

Elementary students plant fruit trees to aid environment

By James Cook
EPA Today Contributor



Photo courtesy of James Cook
From left to right: Lizette Lopez, Christian Solorio and Lexus Julien help with the tree planting.

When youth counselors asked students at the East Palo Alto Charter School, if they'd like to get your hands dirty, the kids all raised their hands and screamed, "I do, I do, me, me, me!"

So the students at the school planted something new in their garden -- fruit trees. For months, the students clamored to add some fruit trees to their already impressive vegetable. So on a hot, sunny day, the students got their wish.

On this day, the students in the Garden Club at the East Palo Alto Charter School tripled the number of trees in the student run garden. Dedicating the trees, student Marcos Quintero proclaimed, "Without you,

none of this would be here" as the 4th grader stretched his hands over the garden and looked at the garden's founder Holly Taylor.

The tree planting honored Taylor who will be leaving Collective Roots this spring as she and her family prepare to move across the country to North Carolina. Holly co-founded Collective Roots Garden Project in 2000 (see www.collective-roots.org for more).

Students and parents chose these trees from the recommended fruit list developed by noted local arborist Dave Muffly and James

Cook. Fuyu persimmons, Black Mission fig, pomegranate, Meyer lemon and White Sapote were several of the trees on the list

. Serina Eichelberger, the students' teacher, said "it's exciting to have the students chose and plant trees that will feed them and future students for years to come."

This planting extends the wider the East Palo Alto Tree Initiative funded by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and led by the non-profit group Canopy that has already planted over 1,000 trees this year in East Palo Alto.

In addition to cleaning the air and providing food, the new fruit trees will also provide shade, beauty, and other environmental benefits. Over a lifetime, one tree absorbs one ton of carbon dioxide. As noted in Al Gore's award winning documentary, An Inconvenient Truth, planting a tree is one of the best activities we can do to help combat global climate change,

For more information, contact, James F. Cook (650) 455-1855 or Tori Derr, PhD (tori@collectiveroots.org) and (www.canopy.org).

1960s

DDT causes cancer and harms bird populations.

1990s

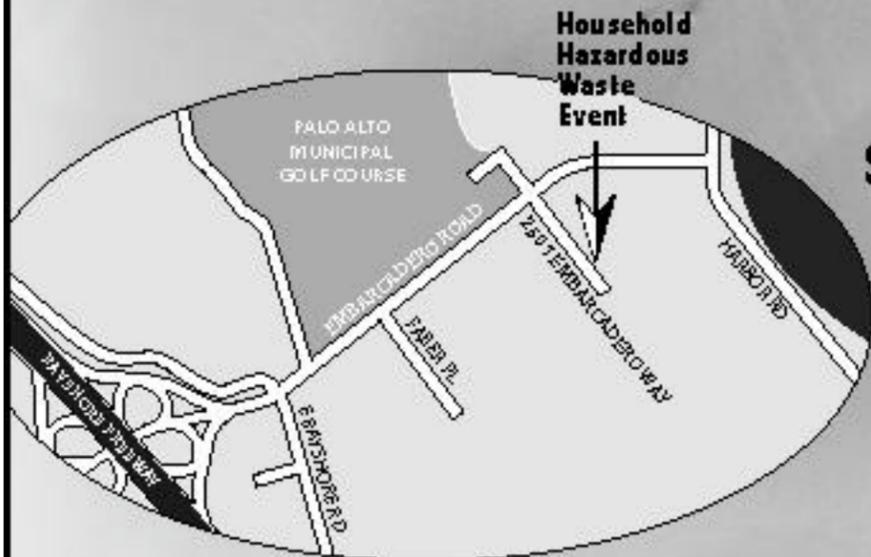
Diazinon and chlorpyrifos pose neurological health threats to children and cause toxicity in Santa Clara County creeks.



1970s & '80s

Chlordane and dieldrin from run-off water still impair San Francisco Bay today.

Banish these dangerous pesticides from your garage.



**Safely dispose of pesticides—free.
First Saturday of every month**

9am—noon. Palo Alto residents only.

Other residents and businesses in Santa Clara County visit www.hhw.org or call 408.299.7300.

In San Mateo County call 650.363.4305.



Now — there's a better alternative. Look for *Our Water, Our World* pest control products identified with this symbol at hardware stores and garden centers. These products are effective and less toxic to people and the planet. www.ourwaterourworld.org

www.clearbay.org
WE'RE ALL IN IN TOGETHER
850.329.2588



**Regional
Water Quality
Control
Plant**

Winning the highest honor in the class

By Robert Hood

East Palo Alto's Lomitusi Asaua, an immigrant from Samoa, will be honored as valedictorian at Cañada College's 39th annual commencement ceremonies Friday, May 25 at 7 p.m. Commencement will be held in the school's main theater, 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., in Redwood City.

Asaua, 35, is graduating with a 3.97 GPA and will enroll at U.C. Santa Cruz this fall to pursue his bachelor degree in electrical engineering. Asaua first enrolled at the college to pursue a



Lomitusi Asaua

certificate in family studies offered through the Cañada College Menlo Park Center.

Asaua came to the United States in 2000, moving to Los Angeles to meet family and pursue his education. He eventually moved to East Palo Alto. He enrolled in the

electrical engineering program at Cañada College in 2004. He was accepted at both UCLA and U.C. Santa Cruz but chose Santa Cruz because of the smaller class sizes.

"That's what I liked about Cañada," he said. "I had a chance to ask questions during class and the professors took the time to work with students. That was essential to my success."

The Class of 2007 includes a majority of graduates who are either the first in their families to earn a college degree or are re-entry students who have returned

to complete their college education after raising children or starting their careers. The college will award degrees or certificates to approximately 250 students.

Glenna L. Vaskelis, president and administrator at Sequoia Hospital, will serve as commencement speaker. Vaskelis has been in her current position since 1996, when Sequoia became affiliated with Catholic Healthcare West.

The college will also recognize the contributions of three retiring faculty members: Judy Liteky, professor of mathematics and director

of the Math, Engineering, Science, Achievement (MESA) program; Glory Bratton, counselor; and Marie Sandler, professor of Early Childhood Education.

Founded in 1968, Cañada College has approximately 6,200 students. It was the first community college in California to offer bachelor degrees and university courses and programs onsite through its University Center.

Robert Hood is the Director of Marketing and Public Relations for Cañada College which is located at 4200 Farm Hill Boulevard Redwood City, CA 94061

School District Nurse Receives Award

By Debbie Schechter
EPA Today Contributor

Ravenswood City School District Nurse Laurie Bauer was honored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on April 16th with an award recognizing her work in providing healthy learning environments in the school district, particularly for children who suffer from asthma.

Laurie Bauer has served as the District Nurse for the school district since 2002. Recognizing the number of students with asthma and the fact that asthma is a leading cause of school absences, Laurie developed a district-wide program to identify and assess asthma in schools and provided

asthma education to students and families. She led indoor air quality assessments of schools and conducted asthma classes for district staff, parents and students

to improve indoor air quality. She chaired the East Palo Alto Asthma Task Force and led the development of a strategic plan for addressing asthma in children.

Laurie received the award from U.S. EPA Region 9 Administrator Wayne Nastri. "These organizations and individuals have applied creativity, teamwork and leader-



RCSD Nurse Laurie Bauer (center) receiving her award from US EPA Regional Administrator Wayne Nastri and Deputy Regional Administrator Laura Yoshii

ship in addressing many of the West's most sensitive and complex environmental challenges," Nastri said. "Thanks to their efforts, our air, water and land will be cleaner and safer for generations to come. The winners set an example for all of us to follow."

As she accepted her award, Laurie was quick to

recognize the contributions of many individuals and organizations involved in asthma management, noting "Everything that we've accomplished in the schools has been a huge collaborative effort on the part of the East Palo Alto Asthma Task Force. If I add up all those who have been involved in our asthma management program over the past five years, it would be more than 100 individuals."

Laurie was one of 38 awardees selected from 160 nominees submitted this year from businesses, media, local government officials, tribes, environmental organizations and citizen activists.

The U.S. EPA Region 9 Environmental Awards pro-

gram acknowledges commitment and significant contributions to the environment in California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, and tribal lands.

Want to help address the problem of asthma in East Palo Alto? The East Palo Alto Asthma Task Force meets at 12:15 on the first Tuesday of most months at the Ravenswood Family Health Center at 1798B Bay Rd.

Contact Janine Bishop at 725-0923 or jbishop@stanford.edu for more information and to confirm meeting dates.

Debbie Schechter is the Environmental & Economic Development Coordinator for the City of East Palo Alto

NCDI leader makes a job change

In an email that was distributed on May 16, Omowale Satterwhite told some friends and colleagues, "I want you to be among the first to know that in the fall of this year, I will be shifting to a new role."

In describing his new role, Satterwhite said, "It will be one that will allow me to devote greater amounts of my time to public speaking, publishing my experiences for a wider audience, training young changemakers, and building strong communities in conjunction with NCDI's partners and clients throughout California and across the country."

As the executive director of the National Community Development Institute, which is located in Oakland, Satterwhite assured his readers that the shift in no way



Omowale Satterwhite

marked his departure from NCDI."

He said, "The Board and I view this change as a natural evolution of the organization, allowing me to take on the role of emissary in order to broaden NCDI's impact on the community building movement."

Satterwhite founded the National Community Development Institute with the mission of building capacity for social change in

communities of color and other underserved communities in a culturally-based way."

Years before founding NCDI, he created the Community Development Institute in East Palo Alto in 1979. Along with the late Mrs. Barbara Mouton, Satterwhite was one of the prime forces behind the Incorporation Movement which led to East Palo Alto becoming a city in 1983.

CDI was created to develop community leaders and to support and nurture community-based organizations, public agencies, and businesses for the purpose of promoting community self-determination and sustainability.

Satterwhite's day-to-day operational responsibilities

at NCDI will be taken over by Kelley D. Gulley, who is currently NCDI's executive vice president.

Gulley will relocate from Indianapolis, Indiana to Oakland, California this summer. Gulley is no stranger to California since she worked with Satterwhite at CDI for more than ten years

Gulley joined NCDI's staff in 2005. According to Satterwhite, she has taken the lead role in NCDI's highly successful community building initiatives in Detroit and Benton Harbor, Michigan.

In the email that announced the change in his current role, he said, "NCDI has grown phenomenally over the five years since its inception, and internal administrative demands have grown along with it.

"This realignment ensures

that we will maintain the solid infrastructure necessary to fully support and nurture our client relationships as the organization expands.

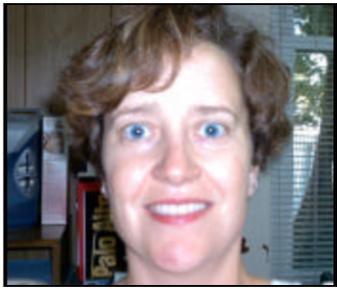
"As always, our aim is to provide the highest quality services, and to strive for excellence in the areas of Organizational Development and Effectiveness, Education and Training, and Community Building."

Satterwhite ended his email by thanking everyone in advance for their "continued support during this exciting stage of NCDI's growth. I look forward to speaking with you directly and answering any questions that you might have," he said.

Satterwhite will resume his new focus from his desk at the Community Development Institute.

Connections can make a difference

By Kimberly Carlton
EPA Today Contributor



Kimberly Carlton

Chances are, you've heard about how important networking is, particularly if you're trying to grow your own business or get a job. Even if you're not doing either of those two things right now, you probably have or you will at some point during your life. But have you ever been taught how to do it?

Some people are natural networkers and seem to have no problem meeting new folks and connecting with them. For others, the thought of going up to someone they don't know and striking up a conversation is enough to strike terror into their hearts. For most of us, we'd rather talk to people we already know and while we

may not be terrified to meet new people, we're still not particularly comfortable or skilled at it. Luckily, connecting with others and building a powerful network is a skill that can be learned and, like most skills, comfort increases with practice.

"Connecting is all about your friendliness, your ability to engage, and your willingness to give value first. When you combine those three attributes, you will

have uncovered the secret of powerful connections that lead to RICH relationships." Jeffrey Gitomer's Little Black Book of Connections, the source of this quote, is an excellent resource that can give you practical tools for building effective networks and teach you how to use them.

The first step is to take stock of where you are right now. Make a list of the four or five most important connections you have now, and next to each name write down a few of the ways these people have helped you. (Really - grab a pencil and paper and do this.)

Now, write down the ways how you have helped each of them.

Which list is longer - how the important people in your

life have helped you, or how you have helped them? If it's how you've helped your important contacts, you can be pretty sure you're on the right track when it comes to "giving value first." If it's the other way around, though, ask yourself how long you'd keep doing things for other folks who don't do much for you - and then write down what you can and will do for each of them in the next 30 days. Make sure you follow through and actually do those things, and then make sure you keep doing something for each of them at least once a month.

If you follow these steps, you'll strengthen your existing networks and start on the path toward having more solid connections. Why should you invest your time

in this? Because, contrary to the American myth, no one becomes successful on their own, and we all need someone else's help sometimes.

Who will be there for you when you need them? More to the point, why would those people who can help you get what you want actually make the effort to do it? Most of us will gladly help those we like and care for... but not the ones who only get in touch with us when they want something from us.

Kimberly Carlton is the Executive Director of Start Up, an East Palo Alto non-profit agency that is committed to helping individuals realize their entrepreneurial dreams

3rd Annual East Palo Alto Business Expo a Success

By Raquel Medina
EPA Today Contributor

The City of East Palo Alto, Start Up and the East Palo Alto-Belle Haven Chamber of Commerce teamed up to honor businesses and bring together resources for small businesses.

The Third Annual East Palo Alto Business Expo was held at the city's new YMCA.

David Wood's, East Palo Alto's mayor, presented awards to two local businesses for their hard work and dedication to the community--El Galope Taqueria, a long-time local small business known for its great food, and Circuit City, Inc., a new business that has embraced the community.

Start Up, a local business assistance organization, also presented six women entrepreneurs with cash awards

to help them develop their businesses.

Those who attended were able to meet with small business experts, learn how to access financial resources and enjoy great local food from Hutcherson House Catering and El Galope Taqueria.

Owned and operated by Guillermina González, El Galope Taqueria is a local small business that has existed in East Palo Alto for over seventeen years. El Galope Taqueria is known all over the Bay Area for its great Mexican-Michoacan style food. Tortillas are hand made on the spot with every meal, and they melt in your mouth.

Located on 941 Donohue Street, El Galope is open from 9 am to 8 pm daily, except Tuesdays when it closes at 4 pm. Some traditional popular dishes, such

as Uchepos and Menudo, are prepared on weekends only. For more information, call 650-322-6355.

Circuit City opened its doors for business last December 2007 with an energetic, well attended grand opening. Store Manager, Rick Green, worked exceptionally hard before the store's opening on a First Source Hiring Fair with the City of East Palo Alto's Redevelopment Agency to ensure that a significant number of local residents were hired.

Circuit City exceeded local hiring expectations and continues to work with the city to offer job opportunities to local residents.

Several of the employees attended the event and shared their infectious spirit as they cheered "EPA Rocks the Bay" in a chant led by Rick Green, the store's man-

ager. Circuit City is located in East Palo Alto at the 101 Ravenswood Shopping Center. Event participants offering resources included:

California Bank and Trust
California Employment Development Department
Cañada College
Circuit City, Inc.
Citibank
City of East Palo Alto
Community Wireless
East Palo Alto-Belle Haven Chamber of Commerce
El Galope Taqueria
Hutcherson House Catering
Lenders for Community Development
Silicon Valley Black Chamber of Commerce
Small Business Administration
Start Up
State Board of Equalization
Su Casa GMAC
Visions In Partnership
Wells Fargo Bank

Young Sprouts, a Build sponsored youth business

Kimberly Carlton, Start Up's Director, presented the Women and Company Micro Enterprise Boost Award to six exceptional women entrepreneurs.

The awards consisted of grants totaling \$10,000 and free participation in Start Up's incubator program.

"These women were selected in a competitive process from a pool of highly qualified applicants. Their applications showed their drive to succeed, clear goals for their businesses, and viability of their business ideas," said Carlton. The six women selected included:

Ines Alvizar of Decoraciones Alvizar. Alvizar owns and operates an event planning and decorating service that provides table

continued on page 18

**Professional web design
hosting and email.**

Call or email us today for a free consultation.

faultlineWeb.com
design • hosting • email

2109 O'Toole Avenue, Suite D • San Jose, CA 95131
t: 408.433.9794 • info@faultlineweb.com

Contact us before 6/30/07 and receive a 10% discount on your site.

**Do you think you might
want to
serve on
East Palo Alto Today's
Board of Contributors?
Call us to get
more information
(650) 327-5846, ext. 311**

From the Editor's Desk

Celebrating Victory

On Thursday, May 31, Youth United for Community Action (YUCA), held a press conference to celebrate victory. The long awaited decision by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) was in.

Romic, the company in East Palo Alto that has handled the hazardous wastes of Silicon Valley companies in its East Palo Alto location for several decades, was ordered to start shutting down its operations.

The DTSC's decision was the result of a long, drawn out battle, with members of YUCA at the front of the fight.

The students in YUCA were organized, committed, focused, and determined. They fought the hard fight, and they gained increasing strength from East Palo Alto residents and from many city, county and state officials.

The battle YUCA and other groups waged against Romic picked up added momentum a few weeks ago when the Palo Alto City Council voted not to award Romic a contract as the back up waste handler for the City of Palo Alto.

The DTSC's ruling now means that Romic can not continue its main day to day operations. The permit that would allow the company to store and handle hazardous waste in its East Palo Alto facility is still pending.

Romic's operation in East Palo Alto has been dealt a serious blow. YUCA's press conference in front of the Romic facility was held to announce the DTSC's decision to the community and to celebrate victory.

But what does celebrating victory mean?

Charisse Domingo one of YUCA's leaders said that she still wanted a complete shut-down of the Romic plant with something in the plant's current space for the community.

She said, "We're not done with the fight. This is just round one, but it's a victory for the entire environmental

justice movement and it shows how little communities can take on a fight"

Domingo made a major point. The DTSC's decision is not just about Romic.



Henrietta J. Burroughs

We are reminded of the battle between David and Goliath, with David representing someone who is, apparently powerless,

but who is, nonetheless, fighting against tremendous odds.

The DTSC's decision shows how poor, supposedly, powerless communities can fight for what they believe is right. It also says something about the power of our young people.

After all, who said that our youth are apathetic or uninterested in the events going on around them? Whoever has this opinion has certainly not watched the young people in YUCA or the young people in the Leadership Training Academy (LTA), a youth organization housed and supported by the Community Development Institute in East Palo Alto.

They haven't seen the work of Public Allies, Younglife, the urban street workers in East Palo Alto, or the work of For Youth BY Youth (FYBY), which is involved in a video series called "What's Going On" that you can read about on page 16 in this issue.

Our young people need to be commended. They are our future leaders and they are amply showing that they can take on leadership roles and be successful.

East Palo Alto has had a history of activism, most epitomized by the incorporation movement which led to the founding of the city, itself.

This tradition of activism has obviously taken root. So, what is celebrating victory?

Celebrating victory means watching our youth become involved in the issues affecting all of us. It means watch-

continued on page 19



Photo courtesy of Nadine Priestley for Boys & Girls Club U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stands with youngsters during her tour of the Center for a New Generation at Flood School. See story on page 3.

Letters to East Palo Alto Today

Supporting Palo Mobile Estates

Dear Editor

We support the City Council in urging the State Legislature to pass SB900 and AB1542 regarding mobile home park conversions.

As the citizens most affected by the existing laws governing these activities, rent-controlled parks are under attack in a state-wide effort to eliminate local jurisdiction in their communities.

Who better than local governing bodies to decide on what is best in their cities for such things as affordable housing, rent stabilization and, when necessary, mitigation requirements?

These bills working their way through the legislative process will address the situation that has tied the hands of local entities since a court ruling in 2002. Assembly bill 930 attempted to re-establish local authority but was watered down in the legislative process, and loop-holes were found and advantage taken despite legislative intent. SB900 and AB1542 will correct the problems being used by park owners in forced conversions of mobilehome parks throughout California.

Thank you for supporting this resolution.

Romic

Dear Editor:

About twenty years ago Ms.Mouton, Mr.Vines, Mr. Bostic, Ms. Johnson, and Mr.Coats were on the East Palo Alto City council and a resolution was passed to exempt Romic from EPA standards. My question is did Romic pay the city council pollution credits? Pollution credits are fines paid to allow industries to contaminate the cites they are in.

Many people in my city remember this resolution and the shock of having it pass. Council member Pete Evans and William Webster, housing advocate remember it well and they said so during the council meetings present and past.

I have requested four times for a copy of this resolution. The city attorney claims there wasn't one or they cannot find it. As stated before Mr.Webster, Council Member Evans, Mr Bostic remember this resolution being passed and council member Evans said at an April city council meeting that they searching in the wrong place. I hope the city uses its resources.

Under the Freedom of Information act, the city has 10 business days to answer a request for a copy from the public. Even though I was informed by a city staff member that they were searching and could not find anything, I do wonder why it was taking so long to locate something that a lot of people remember but the city can't find. Who is responsible for city record keeping, and doesn't the city record every city council meeting or have recorded minutes? Michael Francois concerned resident

An important decision

Dear Editor:
On the week of May 29, 2007, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is supposed to make their long-awaited decision to approve or deny Romic's operating permit. This decision has been a long time coming since Romic's operating permit expired 16 years ago. In 1991, Romic's operating permit authorized by the state DTSC expired. In 2005, DTSC released the Draft Permit and Environmental Impact

continued on page 19

EPA Today's Policies & Principles

In order to better serve the communities of East Palo Alto and Belle Haven, East Palo Alto Today has made the commitment to operate with high professional standards and to adhere to a strict code of ethical conduct. The principles and policies stated herein serve as an agree-

ment with our readers, advertisers and all others within our service area.

East Palo Alto Today is dedicated to conscientious journalism. We maintain this commitment by seeking and reporting the truth, acting with integrity, and serving the public interest. We will report the

news thoroughly and accurately and include multiple perspectives without favoring one over another.

We will hold ourselves accountable to common standards of decency, treating our colleagues, news sources, and the public with respect.

East Palo Alto Today

Publisher: East Palo Alto Center for Community Media
Editor: Henrietta J. Burroughs
EPA Mentorship Director: Julie Patel

East Palo Alto Today is published bimonthly;
Address all letters to: East Palo Alto Today
321 Bell Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650)327-5846, ext 311 (phone) (Fax) (650)327-4430
epatoday@aol.com; epamedia.org and epatoday.org

Opinion

The ideas expressed on this page are solely the views of the individual authors, who do not represent East Palo Alto Today's Board, management or staff.

Open Letter to City of EPA and its Residents

By Marcia Perez

What Rec Department?

My intent was to write this letter as a complaint regarding the sad and dilapidated conditions of our playgrounds and lack of recreation services in the hopes someone would say, "Yes, we'll fix that!" But after speaking with many community leaders (not the politicians) in East Palo Alto, I have come to the sad conclusion our City Council just does not care about its youthful residents or they do not care to know. I have called each council member personally, including the Recreation Division personnel, some twice, and have received no response, except for one lone return call from Peter Evans to my voice mail. I commend Peter for even trying.



Marcia Perez

I know he is often up against the bureaucratic machine by himself and he should be thanked for his efforts. After numerous complaints from residents, nothing ever gets done. So I thought if you understood the legal liabilities your neglect may cost the City in lawsuits you would at least address some of the problems. Let's start with Jack Farrell Park. The following is the laundry lists of what needs to be fixed and why you should do it.

I.Children's Playgrounds

A. Play Structure Unsafe: The bottom step of one of the play structures is completely torn out. The children, especially small children have to struggle up a second step. If they slip there is a gap between where the step used to be and the board that held it up. If a child gets their foot caught in the gap, it will cause their little bodies to fall back in the hole where the missing step should be and will surely break their little leg.

Luckily, I was holding my child's arm when her foot got stuck in just such a manner. Where the board should be is an exposed nail head. This will surely, if it has not already, cause a small child much pain and possibly bleeding. This is a liability to the City. It would only cost a few dollars to fix and prevent a child from being harmed.

What is that worth to you?

B. Playground Activities Not Safe Due To Broken Play Ground Equipment:

(1) There is a springy-ride-thing (for lack of a better name) that children sit on and bounce back and forth. It is very fun to them, until they try to get off. You see, the rubber seat is broken on the underside, but you cannot tell when looking at it from the top.

When the child tries to get off, she drags her foot across the seat because she cannot yet reach the ground with both feet. When her foot rubs against the seat it rolls back to reveal that it is broken underneath with a bolt missing that should be holding it in place. The result is the little person then falls flat on her face and scrapes her nose or it gets bloody. I know this because I watched this happen to my one year old child.

(2) There is a peddle-thingy where the child stands on a lower bar and holds on to the upper bar and it all moves in unison like a bike peddle. The lower bar is missing so children can't really use it and must hang from the upper bar with their weight. Well, the upper bar requires 8 bolts to hold the hand peddles in place, but the hand peddles only have one bolt each, so 6 bolts are missing. If children hang from with their weight, it may cause the hand peddle to open with a gap. If their little fingers get caught in the gap, then those little fingers might break.

(3) The matting under the chain ladder is gone, so if a little person falls down there will be nothing to protect them. This one is a violation of law, but you may have to be sued before you fix it. An

continued to page 18

Students speak up to defend their school

The Ravenswood City School District and its Board of Trustees are examining several proposals that could lead to the relocation of several schools within the school district. The East Palo Alto Academy High School run by the Stanford Schools Corporation could be seriously affected. Below are several letters that were written by the school's students on behalf of their school. The letters were submitted to EPA Today by one of the school's staff members.

To Whom It May Concern:

A graduate of the school, I just finished my second year at Smith College, and I honestly feel that if it weren't for the guidance and support I received at EPAAHS, I wouldn't have made it this far. I chose to go to the academy because I did not want to attend a large school in which I'd just be another face, another number. I wanted my

teachers to know me, and I wanted to know them. The small classes allowed teachers to give me individualized attention and support. Teachers were readily available to assist me in anything I needed; their main goal was my academic and personal success.

I hope that the Ravenswood school board continues to support our high school

because it is the best education we can provide to kids in our community. After twenty-five years of lacking a high school, we finally have one that serves East Palo Alto and Menlo Park residents. We've increased the college acceptance rates and helped lower dropout rates-let's work together and let's work very hard to keep it that way. Sincerely,

Sonia Jimenez

Dear Letter to the Editor,

As a member of the first graduating class of the academy, I can offer many reasons why... [the possible closing of East Palo Alto Academy] should not be allowed to happen.

EPA Academy prepares its students for college with many unique requirements

like yearly exhibitions and a grading system that allows students to know their weaknesses and strengths.

I truly believe that if it were not for EPA Academy my chances for going to college-I now go to University of Colorado Boulder-would have been slim, and I probably would have dropped out

continued on page

Designed to test your sense of humor

By Michael Uhila
Resident Humorist

What if YOU ran a non profit in East Palo Alto like this:

You don't care about skills or qualifications because it's all about affirmative action.

You hire a grant writer who is very expensive and he eats a hole in your budget the size of Lake Michigan.

You and your organization never heard of the term nepotism. You wear ethnic clothes and try to be hip but your hipness is totally out of style.

You make race relations as your primary objective and ironically you're good at being discriminatory.

You hire crackheads to monitor the office and they always end up stealing from the

organization. You blame everybody but yourself.

Your executive director is overpaid and never works. Your executive director spends 29 hours a day at meetings and doesn't execute anything.

You spend the majority of your time hating everybody and not being concerned with what you have to do to survive.

You horde all the good stuff for your organization and give the left-overs to the community.

You hire a worker just to have a gay or lesbian affair. Your executive director has more frequent flyer miles than NASA.

You like hiring incompetent people because it shows how much leadership you have.



Michael Uhila

You only want Spanish speakers involved because they need a chance and English speakers can wait.

You hire people who say they worked for the Peace Corps even though you're not sure if they really did.

You hire the token white guy just to say that you're not a racist organization.

Your executive director is a control freak and wants to run other people's organizations, too.

You hire a man who was charged with manslaughter to be your youth coordinator.

You lie to foundations and tell them that you're running a school but you're just picking up a check to spend their money.

You use the money that was allocated for 50 computers to buy you a new fancy car.

You use your job just to have affairs with other people's wives.

You smoke crack in the bathroom after the board meetings.

You're on vacations whenever problems start to arise.

You hire whomever you want despite what the board of directors say.

You resist change and your organization is starting to be constipated.

You make a lot of noise. You litigate. It turns into a lawsuit. You win and you can now afford that house and go to college.

You only speak Spanish so that the English speakers can leave the room.

You're happy as long as a non-profit is giving you a paycheck to do nothing.

You want everybody to make the exception because you live in East Palo Alto.

You make not understanding another race as the reason why you shouldn't communicate with them.

Your executive director shows up late and leaves work early.

You hire people who come to work whenever they want

continued on page 14