The Mystery Tours

By Johanna Leonard

With enthusiasm and strategic planning, Ryan Wilcox, Program Director for the Lake Merritt – Independent Senior Living, has conscripted fun and memorable adventures for those living in our adult community. His Mystery Tours are designed to be playful, surprising and full of wonder about Oakland and its people.

Ryan plans the tours, and the trip itinerary is unknown to the residents who enter the 12-seat minibus as it heads out for adventure.

“Our tours are not of the snoozy education variety,” Ryan laughed. “If you sign up, we don’t tell you where the trip is going. This approach allows me to be really creative. Adventure might be a little hard to come by as we age, or if one is physically limited, or can’t drive anymore. Thus, each tour is carefully planned in advance and designed to be memorable, fun and doable for everyone.”

“Our first Oakland Mystery Tour was in 2015,” Ryan recalled. “I wanted to do something that was really fun, to take them away.”

One of the early tours Ryan created took the form of a scavenger hunt. A series of clues were planted in advance and some were in riddle form.

“We would dedicate a location, go there and have an activity, find the clue and then drive on to the next,” he explained. “At one stop, we solved the riddle and ‘discovered’ all the elements for a spectacular picnic.”

“Our next clue took us to our ultimate destination, a place that was entirely new to everyone. It was a breath-taking location in Anthony Chabot Regional Park, featuring an unforgettably view. We set up a picnic, and a number of the residents took a short nature walk.”

Ryan is very imaginative with his Mystery Tours. He has taken our residents to parts of the city they’ve never seen, introduced them to Oakland’s performers and artists, and provided some exceptionally tasty treats.

“As we age, life can get predictable, but there’s plenty of wonder if we’re willing to look for it,” Ryan says. “It doesn’t need to be complicated. Anyone can create a ‘Mystery Tour.”

Johanna Leonard is Executive Director of the Lake Merritt and previously served as manager of The Lake Merritt. For more information about The Lake Merritt – Independent Senior Living, visit the website at www.thelakemerrittsenior.com or call (510) 903-3600.

Right Sizing

The perfect move began with the simple idea of minimizing. “Jo” knows that less can mean a lot more. Perhaps it’s her years of teaching English in Japan and adopting a more considered and gentle lifestyle.

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Missing Manual

...and sometimes heartbreaking stories of people who are new to everyone. It was a breath-taking location in Anthony Chabot Regional Park, featuring an unforgettably view. We set up a picnic, and a number of the residents took a short nature walk.”

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Senior Theatre Company’s annual Valentine show at PCA Feb. 12

Sunday, February 12 at 4:00 p.m.


See STAGEBRIDGE on page 29

Stagebridge comes to town with storytelling, romance

Senior Theatre Company’s annual Valentine show at PCA Feb. 12

Everyone has a story… and Oakland’s Stagebridge Senior Theatre Company is launching the year with a series of events to celebrate the art of storytelling.

Beginning tomorrow, January 19, the nation’s oldest senior theatre company will launch their fourth annual Love Lines: Storytelling Series at the Stagebridge campus, located at 2500 Harrison Street (25th & Harrison) in Oakland. Each noontime-hour-long event will feature two student storytellers with a variety of pieces – some funny, some poignant, and all of them heartfelt. This free monthly program is currently scheduled to run through May.

For those at home, Senior Center Without Walls is an award-winning program, founded in 2004, that offers activities, education and support to seniors online or by phone. In keeping with Stagebridge’s goal to transform the lives of older adults – those who are active and those home-bound – through performing arts, Stagebridge storytellers recently held a showcase. They will bring a series of monthly “Personal Storytelling” call-in concerts to members beginning next Tuesday, January 24.

For more information, visit Senior Center Without Walls online at http://www.seniornetworkwithoutwalls.org.

Ready, Piedmont Moving into February, just in time for Valentine’s Day, wrap yourself in the magical, hilarious and sometimes heartbreaking nature of romance with Stagebridge’s Love Lines: An Afternoon of Valentine Story and Song.

Now in its fifth year, this popular event will return to the Piedmont Center for the Arts on Sunday, February 12 at 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday, January 18, 2017

StageBridge—Continued from page 28
Stagebridge storytellers and singers will regale audiences with stories and classic songs of love—love lost, love found and all things in between. They will be accompanied on the piano by Bay Area favorite, Scrumbly Koldewyn. Bring your sweetheart, or maybe meet someone new at this afternoon of lively entertainment. The performance runs approximately 90 minutes and includes refreshments, sweets, and Valentine raffle prizes.

Lou Barnes is a mortgage broker based in Boulder, Colorado. He can be reached at lbarnes@pmglending.com.

Barnes — Continued from page 28
Also, might one of you have asked if the transition team has contacted the Fed? Eh?
The bond wreck is now global, triggering widespread currency and debt wrecks, while the sillies here admire a “strong dollar.” The currency moves will suppress US inflation and growth. The yen has lost 10% of value, a theoretical help to Japan if the slide stops here, 117/$. If it stops. Many nations, China included are right on the edge of destabilization. The outside world does limit Fed action, which the Fed understands, spillovers from here to there causing unpleasant spillbacks from there to here.
The yield curve is always a guide, but crucial during Fed tightening cycles. The Fed-sensitive 2-year T-note since summer has risen a half-percent, now pricing-in the Fed’s next hike. The 10-year T-note has risen twice that far. New signs of inflation did this? Growth? There are no such signs. Twits insist that rising rates reflect rising expectations for inflation, but that is circular nonsense. More significant, the 30-year T-bond has risen only 0.60%, and 10s have closed the 10s/30s spread from underneath (10s at 2.60% today, 30s at 3.19%). One nearly perfect marker of an end to Fed tightening: when 30s stop moving and 10s close altogether from below.

Now all the way back to the election. Just exactly what happened by dawn the following day to cause this wreck? Bonds were leaning the wrong way, a little. The ECB and BOJ last summer mumbled intentions to let their bond yields rise a little, to restore some yield curve to benefit banks, pension funds and insurance companies, so less of their cash is spilling to our bonds. The election surprise pulled those things forward. But this explosion? Danger in the world pushes money to bonds, not away — risks of war or default or depression. Trump is a new kind of risk. A wild card. No way to measure the risk he brings. Not policy risk, but personal from a demonstrably unstable man. His stimulus proposals have poor chances in Congress — a big deficit add, zero. The stock market is right that the easy stuff, deregulation and a business-friendly cabinet will add to profits. But growth, jobs, and incomes...? Hardly. That’s a long, difficult, productivity-enhancing road.

This bond wreck is overdone. Not a cycle top, but past halfway to one, and maybe a lot past halfway.

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