



Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Association

March 2024 Newsletter

P.O. BOX 7572 • BERKELEY, CA 94707

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Thursday, March 14, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Thousand Oaks Baptist Church, Catalina at Colusa

Enter on Catalina about half a block east of Colusa Avenue.

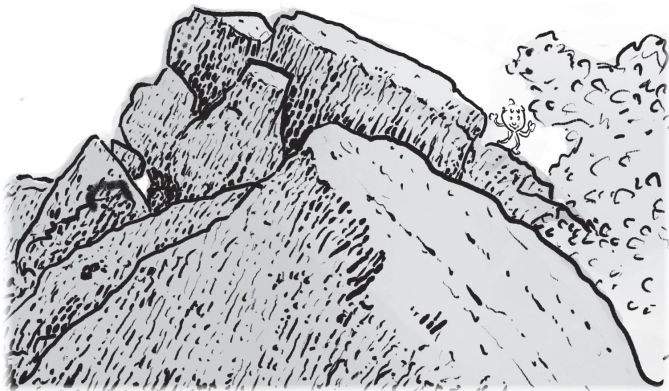


The Rocks of Thousand Oaks

The residents of the Thousand Oaks neighborhood have a unique geological and historical phenomenon all around us, sometimes occurring in our own yards and basements.

Celebrated author **Ally Markovich** and award-winning photographer **Ximena Natera** from *Berkeleyside* will present us with an in depth look at their recent reporting on the history and uses of two of these rocks, Indian Rock and Mortar Rock. Learn about how the boulders have always been appreciated and utilized, from the first people who inhabited this area until the present, as well as how efforts throughout time have preserved and protected these natural gifts.

Come with questions, as well as your own stories of how the rocks have impacted your life in the Thousand Oaks neighborhood. Find out why Ally and Ximena found this an important story to cover, and how they went about their research.



Ally Markovich is a journalist at *Berkeleyside*, where she covers the education beat and specializes in enterprise, accountability, and data reporting. Her work has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Huffington Post*, and the *Washington Post*.

Ximena Natera is a photojournalist for *Berkeleyside*, whose photographs have been published in newspapers and magazines across the US, Mexico, and Latin America.

You Can Nominate a Thousand Oaks Business for the 2024 Golden Acorn Award

For more than twenty years, TONA has honored a local business for its contributions to making Thousand Oaks a better place to live, and for contributing to a sense of community. This year we are inviting YOU to nominate a business that you think should receive the Golden Acorn Award for 2024.

You can vote online at tinyurl.com/ym22mac4. If you don't have easy access online, you can mail in your vote (perhaps along with your annual membership fee? See back page), or send an email to tona.board@gmail.com. Be sure to visit www.tona.org/golden-acorn to view the list of past winners to make sure you're not nominating a business that has previously won. This year, TONA will be announcing the winner at the TONA Arts and Crafts Fair at Peralta Park on Saturday, June 1. Please send in your nominations by May 1.





On the Avenue

Peter Goodman



The rain this season has been good to us. Solano all in all looks clean, verdant, and thriving.

Talking about great looks, one night recently I noticed the spectacular, red-lit lettering at **Ritual Tattoo** (1563). I mentioned their gorgeous metal-door design previously. Whoever's in charge there has a great eye.

Squabisch Pretzels (1585) is now offering 2x a month classes in pretzel making. Recommended especially for politicians facing tough interview questions this year! Also offering classes is **Beadazzled** (1741), where you can—what else—learn beading.

A shout out to **Akemi** (1695) for their very tasteful and colorful planter boxes that dress up what would otherwise be a plain outdoor eating space.

I stopped by **Nielsen Arts** (1545) to admire their new digs (just up from their old ones) and enjoyed their mini-gallery with works by Ricky Watts. Every two months they feature a new artist; from February to April the fantastical watercolor paintings of Oakland-based Malisa Suchanya will be on display. Check it out!

Coming soon to 1841 (old **Greetings** space) is **Of All Places**, which describes itself as offering retail wine and beer for an “artisan food market.” I have no idea what that means, and I’ve not been able to find out any further information.

The **Oaks Theater**'s morph into a bouldering gym at 1875 is still not complete, despite a lot of fanfare promising an end-of-year debut. A peer into the lobby reveals that they've kept the lovely floor and a lot of decorative details. Sadly, the popcorn machine has been removed. Allen Cain of the Solano Avenue Association says the inside looks “awesome”!

Overall there seem to be fewer empty spaces along the avenue, but the old **Red Oak** space (1891) up by the Alameda is still begging for an occupant. I often wonder what the real issue is here: rent too high, space too large, in need of costly repairs or code upgrades,

owner making some kind of tax play? You couldn't ask for a better neighborhood, so what's going on?

Tha Siam Thai (1892) is the new name for **Bangkok Jam**, the result of a partner joining the business. I was told that “tha” means basically a place to park yourself, so that's what you're encouraged to do here when looking for a meal. They told me that they make a point of their food being authentic and not “fusion.” A recommended dish new to the menu is their #8, whole tilapia with sweet chili sauce.

The space at 1744 vacated by **Pharmaca** is now **Afterschool University** and is filled with kid energy. Sadly and astoundingly, **Delirama** (1746) has ditched its super popular pastrami sandwich in favor of . . . something else, TBD.

Cugini (1556) has yet to turn the vacant spot next door into a dining area. They've had their plans posted outside for months now, but all they'll tell me is that it'll open “soon as we can.” We're waiting!

Photopia (1607) is a new studio where you can get portraits done and learn about photography.

Safeway (1500) may technically lie just outside the Thousand Oaks neighborhood, but the store serves many of its residents. And many will be either pleased or horrified to discover they have installed four new self-checkout lanes. What do you all think about this? Depending on whom you listen to, it's a sign either of a worker shortage or of contempt for workers. One other new thing at Safeway is an Eco Recycling box at the corner of Neilson and Solano for clothes, shoes, and books. Time to clean out your closets!

And one last thing: Hey, you guys at **AT&T** (1612), all that graffiti on your utility box has got to go! Kudos to all the other Solano shopkeepers who are keeping their storefronts spiffy and shopwindows clear!

As ever, all tips and gossip to me at peterlordgoodman@gmail.com

SQUABISCH



Heads Up! The TONA “Home-Grown Artists and Makers Fair” Is Coming Once Again!

Date: June 1, 11–3 Location: Peralta Park at the corner of Solano and Peralta

This is an invitation to Thousand Oaks artists and makers to participate in the third annual “Home-Grown Creations” art fair, sponsored by the Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Association. Artists, musicians, and creators of all media, including wood sculpture, painting, printmaking, drawing, fabric arts, photography, cartooning and other crafts and handiwork are encouraged to participate. You may want to sell your work, or just to display it.

If you’d like to participate, register by emailing the following information to tona.board@gmail.com. Deadline for registration is May 15. • **Name and home address** • **Email address** or preferred method of communicating with you • **General description** of the art/craft/talent you will be sharing and amount of space you will need.

Please contact us with any questions. Check the TONA website for updates at www.TONA.org. We look forward to this annual spring event!

History Corner

Karen Chapman

Are you aware that inside the Veteran’s Memorial Building at 1931 Center Street in downtown Berkeley, there’s a dedicated museum preserving the history of our city? As an active docent at The Berkeley Historical Society & Museum (BHSM), I get energized promoting BHSM resources, including the *BHSM Newsletter*.

The winter 2024 edition features two great articles about our Thousand Oaks neighborhood. One delves into the history of the Thousand Oaks Urns, while the other explores “The History of North Berkeley’s Lovers Lane.” Might you live in a Thousand Oaks Lovers Lane home or be walking by one of them? Maybe so if you are on Capistrano and/or Yosemite streets! It is an area where some of the first homes in our neighborhood were built.

Past BHSM newsletters are available online at www.berkhistory.org, and current copies are mailed to BHSM members. A limited number of current editions are also available during open museum hours. I wholeheartedly encourage you to visit the museum and discover intriguing stories that shape our community. Be sure to mention that you live in Thousand Oaks neighborhood!

There is more to be found on the BHSM website too. After logging in, navigate to **Resources > CatalogIt** Hub to explore a wealth of historical photographs, maps, and vintage postcards, including several cool photographs of our neighborhood pre-development.



School Corner

Megan Silverman, VP of Communications

Happy end of winter, Thousand Oaks Community! The PTA is busy planning spring events, such as our parent Auction Night and Read-a-thon, which are two of our biggest yearly fundraisers to support our school programs. Also, students, staff and caregivers are excited for the return of our annual Science Fair, where students research and present their findings on a chosen topic. We also are in the stages of planning our Annual Spring Carnival, with games, prizes and food. The whole Thousand Oaks community is invited to the Carnival. Stay tuned to see flyers with the date as details firm up.

Be sure to honk or “holler” as you drive by our school’s Climate Strike on April 19. Show your support for our passionate young activists and for protecting our planet!

A reminder that our school hours are 8 am—6 pm weekdays, which includes our afterschool programs. Thank you all for sharing our park area outside of these times. Enjoy the longer days as we approach spring!



TONA Treasurer's Report

Jane Tierney, *Treasurer*

TONA welcomed 28 new members in 2023. Dues paying member households totaled 203. Donations totaled \$3268. The TONA PayPal account continues to be a convenient way for people to join or renew their memberships.

TONA's major annual expense is always our newsletter. In 2023 we printed three newsletters at a cost of \$2086. Everything else involving the newsletters (writing, editing, layout, proofreading, artwork, and distribution) is done by neighborhood volunteers. The distribution involves 52 people who deliver to homes.

Additional expenses for 2023 were rental of the P.O. Box at \$230, TONA.org website services at \$276, and membership envelopes at \$128. The TONA Arts and Crafts Fair costs were \$138 for a City of Berkeley permit and \$117 for insurance. The ice cream social cost \$135. The Halloween Decorating contest cost \$50, and an honorarium to The Thousand Oaks Baptist Church for use of the space was \$50.

The total amount spent for the year was \$3210.51, almost exactly what we received in donations for the year. TONA had an increase of approximately \$500 in expenses over 2022. There were higher costs for the website, the post office box, and insurance.

Thank You to Our Deliverers

A loud shout out to our hardy band of 52 volunteers who deliver the TONA newsletter to 1800 homes and Solano businesses. In this digital age, we are so fortunate to have folks who walk their streets to personally deliver each issue to neighbors. Our newsletter is, of course, available on line, but we believe that the personal connection is an important element for neighborhood groups.

We are a volunteer organization that deals with neighborhood concerns. Neighborhood meetings provide a forum for discussion of current issues. Please consider joining your neighbors in becoming a TONA member!

TONA Board of Directors

Lucia Blakeslee, <i>President</i>	510-701-9386
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Charlotte Toothman	510-409-0451
Ray Yep	510-318-4894

Editing: Martha Salzman Design: George Mattingly Illustrations: © John Klinger Acorn Illustrations: Nancy Gorrell Archives

TONA Membership Form

Dues per year: \$5 Senior, \$10 Single, \$15 Family.

NOTE: If you need to waive or reduce your membership fees because of financial hardships, please do so!
Send dues to: TONA, P.O. Box 7572, Berkeley, CA 94707 or via Paypal at www.tona.org/membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____

Yes, I can deliver newsletters in my neighborhood.