



# OUR Voice

Oakland Unified Residents



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Spotlight
- Senior Resource
- Success Stories
- Your Voice
- RAB Blog
- Kid's Play
- Teen Scene
- At-a-Glance Calendar

## The Scoop

As of January 1, 2013, grocery stores and other stores in Alameda County that sell packaged food can no longer provide single-use plastic carryout bags, nor can they distribute paper bags or reusable bags for free at checkout.

Consumers have the option to bring their own bags or pay for bags made from recycled paper or reusable bags. Recycled content paper bags and reusable bags may be provided, but affected stores must charge a minimum of 10 cents per bag. Consumers may bring any type of bag to a store for their purchases, and are encouraged to do so!



Learn more at by visiting Alameda County Management Authority at <http://reusablebagsac.org/>.

### RAB Newsletter Committee

- William Curry
- Henry Flowers
- Lillian Gibson
- Robin Johnson
- Tina Moses

### Staff

- Greer McVay, Managing Editor
- Jillian Ryan, Senior Editor

## The Splendor of Seniors



2011 Holiday Splendor Planning Committee members.

In this issue of OUR Voice, we want to pay tribute to the seniors who reside in the OHA community. We appreciate the experience and knowledge that seniors share and their contributions to their own families as well as to those around them. So many of our seniors represent the "village" it takes to raise children and look out for the safety of the kids in their neighborhood. Oakland is truly fortunate to have the

wisdom of people who have served their community and country dating back to WWII. We encourage our youth to learn from the positive examples of the seniors who are wonderful caregivers and role models.

Part of OHA's recognition of seniors is the annual Holiday Splendor, a festive event that will take place on Thursday,

December 13. All seniors residing in OHA are invited to join their neighbors, friends and staff for a night of socializing, dinner and dancing, capped off with a fashion show, raffles and prize giveaways.

Tickets are \$8 per person and seating is limited. Purchase tickets today by calling OHA's Department of Family & Community Partnerships at (510) 587-5127. This event is jointly coordinated by a committee of OHA residents and staff.

## Veterans Day

In the United States, November 11, is recognized as Veterans Day. On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 an armistice, or cease-fire, between Germany and the Allied nations (primarily Great Britain, France and Russia, prior to US involvement) came into effect, bringing World War I combat to a close. On November 11, 1919, Armistice Day was commemorated for the first time. In 1926, the United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I and declared that the anniversary of the armistice (Armistice Day) should be commemorated with prayer and thanksgiving.

Following World War II, the U.S. changed Armistice Day to Veterans Day to recognize not just veterans of World War I, but to honor and thank all military personnel who served the United States in all wars, particularly living veterans. [Memorial Day is intended to honor those



who have died while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.] Veterans Day is typically celebrated with parades and ceremonies dedicated to the brave men and women who protect our country. And it is always appropriate to thank a veteran for their service.

Veterans Day is a federal holiday and government offices, including the Oakland Housing Authority, are closed. This year the holiday will be recognized on Monday, November 12. Learn more about veteran's programs in California at [www.cacvso.org](http://www.cacvso.org).

## Spotlight

### New Homeowner

Fahim Munir  
Essie Day

### Newly Employed OHA Residents

Nadra Hannan  
Sedina Pratt

### College Scholarship Recipient

Marquis Smith received an academic scholarship to attend a four year University in the country of Turkey.

### Spotlights for future issues:

Send names of OHA family and friends who have recent accomplishments you'd like to share with the housing community.

Please forward entries to: [jryan@oakha.org](mailto:jryan@oakha.org). Make sure to include your name, phone number and e-mail address, along with the name of the person you want to recognize and your relationship to that person.



## When Hunger Strikes

We have all been there. Funds have been tight, cabinets are bare and there is a familiar rumbling in the tummy. When a choice has to be made between keeping the lights on or buying groceries, sometimes the electricity wins. Whether your hours have been cut at work or you are just trying to make ends meet, purchasing healthy foods and snacks can be a challenge. Fortunately, there are year-round community resources available to help and there is additional support during the holidays.

Over the last seven years Oakland Housing Authority, its employees and the Oakland Black Firefighters Association (OBFFA) have teamed up annually to give food baskets to OHA residents during the month of December. The winter holiday season can be particularly difficult for some and through this partnership nearly 500 OHA families are provided holiday meals. Oakland Housing Authority employees have been instrumental in collecting donated food for the resident holiday

basket giveaways. These mouth-watering gift baskets have either a turkey or chicken and all the fixings to make a complete traditional holiday dinner; and several residents graciously volunteer their time to assist in packing the meals as well as assist with distributing them to their neighbors.

The OBFFA works tirelessly to give back to the community through their food give-away



programs that feed over 1,000 Oakland families during the holidays, and they also volunteer to serve meals at OHA's annual senior celebration, Holiday Splendor.

The Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) provides emergency food to families in need, as well as to charitable organizations and some local holiday food drives. The ACCFB can be reached weekdays from 9:00am-4:00pm at (800) 870-3663 or (800) 870-FOOD. In addition to making emergency food referrals, if requested they will provide information about Food Stamps and the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program.

All of these resources are available due to the generosity and kindness of people who strive to help the communities in which they live and work. If you are in need, please feel free to contact the Family & Community Partnerships department at (510) 587-5127. If you are able to donate time please contact your local food bank. 🌱

by Lillian Gibson

## Don't Let A Foggy Grinch Ruin Your Happy Holidays!

Fun and food-filled holidays may challenge not only waistslines but, surprisingly, your sewer line. Holiday treats like buttery foods, deep-fried turkeys and homemade gravy use lots of cooking fats, oils and grease, or FOG. FOG, when washed down the drain, can stick to the inside of sewer lines. Over time, FOG can create a clog/blockage in your sewer line. FOG blockages may cause sewage backups into your house, business, or streets and could end up in local creeks and the Bay.

The good news is that sewage backups caused by FOG are easily preventable! The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) is working with the City of Oakland, Baykeeper, other local agencies, restaurants and residents to prevent FOG pollution.

Residents are urged to prevent a kitchen headache and costly repairs this holiday season by taking these easy preventive steps:

1. Prior to washing dirty dishes, wipe down greasy pots or dishes with a paper towel or with a FOG scraper. Dispose of FOG into your kitchen scrap recycling or the garbage. **Call EBMUD to order a FREE FOG scraper!**
2. Pour small amounts of FOG into a can with a lid or mix it with absorbent materials, like paper.
3. Don't use hot water and soap to wash FOG down the drain. When water cools in the pipes, FOG hardens into clogs further down the line.

4. Drop off large amounts of residential cooking oil (i.e. turkey fryer oil) for recycling.

Cooking oil from residents may be disposed for FREE at recycling locations in the East Bay. For location information and other available FOG control resources, please visit: [www.ebmud.com/FOG](http://www.ebmud.com/FOG) or call EBMUD's Environmental Services Division at (510) 287-1651.

**Please do your part to protect your sewers and the community's health; and KEEP OUR BAY CLEAN!** 🌱



## Success Stories



Nadra Hannah at her desk.

The OHA community congratulates **Sedina Pratt** and **Nadra Hannah**, two residents who were recently hired through the Family & Community Partnerships (FCP) Employment Assistance and Referral Program. Both ladies were hired as Resident Services Coordinators, by John Stewart Company and Satellite Housing, respectively. Their new jobs came after participating in an orientation and the job training services offered by FCP to help prepare candidates for employment opportunities where employers have come to OHA for referrals.

As Section 3 job candidates, Pratt and Hannah reflect a great deal of the talent that can be found within the OHA community. Ms. Hannah says, "I am grateful for the support and encouragement given to me by FCP counselors. OHA is offering some great opportunities for residents to become engaged in their community."

Join us in recognizing the hard work and determination required for them to achieve success with their job search. Good luck in your new jobs!

## SENIOR RESOURCE

People who lack basic reading skills might put their health at risk if they can't read the labels on prescription medicines or understand information about managing diabetes, arthritis or hypertension. Adults who struggle with reading can have a hard time participating in a technology-based society, not to mention the social, economic, and political life of Oakland.

Being informed about your community, understanding healthcare information, or even filling out forms and applications can be challenging for most of us. But when you have difficulty reading and writing the challenge can be particularly difficult. Non-readers need to be aware of the many resources available to help them learn basic skills in reading, writing and math. It is important for family members to encourage literacy because they might not always be available in times of crisis.

For more information contact the Oakland Public Library about its Second Start program at <http://www.oaklandlibrary.org/services/second-start-adult-literacy-program> or call (510) 238-3432.

## YOUR VOICE

**Q:** Are there any training opportunities in the medical field being offered through FCP's Employment Development program right now?

**A:** The Alameda County EMS Corps is currently recruiting for their 5-month paid (stipend) program where participants will receive Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training. With this preparation, participants will be trained for careers as EMTs, firefighters and/or for hospital employment.

EMS Corps members will be trained/educated through daily classes, tutoring, workshops and internships on first responder skills and response. In addition, they will receive mentoring, life coaching and health education. Participants will also practice public speaking and develop their leadership skills.

If you are an OHA resident and are interested in pursuing this opportunity, please contact Patraya Lowe at (510) 587-5107 or [plowesmith@oakha.org](mailto:plowesmith@oakha.org).

Applications are due by October 31, 2012.

## RAB Blog

The Resident Advisory Board (RAB) is eager to help all residents understand their legal rights and responsibilities. If you are raising children, or if you are a teenager on the cusp of adulthood, or if you are a senior trying to understand retirement and Medicare, these informative guides offer practical information in an easy-to-access format. Residents are encouraged to request or download copies from the website of the California State Bar, at <http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Public/Pamphlets.aspx>.



### Consumer Education Series includes:

- *Seniors & The Law: A Guide For Maturing Californians*
- *Kids & The Law: An A-to-Z Guide For Parents*
- *When You Turn 18: A Survival Guide For Teenagers*

### RAB'S MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure that OHA Public Housing Residents and Section 8 Participants actively participate in the decision making process regarding OHA policies and procedures and are actively engaged in their community as leaders.

## Parents Get Involved

Children whose parents are actively engaged in their education are more successful in school and in life.

Research shows that the more a parent establishes expectations, communicates with teachers and follows through with their child's assignments, the more a child feels supported in their education; and those children will ultimately work harder to meet their goals.

Many parents aren't as involved as they could be because they simply do not know where to begin. School can be just as overwhelming for parents as it is for students and even more so for parents who have multiple children in varying grades or schools. It is recommended that parents take the beginning of the school year as an opportunity to start preparing their children for the school year ahead by reaffirming their commitment and expectations.

As early as possible parents should

introduce themselves to their children's teacher(s) and convey to the teacher the value they place on education. This is a good time to develop a plan that both the parent and teacher agree to support.

With all the forms of communication available and the ease of losing or missing messages, the parent/teacher plan should also include an agreement on the best mode and frequency of communication. Regular engagement is the key, especially with children who have had previous challenges with issues like attendance and completing and/or turning in assignments.

Follow-up on assignments and check your child's backpack for important notices. Offer help in areas of academic weakness as this will help create an environment of greater success for your child(ren). For more tips and resources please visit [www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org) to help your child have a successful school year. 



## Teen Scene

### Volunteering

When the time comes to prepare college applications or employment resumes, work experience isn't all that sets one person apart from another. College recruiters and potential employers like to see candidates who have diverse backgrounds. You can round out your experience by demonstrating a strong commitment to giving back to your community. Valuable skills like teamwork, customer service and organization can be obtained through volunteerism.

During your holiday break consider helping those in need while also expanding your skills. There are many places to donate your time and the Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) is a local option that benefits thousands of people in need. Gather a group of friends or go alone to help feed the hungry. Your contribution will make your community a better place and you'll feel good knowing that your contribution makes a huge difference in the lives of others.

To learn more about ACCFB visit <http://feedingamerica.org/get-involved/volunteer.aspx> or for other volunteer opportunities visit The Volunteer Center website at [www.thevolunteercenter.net](http://www.thevolunteercenter.net).

**Kid's Play**



**Thanksgiving Word Search**

turkey	stuffing
dinner	thankful
harvest	pilgrims
feast	pumpkin
family	pie
november	celebrate

p i l g r i m s m n  
u f c f p i e t h o  
m a e e y r u u a v  
p m l a z p b r r e  
k i e s b u j k v m  
i l b t n g g e e b  
n y r s i t c y s e  
t h a n k f u l t r  
q s t u f f i n g f  
z r e d i n n e r x

Please clip the safety tips on the reverse and keep handy.

Send questions or comments to [jryan@oakha.org](mailto:jryan@oakha.org) or [ohacommunications@oakha.org](mailto:ohacommunications@oakha.org)



## Election Day is November 6, 2012



With the Democratic and Republican National Conventions becoming a distant memory and campaign speeches, rhetoric and gaffes in full swing, clear distinctions between the two candidates for president are becoming crystal clear. By now most voters are able to identify the differences between the incumbent, President Barack Obama, and his challenger, former Massachusetts Governor, Mitt Romney on issues including job creation, tax reform, housing, healthcare, foreign policy and other domestic and ideological issues such as the role of government and the need for a social safety net.

Recent polls have shown a considerable lead by President Obama. However, all political pundits and strategists would remind people that there is a long way to go until Election Day, Tuesday, November 6. In fact, the series of presidential debates is expected to have the greatest impact on many people's decision-making process and will help determine the outcome of the election.

The three presidential debates are being televised October 3, 16 and 22. The one vice-presidential debate between current Vice-President Joe Biden and Wisconsin Rep. Paul Ryan, was held October 11. Viewers should check local listings for times and be sure to watch live, or view them online.

While most eyes are on the presidential election and the impact it will have on the nation, just as much attention should be paid to other items on ballots this November. Several items that Californians in general and Bay Area residents in particular are paying attention to are:

**Proposition 30** which seeks to fund schools by raising taxes on income earners over \$250,000 for seven years and increase sales tax by .25 for four years.

**Proposition 32** will eliminate campaign funding from big business, unions and government contractors, with the goal of "taking the money out" of politics.

**Proposition 33** allows auto insurance companies to lower costs for people who have had previous insurance coverage, while charging higher premiums to people who have not carried insurance continuously.

**Proposition 36** revises the current Three Strikes Law, imposing a life sentence only if the third strike is a serious or violent offense, presumably preventing offenders from receiving life sentences for lesser offenses.

**Proposition 37** would require adjustments to labeling of certain genetically modified foods making it easier for people to make informed dietary decisions for their family.

Learn more about these and other propositions, federal, state and local candidates, and issues that have an effect on your life.

Visit <http://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/> for a complete look at the election.

Register to vote online at <https://rtv.sos.ca.gov/elections/register-to-vote/>.

## Your Right (and Responsibility) to Vote

The last presidential election was historic in many ways, including being the election that saw the highest turnout in U.S. history of voters from previously underrepresented groups.

While other states may be proposing more restrictions on voters this year, California is leading the way toward easier voter participation by introducing online voter registration. You still have time to register online through **Monday, October 22, 2012**.

Make a commitment to yourself and

your country to register to vote. Pick up a voter registration form at the post office, library or sometimes even in front of the grocery store. You may also register to vote online at [www.GottaVote.org](http://www.GottaVote.org). Don't assume you are registered to vote especially if you have moved or changed your name since you last voted. Make certain to check to see if you are still registered.

Once you are registered, identify your polling place which might have moved, make a plan to vote, encourage your family and friends to join you and vote on Tuesday,

November 6. Don't forget early voting and voting by mail options if you plan to be unavailable on Election Day. And finally, contact your out-of-town family and friends and remind them of the importance of registering and voting, especially if they live a state in which it might be difficult to vote. Every vote counts! The California voter registration deadline is Monday, October 22, 2012.



## Community and Household Safety Tips

- ⚠ While walking to your car or to your front door it is always a good practice to have your keys in your hands.
- ⚠ Never provide to a stranger personal information, such as your Social Security Number or bank information.
- ⚠ Do not prop open doors and gates when entering and exiting your building.
- ⚠ Add variety to your daily routine so your whereabouts aren't as predictable.
- ⚠ Make sure the door is closed behind you when you leave or return to your property. All doors should close and latch properly without assistance.
- ⚠ Keep entrances and parking areas free of stored items or debris. This will help you get into and out of your vehicle without tripping.
- ⚠ Form a neighborhood watch.
- ⚠ Don't leave notes on your door when going out.
- ⚠ Don't hesitate to report a crime or suspicious behavior. Calling the police anonymously is okay.
- ⚠ Don't leave keys under your mat or in nearby plant pots.
- ⚠ While shopping, don't turn your back or step away from your purse or wallet sitting in the cart.
- ⚠ Don't leave valuables in your vehicle.



# AT-A-GLANCE • FALL/WINTER 2012-2013

## OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

10/04/12  
Resident Advisory Board Meeting

10/8/12  
Columbus Day

10/31/12  
Halloween

## NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

11/06/12  
Election Day

11/11/12  
Veterans Day

11/22/12  
Thanksgiving

## DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

12/06/12  
Resident Advisory Board Meeting

12/08/12 Hanukkah Begins

12/21/12 Dongzhi Festival

12/25/12 Christmas Day

12/26/12 Kwanzaa Begins

12/31/12 New Year's Eve

## JANUARY

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

01/01/13  
New Year's Day

01/21/13  
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

01/21/13  
Inauguration Day  
(public observance)

Visit the Board of Commissioners web page for Board meeting schedule, agendas and minutes at <http://www.oakha.org/boc.html>

### Movie Road Show

A film lecture series, Movie Road Show, will be presented this fall at senior centers throughout Oakland. Several movies have been selected that address the concerns of seniors, working families and anyone interested in social issues.

Each event will feature a different movie followed by a brief Q&A session and testimonies from guest speakers representing various community organizations.

To find out when and where the next Movie Road Show is scheduled contact Jamie Manalang at (510) 587-5118.

### Movie Titles

- Too Big to Fail
- An Age for Justice Elder Abuse in America
- American Greed Season I
- Fahrenheit 9/11
- SICKO
- The 11th Hour
- Identity Theft

## ELECTION DAY!

# TUESDAY NOVEMBER 6



**Oakland Housing  
Authority**

1619 Harrison Street  
Oakland, CA 94612

Presorted  
Standard  
US Postage  
PAID  
Oakland, CA  
Permit #3048

Language translation services are available in 151 languages at all offices at no cost.

Los servicios de traducción en 151 idiomas están disponibles en todas las oficinas sin ningún costo.

Trương chính thông dịch đây đủ cho tới 151 tiếng nói miêng phí cho quý vị đang có tại nhiều văn phòng gần đây.

所有辦公地點都會免費提供 151 種的外語翻譯服務。