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**NEW MURAL IN THE DIMOND**



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**DIMOND MINE ART GALLERY OPENS SHOW**

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**COOKIE FACTORY SALE OPEN TO PUBLIC**

## Lincoln Heights

**“We changed the name to reflect our focus on participants’ abilities, rather than their disabilities. Our goal is to enhance the ability of adults with cerebral palsy and other developmental disabilities to lead more independent and fulfilling lives.”**

— *Maureen DeCoste, marketing and development manager for Ability Now Bay Area*



D. ROSS CAMERON/STAFF PHOTOS

Monique Harris, top, who creates wall calendars with her own custom art, uses a wand she wears on her head to control her computer at Ability Now Bay Area. Below, Tyrone Cobb, left, works on his art on the computer, with assistance from classroom aide Samme LaFargue.



## Ability Now Bay Area focuses on potential, not challenges

*Oakland-based day center serves adults with cerebral palsy, neurological disorders*

**By Maggie Sharpe**  
*Correspondent*

OAKLAND — A choir of sixth-graders from Head-Royce School brought Christmas cheer — and a few holiday hats — to the clients and staff of Ability Now Bay Area on Dec. 10.

The day center serves the needs of adults with cerebral palsy and other neurological disorders and is located across the street from the school on Lincoln Avenue in Oakland.

Under the direction of choirmaster Robert Wells, the students performed a medley of traditional Yuletide tunes as well as an African song called “Mangwanani” (meaning “welcome”) and a song in Hebrew called “Bashana Haba’ah” that expresses hope for the New Year.

“The choir was so cute standing up there with their songbooks,” said Maureen DeCoste, marketing and development manager for Ability Now Bay Area. “Everyone enjoyed the students’ visit and the carol singing.”

Wells has brought the sixth-grade chorus from Head-Royce School to the day center for many years.

“It is always a special holiday treat for the sixth-graders,” Wells said. “The kids love to sing carols and especially for the lovely folks at the center.”



Members of the Head-Royce School sixth-grade chorus sing Christmas carols for clients at Ability Now Bay Area on Dec. 10.

Ability Now Bay Area, which changed its name in October from the Cerebral Palsy Center for the Bay Area, dates back to 1939 and has been at its current location on Lincoln Avenue since 1956.

“We changed the name to reflect our focus on participants’ abilities, rather than their disabilities,” said DeCoste, adding that the center caters to 86 clients, most of whom come on a daily basis.

“Our goal is to enhance the ability of adults with cerebral palsy and other developmental disabilities to lead more independent and fulfilling lives.”

Ability Now Bay Area offers a variety of classes in

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## Rockridge

# Residents mixed on housing plan

*Proposal to build more secondary units on private property goes before council on Jan. 5*

**By Laura Casey**  
*Correspondent*

OAKLAND — Several dozen Rockridge residents piled into the district’s library to hear more about the city’s plans to relax regulations on secondary units on private property from city officials.

The plan, which will go before City Council on Jan. 5, is part of the city’s goal to create nearly 15,000 new units by 2022. The Housing Element of the General Plan’s policies supported this goal by asking the city to explore eliminating an off-street parking space requirement of one space per unit of housing and eliminating setback requirements for secondary units.

“Housing affordability is a major issue in the city, and this road map recognizes this problem,” Darin Ranelletti, deputy director of the Oakland Planning

Department, said at the Dec. 9 meeting.

Some Rockridge residents welcomed the idea, saying it would improve the affordability of their own homes if they can build, then rent on their properties. Others said that building new units in backyards might upset the quality and character of their neighborhoods and create parking congestion while not alleviating the housing problem.

The proposed changes were modeled off Berkeley’s “Yes in My Backyard: Mobilizing the Market for Secondary Units” document from 2012, found online, that said secondary units are a potential way to address housing affordability. It also said that city regulations such as parking regulations and setback requirements prevent many

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## ‘Ocean Guardians’

# Joaquin Miller, Hillcrest School students honored

*East Bay schools are involved in program’s conservation activities*

**By David Boitano**  
*Correspondent*

OAKLAND — That plastic bottle you drop in the street could well end up in San Francisco Bay.

But don’t take this paper’s word for it. Ask the students at Joaquin Miller Elementary School in Oakland and Lincoln Middle School in Alameda.

They are learning all about the dispersal of trash and its effect on the ocean through a unique federally funded program aimed at making them “Guardians of the Ocean.”

Joaquin Miller and Hillcrest School in Oakland and Lincoln Middle in Alameda are Ocean Guard-

ian Schools, designated as such by the National Marine Sanctuaries, which operates the program under the auspices of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Each year, schools apply for grants of up to \$4,000 to finance student-based ocean conservation activities. The projects combine science education with a hands-on project that allows students to care for the environment while getting their hands dirty.

“The real motivation is to get the kids outside to connect with nature, to let them have that sense of exploration, wonderment and joy all within the connect of learning,” said Seaberry Nachbar, program manager for California Bay Watershed Education and Training.

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**Prior: Small world indeed at holidays**



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