \$286,500,000.

More information on the candidates, measures, and polling places can be found at the website of the League of Women Voters.

**next meeting**

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## quick-takes

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### Explore Latino presence

Admission to the museum is \$2 general and \$1 seniors and students, and includes the Siempre Aqui exhibit. Children and museum members attend free.

The exhibit, which is curated by historian Maria Sakovich, will be on display through July. The museum hopes to expand its documentation of the local Latino presence. To learn more, call the museum at 510/235-7387 or visit online at

[www.richmondmuseumofhistory.org](http://www.richmondmuseumofhistory.org)

### Super-size your collection

The Friends of the Richmond Library will hold its Grab-A-Bag book sale at the main library, 325 Civic Center Plaza, on the first Wednesday of each month, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.. For just \$2 you can select 10 books of your choice. And really help out your library.

### Computer Literacy classes

Literacy used to simply mean the ability to read and write. But whether you're a student in grade school or an adult in the job market, literacy increasingly means having computer skills as well.

The Computer Excellence Center operated by the Richmond Police Activities League works to level the playing field for households that can't afford a computer and necessary training by offering free classes in basic skills literacy for young people and adults.

Now the center is teaming with the YMCA of the East Bay to offer adults the free basic skills class. The class is open to anyone, but the hope is to reach people who wouldn't otherwise have access to training, particularly people who are out of work or underemployed.

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## Propane Tank Safety

Last month, a fire caused by a leaking propane tank caused about \$250,000 in damage to a two-story duplex in the morning near the corner of 23rd Street and Virginia Avenue. Nobody was hurt, and the damage was confined to the interior of the building.

Seems like a good time to point out that more than 8 million households use propane gas to fuel their home-heating systems. Propane is liquefied petroleum gas, the same fuel product created from crude oil or natural gas refining. And it is really, really flammable. In case you, a loved one, or a neighbor is in one of those households, here are some safety tips.

Some major "don'ts": Do not smoke while handling the propane cylinder. Do not allow children to tamper or play with the cylinder or grill. Do not use, store or transport your cylinder (or your spare tank) where it would be exposed to high temperatures, such as your barbeque.

To recognize a leak, know what propane smells like. Propane retailers have scratch-and-sniff brochures so you your entire family can recognize the smell. They also sell propane leak detectors.

If you smell a leak, immediately evacuate everyone from the building and call your local propane supplier or the fire department from your neighbor's phone. Don't use the telephone. Don't use light switches. Don't try to determine the source of the leak by yourself.

Be aware of where gas service lines are located, especially when working in your yard.

Water is bad for propane heaters. If yours gets wet, say, due to flooding, have a trained technician look it over.

Finally, if you have a wall furnace, keep it clean of lint and dirt.

There are many more safety recommendations, all of them easily downloaded from the website of the Propane Education & Research Council.

## Juneteenth' America's Jubilee

Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, is the annual holiday celebrated on June 19 in the United States to commemorate the ending of slavery. Juneteenth celebrates the freedom of more than 250,000 slaves at the close of the Civil War. The celebration takes its name from June 19, 1865; the day federal troops arrived in Galveston to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation. Although the Proclamation had taken effect on January 1, 1863, news of the war's end did not reach Texas until well after the Confederate surrender at Appomattox. When the news was finally delivered, it was celebrated in great fashion. Juneteenth festivals have evolved into day long events which include picnics, parades, music, dancing, and baseball.

Richmond will have its own Juneteenth event, sponsored by the National Brotherhood Alliance and the City of Richmond. This year's theme is "Reclaiming Our Family Values." Children of all ages are welcome. It will be held Saturday, June 17, 2006, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at Nicholl Park in Richmond (near corner of Macdonald Avenue and 32nd Street. The event will feature games, a parade, performers, vendors, and exhibits from local agencies and nonprofits.

For more information about participating, call 620-6516 or e-mail Duane Chapman at [DuanecChapman52@aol.com](mailto:DuanecChapman52@aol.com).

## contacts



You'll find many more phone numbers, as well as e-mail links for public services at our website, [www.eastrichmond.org](http://www.eastrichmond.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 John Scott 620-6642

### General security concerns, other police services

RP Watch Commander 620-6643

### Neighborhood Council issues

Gina Swirsding \*82-232-1675

### Report blight and graffiti

Richmond 321-3010

CalTrans 925-926-6112

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The center is trying to expand its outreach to adults, and is seeking sponsors to provide basic materials such as textbooks for people who can't afford a computer or training.

The center, housed in the RPAL building on Macdonald Avenue, was conceived by Chand Patel as a way to provide young people with computer literacy or job skills such as computer service and repair. At its start in 1993, it was the first such program offered at a PAL program in the nation, and has become a model for similar programs started elsewhere.

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## Calls for service to the Richmond Police

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

**Abandoned Auto 21**

**Recovered stolen vehicle 6**

**Disturbance 17**

**911 Disconnect 17**

**Dogs 1**

### Stolen vehicle

4/02 10XX McLaughlin

4/03 9XX Kern

4/03 8XX Ventura

4/04 14XX Nevin

4/05 4XX Dimm

4/06 7XX Lassen

4/06 7XX Lassen

4/13 7XX McLaughlin

4/19 53XX Pointsett

4/22 6XX McLaughlin

4/25 Clinton / Amador

4/29 9XX Ventura

### Hit/Run Property Damage

4/13 San Pablo / I 80

4/25 7XX Amador

4/27 9XX McLaughlin

### Robbery

4/29 4XX Key

4/29 10XX Lassen

4/30 10XX Lassen

### Hold up alarm

4/25 123XX San Pablo

### Brandishing a weapon

4/03 8XX Ventura

4/07 9XX Kern

### Vandalism

4/22 8XX Yuba

### Burglary from auto

4/03 6XX Amador

4/06 7XX Humboldt

4/14 6XX Humboldt

4/15 7XX Kern

4/17 6XX Kern

4/26 50XX Clinton

### Burglary from Residence

4/01 5XX Key

4/06 10XX Lassen

4/10 5XX Key

4/18 53XX McBryde

4/29 126XX San Pablo

### Grand theft

4/07 San Pablo / Barrett

4/12 125XX San Pablo

### Petty theft/stolen property

4/03 123XX San Pablo

4/12 9XX Sonoma

4/13 54XX McBryde

4/14 49XX Macdonald

4/18 49XX Macdonald

4/26 52XX Nevin

4/30 126XX San Pablo

### Battery

4/04 52XX Solano

4/13 7XX Amador

4/21 6XX Ventura

4/23 9XX Humboldt

4/30 6XX McLaughlin

### Shooting at occupied dwelling

4/20 9XX Kern

### Shots fired in our neighborhood

4/06 4XX Mount

4/06 9XX Kern

4/20 9XX Kern

4/26 10XX Ventura

4/30 5XX Mount

### Calls related to Juveniles

4/04 52XX Solano

## quick-takes

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The nature of computer use has changed considerably since 1993, and the program has expanded over the years to offer low-cost classes for adults in specialized areas such as digital photography and cameras, graphic design, desktop publishing, Web page design, and Internet applications.

The catch is that while the center can make its computers available, it doesn't have the resources to provide textbooks and other necessary materials. Sponsors are needed so families won't have to pay for books, which is very expensive for them. If enough benefactors can be found, the center hopes to offer a second class in Spanish. Donations are welcome and tax-deductible.

For information on the RPAL Computer Excellence Center, call Chand Patel, director, at 510/621-1221 or 510/621-1224, or RPAL Computer Excellence Center, 2200 Macdonald Ave., Richmond, CA 94801.

### Creekniks to celebrate

A ribbon-cutting celebration to officially open Baxter Creek Gateway Park has been scheduled for Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.). There will be lots of music, food, state and local officials. And a special tree will be planted in memory of El Cerrito's beloved Emmy Damon, with a bench in her honor beneath the canopy.

Consider becoming an official (volunteer) Steward of the Baxter Creek Watershed at the ribbon-cutting. Among the perks are a free FOBC T-shirt, a fashion must in our neighborhood.

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## New Schools Superintendent

Remember this name: Bruce Harter, Ph.D. Next month, he takes over running the West Contra County Unified School District, whose schools include Mira Vista Elementary and Adams Middle School, both in East Richmond.

Dr. Harter has been working in the field of education for more than 35 years. Since 2001 Dr. Harter has been superintendent at the Brandywine School District in Claymont, Delaware, that serves 10,700 students. Before Brandywine, Dr. Harter served as superintendent of the 60,000-student Lee County School District in Fort Myers, Florida from 1997 to 2001.

With this appointment he returns to the west coast, where he started as superintendent in Corvallis School District, in Corvallis, Oregon from 1992 to 1997, a district that serves 7,200 students.

Before becoming a superintendent, Dr. Harter worked as a math and science teacher, as an assistant principal, and as a principal. Of his three children, one is a fifth grade teacher. Sounds like education runs in the family.

## For a Close Look at East Richmond

Visit Google Maps at <http://www.google.com/maps>. Simply by entering our local zip code in the search field, one can view a map of Richmond, or a satellite image, or an image that combines the satellite image with street names and other locations.

The image can be manipulated by clicking and dragging on a spot, so that, for instance, if you want to wind your way up Barrett Ave. to Arlington, up over Wildcat Canyon, and beyond, a few clicks will do it. It's astonishing how quickly the closely packed homes turn into wide-open space, when seen at a slight distance.

So, for a fun and easy aerial tour of West County, or wherever you want to go, check out Google Maps. Can you guess this location?



## quick-takes

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More information about the event will be placed on the Friends of Baxter Creek website soon and sent out by e-mail. Spread the word to your friends, children, and neighbors -- all will be welcome. For more information, write to [apple@thewatershedproject.org](mailto:apple@thewatershedproject.org).

### Shoots fired in neighborhood

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> there were people standing near a pickup truck across the street from my home at approx. 10:00 p.m. on a Friday night when I heard about 5 shots. No one was injured, but a bullet grazed the pickup trucks door and another bullet hit the front end of another car.

In April we had 5 reports of shots fired and of an individual being beaten unconscious and robbed. The worst shooting was on April 20<sup>th</sup> at approx. 6:30 p.m. with kids playing near by and adults getting into and out of there cars. At least 2 or 3 cars were shooting at each other as well as putting a bullet hole into a bathroom wall. A neighbor was near her car when the shooting started and she saw a red light laser sight, she saw 2 muzzle flashes, heard one bullet go by and hit the ground. Luckily she was not injured physically.

So far in May I know of at least one report of shots fired in our neighborhood.

In other areas of Richmond, 37<sup>th</sup> and Cutting a nurse was shot while waiting at a red light, and 2<sup>nd</sup> and Barrett an individual was killed when 2 groups of people shot at each other and hit him by mistake.

## Free Classes on Native Plants

Also through The Watershed Project, we've set up dates for classes on identifying native plants and grasses, and one for a workshop on the field management. Mark your calendars!!

### Thursday, June 1st at 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.:

Lesson on plant identification. We'll then head out into the field to collect samples that we can dry and mount in our notebooks. BRING: notebook or pages for a loose-leaf binder, pencil or pen, scotch tape (to mount your cuttings), and a camera if you like! we'll meet at the bulletin board at 6:30 p.m..

### Thursday, June 8th at 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.:

Continuation of previous week's lesson. We'll meet at the bulletin board at 6:30 p.m.

### Saturday June 17th in the afternoon (exact time to be determined):

We'll discuss field management practices... what to save, what to get rid of, where to concentrate our efforts, where and when to weed, where and when to mow, etc. We'll head out into the field to identify areas of plans and grasses to preserve.

Attendees at these classes will receive their own copy of The Weed Worker's Handbook, a handy guide with all kinds of neat info in it, including drawings and descriptions of various plants found at the field.

Remember also, that this Sunday (May 21<sup>st</sup>) we'll be starting work at 10 a.m. on gravel paths, and that we'll have a field celebration for the entire neighborhood on Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## East Bay Women Win Distinction Awards

The East Bay Business Times recently honored 10 of the East Bay's most distinguished women in an awards ceremony at Mitchell Katz Winery in Livermore. Among them was Jane Fischberg, Vice President, of Richmond's own [Rubicon Programs Inc.](#)

Since 1973, Rubicon has built and operated affordable housing and provided employment, job training, mental health, and other supportive services to individuals who have disabilities, are homeless, or are otherwise economically disadvantaged. Based in Richmond, California, the agency employs upwards of 200 people and offers service throughout Contra Costa County and the San Francisco Bay Area.

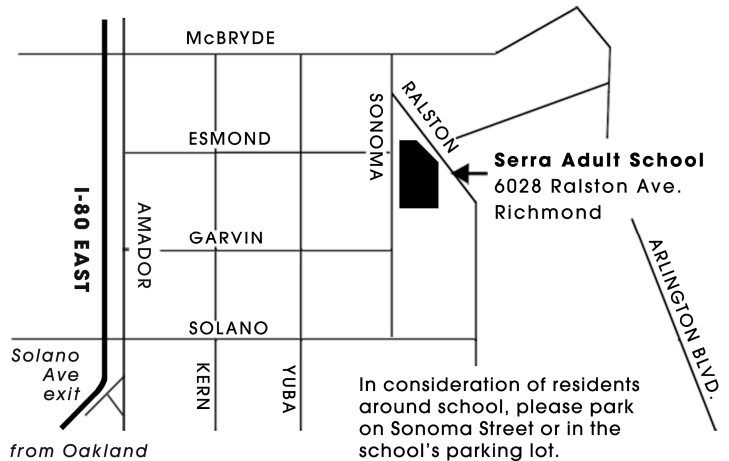
The Business Times award will soon be followed by a 2006 [Fast Company / Monitor Group](#) Social Capitalist Award for being one of nation's top social entrepreneurs. Rubicon Programs will appear in Fast Company's January 2006 issue which hits the newsstands on December 22, 2006. This marks the third year that Rubicon Programs has received the prestigious award.

Now for some really important news. Rubicon Bakery is now online! You can buy its gourmet all-natural products directly by clicking at [www.TheRubiconBakeryStore.com](http://www.TheRubiconBakeryStore.com).

**at the next ERNC meeting**

## The Police Chief will be our guest

Police Chief Chris Magnus will discuss his plans for the future deployment of officers. Listen to our concerns about safety and quality of life in our neighborhood.



**Monday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 7 P.M.**  
Serra Adult School  
6028 Ralston Avenue

RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD COORDINATING COUNCIL  
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