



Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Association

February 2017 Newsletter



P.O. BOX 7572 • BERKELEY, CA 94707
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TONA General Meeting

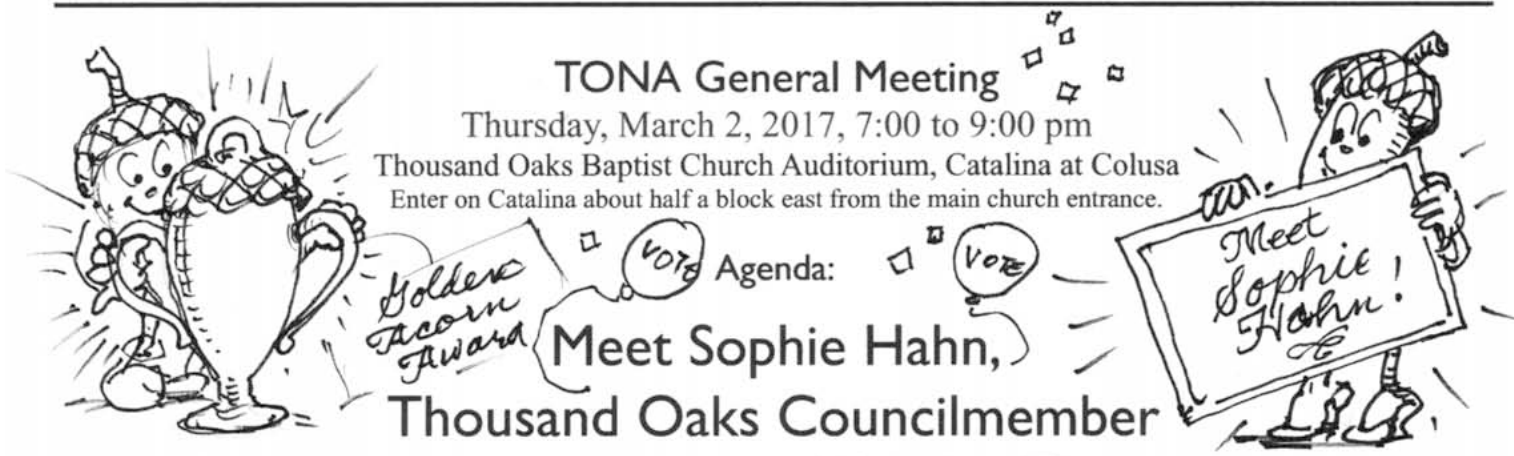
Thursday, March 2, 2017, 7:00 to 9:00 pm

Thousand Oaks Baptist Church Auditorium, Catalina at Colusa
Enter on Catalina about half a block east from the main church entrance.

Golden Acorn Award
Agenda: Meet Sophie Hahn, Thousand Oaks Councilmember

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Plus Golden Acorn Award and TONA Board Elections



Sophie Hahn, our new District 5 Councilmember, grew up in District 5 and has raised her own family here. She has been involved with the community and with our schools in many capacities, and is now representing us on the Council. She will provide an overview of key issues citywide, including homelessness, affordable housing, and climate action/resilience, in addition to covering topics specific to our district—including public safety, Solano Avenue, and our parks. And she will take questions from the audience as well. If you cannot make the meeting but would like to ask Ms. Hahn a question, please mail it to our P.O. Box, or email us at tona.board@gmail.com.

ONE VACANCY LEFT.

TONA Board Election at the March Meeting

The TONA board is pleased to welcome Martha Salzman as its newest member. Martha is a recently retired elementary school teacher and has lived in Thousand Oaks for 17 years (and in Berkeley for 38!). She's a fan of walking the avenues and paths of Berkeley, so you may see her out and about. She dove in right away, and contributed a piece to this newsletter.

Three of the eleven TONA board of director seats remain up for election this year and we have one vacancy to fill. How about joining a great group of community-minded neighbors who love Thousand Oaks and work to make it even better? We meet three to four times a year to plan the general meetings and discuss and respond to neighborhood concerns. Between meetings we consider issues by email. We would particularly love to have new board members skilled at using digital platforms, but all are encouraged to step forward! All dues-paying TONA members are entitled to run and vote for a board seat. Send in your dues payment in the handy envelope included with this newsletter. If you haven't paid your dues by the time the meeting rolls around, bring a check or cash to the meeting and find our treasurer, Jane Tierney. She'll be happy to help you out!



Golden Acorn Award!
iScream!

For the past fifteen years, TONA has awarded the highly coveted Golden Acorn to those local businesses that make our neighborhood an even better place to live. This year we honor the ice cream parlor iScream!, which opened in 2010 and has been a hit from day one, even on cold rainy days. It's become a scrumptious space for families and friends to meet and enjoy some of the best ice cream in the Bay Area. (And that's a high bar!)

Owner Robin Dalrymple makes the ice cream herself from organic ingredients. Flavors are seasonal, so they change frequently, but favorites include Salted Caramel, Meyer Lemon Sorbet, Honeydew Ice, and Brown Sugar Banana.

We are also thankful for the delicious treats that iScream! has generously contributed to TONA's annual Ice Cream Social. (Come this May!) Congratulations!

Organizing for a Disaster

Are you an individual who's looking for a group near you to organize to prepare for and respond to a disaster? You can send an email to Charlotte Nolan of the Berkeley Disaster Prep Neighborhood Network (database@bdpnnetwork.org), and she can connect you with a nearby group. If you're already in a group and want to connect with other groups near you, she can help with that as well! Check out their website to see about upcoming presentations: www.bdpnnetwork.org. They also have a Yahoo group you can join.

ORGANIZE!



Wondering about Earthquake Insurance?

Recently on the Thousand Oaks Nextdoor neighborhood site, a neighbor raised the question of earthquake insurance costs and whether any recent changes in the California Earthquake Authority made it any more affordable. There were some 40 responses to the question, and many of those raised questions themselves. It's a complicated issue and one many of us are struggling to understand.

A while back, Emily Rogan from United Policyholders (UP), addressed the Berkeley Disaster Prep group about Earthquake insurance (YouTube video available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LzDZqSseGM). UP is a nonprofit whose mission is to be a trustworthy and useful information resource and a respected voice for consumers of all types of insurance. They don't take money from insurance companies. They guide folks on buying insurance and navigating claims.

The gap in Bay Area home coverage for an earthquake is . . . \$602 billion! Homes are covered for \$90 billion, but the expected reconstruction costs for a major quake is \$692 billion. Don't fall into that gap. And don't fall into the underinsured gap. But quake insurance is not cheap. The average Alameda county premium for a home quake insurance policy is \$1,806.

If you want to get quake insurance, or see if your quake insurance is what it should be, visit their website (www.uphelp.org) and check out their resources page. They're also there after a disaster happens, helping folks make sure they're not getting ripped off by the insurance companies.

If you are interested in connecting with an independent insurance broker but don't know how to do it, try connecting with Yapacopia (<https://yapacopia.com>). They're a B Corp that will donate 30% of their commission to your selected charity in your name. (California residents even receive a tax deduction for the charitable donation.)

YOUR BOOK



Looking for Authors—Round Two

In our last newsletter, we announced plans for a TONA Authors' Night. We received a number of interested responses. As you can imagine, our neighborhood is home to many published authors. If you would like to be a part of this event planned for late May or early June and haven't already responded, please email us at tona.board@gmail.com. We would like to introduce you and your books to the neighbors.

Berkeley's Energy Choices Get Greener

By Martha Salzman

Good news for local consumers of energy! At its November 1 meeting, the Berkeley City Council voted to join The East Bay Community Energy program, providing an opportunity for local residents to start receiving more sustainable electrical energy. In the past, our only energy source was from PG&E; now homeowners will have a choice about where their energy comes from.

Berkeley is joining Alameda County, as well as Marin, Sonoma, and San Francisco Counties, to subscribe to a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) to purchase electricity from renewable sources as an alternative to investor-owned utilities (such as PG&E). A CCA operates as a nonprofit public agency with a publicly accountable board of directors made up of elected officials. Through the last several years, the program has proven successful in at least six other states (New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Rhode Island, Illinois, and New Jersey). East Bay Community Energy (EBCE) will be a community-governed power supplier that will provide clean, renewable electricity to residents and businesses.

Under EBCE, PG&E will continue to maintain the power grid and respond to outages. Customers would also have a choice of how green they want to purchase or whether to continue to purchase power directly from PG&E by opting out of EBCE.

The initial cost of implementing the community-choice energy program is estimated to be \$3.25 million dollars. After operations begin, the CCA will be self-funded through ratepayer revenues, and the start-up investment provided by the County will be paid back. To date, CCAs in California have been able to offer energy that is 25–30% cleaner than PG&E, and at lower costs to the consumer.

The benefits of the program will be cleaner energy and more local control. For more information, you can contact the Berkeley Office of Energy and Sustainable Development: sustainability@cityofberkeley.info.

Q and A

Have a question for TONA? Drop us an email at tona.board@gmail.com or send it along with your dues payment. Please feel free to share your ideas on any future general meeting topics too!

The TONA Board expresses its sincere condolences to the Bernbaum family for the loss of Jonathan, who was one of the unfortunate victims of the Ghost Ship fire.

On the Avenue

By Tanya Grove

Here are the latest comings and goings on Solano. If you know of others, let us know (tona.board@gmail.com).

Hello

Rose Oriental Rugs (1573), which specializes in cleaning and repairing oriental rugs, has taken over the space left by The Bone Room.

Goodbye

Andronico's was sold to Safeway in November. When the newsletter went to press, the store that graced the top of Solano since 1929 was holding an everything-must-go sale before it closes and then re-opens as Safeway.

Hannah's, which sold used children's clothing and toys at 1871 Solano for over 20 years, has become an online presence only as of November 2016. No word on what might take its place.

Hello Again

Nomad Tibetan restaurant (1593) proclaims to be "reintroducing" itself with a "new, updated menu and revised prices (under new management)."

Opening Soon

Aiming for a March 1 opening is **Fern's Garden** (1831, where Sal's Pharmacy used to be), which promises to be an artisan haven that focuses on fair-trade gifts, offering such fun items as a golden magic wish lamp.

Sonya Krawczyk, the new tenant at 1820 Solano (next to Anytime Fitness), has filed for a change-of-use permit so that in addition to selling dancewear at **Twirling Princess**, she'll also provide children's ballet lessons. No opening date for that yet.

Mountain Mike's Pizza awaits its license to sell beer and wine at 1746, next to Pharmaca. Grand opening does not look imminent. Stay tuned.

Still Empty

- 1741, on the corner of Ensenada
 - 1885, former home of The Fickle Bag
 - 1820 (I still miss La Farine after 2 1/2 years!)
 - 1639, hidden in mysterious brown paper
 - 1605, with its old William Stout Books awning
 - The Oaks Theatre, which showed its last film in 2010
- :(sigh) :(

On my information-gathering walk, I was struck by how many businesses along Solano I've never noticed before. How can it be that I've lived here for 12 years and never knew that Berkeley Psychic Institute (1734, near Ensenada) was a stone's throw away from my house? I guess I'm no psychic...

School Corner

By Karen Tompkins, T.O. PTA President

Happy New Year from the Thousand Oaks Elementary Community! We are excited for lots of exciting and enriching events this spring.



Our annual adults-only **auction fundraiser**, "A Toast to Thousand Oaks," is Saturday, March 25, 2017. Are you a neighbor or local business with something to donate to our auction? Donations are tax-deductible, and 100% of the proceeds benefit T.O. students. Neighbors can also sponsor Thousand Oaks teachers so they can attend the event for free. To sponsor a teacher or donate an auction item, please contact Karen Tompkins: kktompkins@gmail.com.

- The **T.O. Run-a-Thon** is April 24–28. All T.O. students will be running laps to support art, music, and P.E. at T.O. Please sponsor a T.O. student if one knocks on your door.

The **Thousand Oaks Carnival** is 11–3 Saturday, May 3, 2017. Neighbors are welcome to join us for traditional carnival games, treats, and prizes.

- Are you an Amazon shopper? Raise funds for Thousand Oaks Elementary at no additional cost to you. Sign up for AmazonSmile (www.smile.amazon.com) and designate Thousand Oaks Elementary PTA as your charity of choice.

Teen Corner

By Joshua Beissinger

I have lived in the Thousand Oaks neighborhood for most of the 16 years of my life. It is a very nice neighborhood, with easy access to most everything you would need. Take a short walk to Solano Avenue and you will find great grocery stores, restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream, et cetera. Once there, you could go to one of the many bus stops and take a bus to downtown Berkeley, to BART, or to San Francisco.

Walking through the streets of this neighborhood, you will likely find one of the many small parks hidden within the Berkeley hills. Most of these parks are dog friendly, which my dog Blaze appreciates, and they are very nice and well maintained. It is convenient to use the many paths that run up the Berkeley Hills for great views. I enjoy sunsets from the top of Indian Rock.

I do have a wish list for the neighborhood. I wish La Farine bakery would come back. I liked the fresh bread, chokolatines, and the sense of community that the store created. I like having family-owned stores on Solano Avenue, and I am sad that Andronico's is being taken over by a big company. I also wish there were more community events, like the annual block party we have.

I feel happy and privileged to live in Thousand Oaks.

Urn Project—Continued



As many of you know, in 2011 the TONA urn project installed two beautiful new urns—exact replicas of the more than 20 urns that were the signature features of our neighborhood when it was developed in 1909. (All but one of the original urns had disappeared over the years.) The new urns, located in Stone Face Park and on Yosemite Road at the Alameda, have been well received, adding beauty and a visible layer of history to our neighborhood.

As a result of your continued financial support, we have two additional new urns waiting to be installed. They are being stored in the construction yard of neighbor Michael McCutcheon, who has been incredibly patient, as the installation process has been more challenging this time around. We selected new locations for the urns but discovered that these sites require entirely new engineering drawings, as they are not level. The structural engineer who has volunteered his time is very busy and has not been able to produce new plans. To solve this bottleneck we are currently investigating alternate sites that are level and would make it possible to reuse the original engineering plans. Landscape architect Jim Horner, who advised us first time around, helped identify prospective new sites. We will be working with city officials to get the necessary approvals for new sites this spring. We are hopeful that this approach means we can move forward and actually install our new urns in 2017.

In addition, installation at the two new sites will be more expensive than we anticipated. We ask for your patience and, more important, your financial support to reach our installation goal. Donations should be made to Berkeley Partners for Parks (our fiscal partner) with "TONA urn project" in the memo line. Checks should be mailed to TONA, P.O. Box 7572, Berkeley CA 94707. Thank you and look for installation news in the next issue.

—Elizabeth Sklut and Trish Hawthorne, Co-chairs, Urn Project



Did you know that only about 10% of Thousand Oaks households actually are members of TONA, although our yearly dues are minuscule? We are very grateful to those who do join! TONA members subsidize all the rest in supporting our newsletter expenses and projects. If you value our work, please become a TONA member today and help us do more for our wonderful neighborhood.

WANTED: Civic-minded neighbors willing to deliver TONA newsletters to one nearby block three times a year. Many of the folks who deliver your copy are at least ten-year veterans. We particularly need volunteers for the streets above the Alameda (yes—the hilly ones). Explore a beautiful block on foot, meet your neighbors, and get some exercise in the process. Sign up on the dues coupon below. Thanks.



2015 Treasurer's Report



In 2016 TONA had 271 dues-paying member households. Dues and unrestricted donations totaled \$2,347.

TONA's major annual expense is always the production of our periodic newsletters. In 2016 the cost of three newsletters (1,850 copies each) totaled \$1,907.79. There was no increase in 2016 for the printing of the newsletters at Berkeley-based Copy Central on Solano Ave.

This covers the paper and the copying and folding of the newsletters. Everything else involving the newsletters (layout, proofreading, artwork, and distribution) is done by neighborhood volunteers. The distribution by itself requires 52 people, each responsible for a block.

Expenses for the three meetings were \$200. This includes the honorarium to the meeting hall at Thousand Oaks Baptist Church and the Ice Cream Social.

Other expenditures include \$100 for membership envelopes sent with the winter newsletter, \$164 for a meeting AV projector, \$311 for two trash receptacles for permanent use in Thousand Oaks Park at Ensenada and Tacoma Aves, and \$134 for our P.O. box. Total expenses for the year were \$2,823. (Last year: \$2,543)

The 2016 ending bank balance was \$5,412.82

Earmarked for the urn project is \$2,929.50. This past fall, the City of Berkeley contributed \$1,100 of this to pay for the permit. TONA's urn donations will be combined with those from our nonprofit partner BPPF (Berkeley Partners for Parks), when the next group of urns is installed.

TONA Board of Directors

David Peattie	510-508-7619
<i>President</i>	
Véronique Anxolabéhère	510-735-5759
<i>Vice President</i>	
Jane Tierney	510-289-9057
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Virginia Logan	510-528-9993
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Martha Salzman	510-524-9795
Elizabeth Sklut	510-527-5512

Acorn Illustrations: Nancy Gorrell
 Editing: Tanya Grove
 Layout: Alesia Connelly

TONA Membership Form

Dues per year: \$4 Senior, \$6 Single, \$10 Family
 Send dues to: **TONA, P.O. Box 7572, Berkeley, CA 94707**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Comments: _____

Yes, I will deliver newsletters in my neighborhood.