



Mi Pueblo has grand opening

page 3



Honoring a committed leader

page 10



Meeting Pres. and Mrs. Barack Obama

page 11

East Palo Alto Today



Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical

www.epatoday.org

East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

October - November 2009

Vol. 4 No.19

Drug raids cause turmoil

By **Henrietta J. Burroughs**
East Palo Alto Today

Upset residents spoke to the East Palo Alto City Council at its Tuesday, November 3 meeting to voice their outrage over the drug raids that were carried out in East Palo Alto earlier that morning. The raids,

which were said to have resulted from months of investigations by the U.S. Justice Department, targeted two East Palo Alto homes, one on Fordham Street and the other one on Baylor Street.

Nine of the eleven speakers, mostly from the Pacific Islander community, vented their

anger and frustration to the city council during the council's Community Forum session.

They decried the fact that the raids were held at all and they complained about the way the families and their living arrangements were depicted in the media. They also ques-

tioned the extent of the involvement of the East Palo Alto police department in the two raids that took place.

The first speaker, Patricia Finau, said that she was a resident in one of the targeted houses and, she not only objected to the raid itself, but she also voiced her anger over the



Patricia Finau

way the raid was handled, especially since she said the person the agents were seeking didn't live in the home and there were no drugs found by the agents on the premises. She considered the raid a form of harassment.

Dallas Teo said that the execution of the raid was a horrible way to embarrass the families. "If this were an ongoing investigation, one would think that there would have been something found," he said.

Speaker after speaker talked, during the community forum session about the personal humiliation the raids brought to the Pacific Islander community and to the specific families involved.

After listening to the personal stories that were shared, Mayor Ruben Abrica, Chief of Police Ron Davis and Council member Carlos Romero ex-

continued on page 13

Inside News



Homeless unhousted get assistance

Page 3



New officers sworn in

Page 6



Community Viewpoints

Page 7



A new manager for the EPA Library

Page 10

Reopening a park



Photo courtesy of Meda Okelo

East Palo Alto Mayor Ruben Abrica stood with the members of several East Palo Alto youth sports team as he cut a ribbon to reopen Jack Farrell Park which is located at 2508 Fordham Street in the University neighborhood in East Palo Alto. The reopening occurred on October 31.

Opposing a new county jail

By **Tandrea Madison**
East Palo Alto Today

The state of California is in a crisis and although that isn't a newflash for anyone living here, the people elected to fix the situ-

ation seem to be in a holding pattern. Unless his demands are met, the Governor is threatening to veto the hundreds of bills sitting on his desk, awaiting approval, while the state sits anxiously on the edge of its seat.

Although there are several urgent issues on the table, including some involving healthcare and education, one of the most debated is overcrowding in the prisons and jails throughout the state. Recently, a three-judge panel or-

dered California to release 40,000 prisoners within two years. Even with that mandate in place, some feel the answer to overcrowding isn't to release prisoners,

continued on page 12

Greens turning into dollars

By **Emily Gong and Anne-Marie McReynolds**
East Palo Alto Today

The streets of East Palo Alto have seen everything from brick factories to poultry farms to gang shootings, but they haven't seen anything quite like Rev. Bob Hartley, a

known and respected longtime EPA resident. He's a man with a plan to help the youth in the community give up their weapons - in favor of plants.

He and his wife Clara, an industrious wheelchair-bound woman with a lovely smile, grow a wealth of flourishing vegetables in their backyard and bring a selection of fresh

pickings to sell at the EPA Community Farmers' Market each Saturday.

Before McDonald's

"There are some young folks that I want to go around with me, and I want to introduce them to vegetables as

continued on page 8



Photo courtesy Anne-Marie McReynolds

Rev. Bob Hartley

Inside

- Editorial
- News Briefs
- Opinions
- TV Listings
- Youth News

New high school for East Palo Alto

By Nozipo Wobogo
East Palo Alto Today

In 1976, Ravenswood High School (RHS) in East Palo Alto was closed due to SUHSD budgetary restraints and federal desegregation laws.

This resulted in East Palo Alto's 9-12 grade youth having to be bused to schools many miles away. Over the years, there have been organizational meetings, informal discussions and appeals to the

Sequoia Union High District (SUHSD) on the need for a secondary school in East Palo Alto.

There has also been work by former RHS students, parents, teachers, officials and residents who wanted to see a high school in their community become a reality.

What has been the result over the last 33 years of this focus on secondary educational opportunities in the City of East Palo Alto?

Dr. Patrick Gemma, the superintendent for the Sequoia Union High School District provided a few answers to this question in a presentation that he made on October 20.

During his presentation at the Sequoia Adult School Facility at 793 Green Street in East Palo Alto, Gemma

laid out a plan for bringing some of the facilities of a comprehensive high school to several small charter schools that would be located in East Palo

Alto. SUDHS has been in the process for approximately a year to look for and prepare 10-15 contiguous acres on which perhaps two or three small schools would sit, forming a larger campus.

A possible space has been found in the Ravenswood Re-development Area. The campus will provide shared amenities such as a sports field, large gym or multipurpose room, library and the like.

This project would be on a



Photo courtesy Nozipo Wobogo Supt. Patrick Gemma and a participant at the meeting

10-15 acre plot with a cost of 30-40k as opposed to a comprehensive high school that would require more like 25-30 continued on page 9

A sleep study raises student awareness

By Bettylu Smith
East Palo Alto Today Contributor

Menlo-Atherton High School has been named the recipient of the 2009 Golden Bell award for the school's leadership in raising awareness about the importance of teen sleep and the consequences of sleep deprivation.

Menlo-Atherton was selected as a Golden Bell recipient from a pool of more than 200 educational programs by the California School Boards Association, a nonprofit association of more than 1,000 K-12 school districts and county offices of education.



The above picture comes from a powerpoint presentation about the Menlo Atherton Sleep Study, which was shown to the Sequoia Union High School District Board on October 14, 2009.

Initiated in 2006 and led by renown sleep experts William C. Dement, M.D., Ph.D. and Mark R. Rosekind, Ph.D., Menlo-Atherton's comprehensive sleep education program has involved research into the sleep practices and knowledge of sleep information among 4,400 Menlo-Atherton students.

A teen sleep awareness campaign involving dozens of educational programs, presentations, written communications, and announcements over the school's public-address system have reached thousands of students and parents. Awareness has also been spurred by juniors and

seniors at the school who serve as "sleep ambassadors" responsible for advancing sleep education among all students.

"We're honored to have been selected for this award," said Matthew Zito, principal of Menlo-Atherton. "We have a deep commitment to providing essential sleep education to our students and to ensuring that our students understand the importance of being well rested."

Through increased awareness, the program has been aimed at fostering improvements in the sleep, health, mood, safety and performance of students. Over the past year, the initiative has ex-

panded its focus further to include advocacy for a later school start-time – an effort that has gained support among both students and parents.

Following a presentation about the school's teen sleep program on October 14, the Sequoia district board directed staff to explore the possibility of starting the school day later across all district schools. (At the start of the current school year, Woodside High School in the Sequoia district changed the schedule of the majority of students to a later start time of 9:05 a.m.) Palo Alto."

Bettylu Smith is the public information officer for the Sequoia Union High School District.

Tooth fractures: what to do about them

By Dr. Virginia P. Humphrey, II DDS
East Palo Alto Today

As we age, tiny cracks form in our teeth from habits such as clenching, grinding, chewing hard candy or ice, or using teeth as a tool to hold or open things.

Fractures move through a tooth like a crack in a windshield, with no way to repair itself. The angle and depth of the fracture determine what type of treatment can be used

to save the tooth if possible. Teeth sensitive to cold and biting are signs that a crack may be present.

Basically there are three types of tooth fractures: A small fracture in the crown of the tooth which often can be held together with a bonded filling, or a crown. This type is usually not very sensitive, and is most often noticed by the dentist when a filling is replaced.

The second type, a complete break where a piece is

missing, is only sensitive until the break occurs. Because of this, the tooth is often left broken with bacteria entering the unprotected area harming the nerve.

If one doesn't delay getting to a dentist, the tooth can be repaired with a crown, but it sometimes needs root canal therapy as well.

The most severe type of fracture is a vertical tooth split; the tooth is cracked down the root, often loose and infected. In this case the tooth is very

painful, and extraction is the only treatment option.

All types of fractures can lead to tooth loss and infection if not treated right away. Although some problems come from posts after root canal therapy, or large silver fillings, others may be prevented.

Night guards are helpful to protect teeth from clenching and grinding. Avoid diets containing hard objects such as candy, ice, corn nuts, and unpopped popcorn kernels.

When playing contact

sports, always wear a mouth piece. Never use teeth as tools to hold or tear things.

If you experience symptoms of a fractured or cracked tooth, see your dentist immediately. If detected and treated early, a cracked/fractured tooth may be saved.

Dr. Virginia P. Humphrey, II is a doctor of dental surgery (DDS). She maintains a dental office at the Ravenswood Shopping Center and is offering many specials. Get more information about her practice from her ad below.

The East Palo Alto Sanitary District

is seeking bids for a new handicapped parking facility at its district office.

For more information go to: www.epasd.com or call Karen Maxey at (650) 325-9021

6 to 9 DENTAL
Dental Group of Virginia P. Humphrey II DDS, Inc.
"Se habla español"

Experience the evolution of dental care combining the quality of private practice with the value and convenience of our new dental clinic.

- Crowns, bridges
- Dentures
- Cosmetic, veneers
- Teeth whitening
- Invisalign braces
- Root canal therapy
- Implants
- Extractions
- Periodontal treatment
- Intraoral camera
- Nitrous oxide
- Digital x-rays

1765 East Bayshore Rd. #H, East Palo Alto, CA 94303
650-321-6911 www.6to9dental.com

Community News Briefs

Mi Pueblo has grand opening

By **Henrietta J. Burroughs**
East Palo Alto Today

The Mi Pueblo grocery store held a spectacular grand opening in its new location in the Ravenswood 101 Shopping Center.

The store, which opened its doors to shoppers on Saturday, November 14 at 7 a.m., later had an official opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 11 a.m.

Mi Pueblo is now East Palo Alto's largest and only super-market. Juvenal Chavez, the CEO of Mi Pueblo, said, "We're showing that East Palo Alto is the place to be. Things are changing. People who



Mi Pueblo grocery store is shown with some of the crowds that attended the store's grand opening seen in the foreground.

have never been in East Palo Alto are now coming to the city."

Indeed, some people came from more than 30 miles away to shop at the store on its opening day. Throughout the Ravenswood 101 Shopping Center, parking places were few and hard to find.

Hundreds of people congregated outside of the store listening to music and participating in other kinds of entertainment.

The aisles in the huge store were filled with so many people that they were barely passable and the lines to the stores' many checkout coun-

ters were, in some cases more than 20 people long.

If crowding inside the store was a problem, the traffic outside the store was hardly any better with cars almost at a standstill on the major thoroughfares leading into the Ravenswood 101 complex.

Needless to say, those who attended the opening were there because they wanted to be there and all of the crowding, waiting and traffic didn't seem to matter.

To see more pictures from Mi Pueblo's grand opening, go to www.epatoday.org/news/2009/nov_2009/mi_pueblo.html



But not everyone is happy
The East

Palo Alto Merchants Association has argued that Mi Pueblo will take away business from the other grocers in the city. So, it argued its case to the East Palo Alto City Council and then waged several legal battles against the council, the city's Planning Commission and the city, itself, to prevent Mi Pueblo from opening its East Palo Alto store.

In spite of all its efforts, the EPA Merchants Association lost one of its legal battles at a hearing on Thursday, November 10 when San Mateo County Superior Court Judge Mark Forcum ruled against the association's petition to have vacated the East Palo Alto City Council's vote which allowed Mi Pueblo to open a store in the city.

continued on page 15

Homeless, unhoused get assistance

By **Cheryl Bains**
EPA Today Contributor

It is said that whatever the leadership of a community focuses on becomes important to that community. Once the object of focus is established, it then becomes a value and a standard of community development.

East Palo Alto community leaders and supporting organizations spoke very clearly this past Thursday, October 22 as 49 organizations united at the Lord's Gym Community Center for "EPA Connect Event." In a collaborative voice they echoed, "We care about our homeless, and we want to see them restored."

The EPA Connect Event was initiated by the San Mateo Human Services department and coordinated by Project WE H.O.P.E.'s president and project director, Paul Bains and Pastor Mary Frazier of the Bread of Life Ministries.

Pastor Bains said, "It was truly a blessing to see the underserved people served in so many ways.

There was great significance in holding the event at Project WE H.O.P.E.'s Lord's Gym Community Center/Warming Shelter since the facility is the first and only shelter in EPA's history. The event's goal was to identify the homeless/unhoused and help connect them with the services



Photo courtesy of Amanda Kim Craig Goodell stands with County of San Mateo Edison/Mobile Clinic employees Dr. Karen Relucio and Anita Booker

that are available for them in the community.

Over 120 homeless/unhoused individuals attended the event and received assistance in various ways. Attendees had an opportunity to take a shower, receive a hair-

cut, dental care and flu shots, as well as get access to legal aid, clothing vouchers, shelter referrals, benefits assistance and more.

The community response was tremendous with 39 organizations participating: 2nd Harvest Food Bank, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, Bread of Life Church, Bread of Life Fellowship of Faith, Children's Fund, City of East Palo Alto, Community Legal Services of East Palo Alto, East Palo Alto CCC, East Palo Alto Police Department, El Concilio of San Mateo County, Foo Foanga, Free At Last, HIP Housing, Human Services Agency, InVision, Job Train, Legal Aid

Society of San Mateo, Mental Health Association, One East Palo Alto - The Motion Center, Pacific Tonga, Project 90, Project WeHope, Ravenswood Family Health Center, Salvation Army, Samaritan House, SamTrans, San Mateo County Bar Association/Private Defender, San Mateo County Department of Housing, San Mateo County Health Department, San Mateo County, Social Security Administration, United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The organizations participated in the event by either giving donations, providing volunteers, and/or hosting an

continued on page 12

City, County & State Government Meetings & Contacts

East Palo Alto City Council
The City of Council meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers, East Palo Alto City Hall, 2415 University Avenue; (650) 853-3100 or Fax: (650) 853-3115. Website: www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us

East Palo Alto City Council Members

Ruben Abrica- Mayor
(650) 321-4001

David E. Woods Vice Mayor
(650) 853-1907

A. Peter Evans
(650) 321-1009

Carlos Romero
(650)328-4363

Laura Martinez
(650)714-5337

East Palo Alto Boards, Commissions, Committees

Planning Commission
Second and Fourth Monday

Rent Stabilization Board
Second and Fourth Wednesday

Public Works & Transportation Commission
First and Third Wednesday

Youth Advisory Committee
First Thursday of each month

Senior Advisory Committee
Meets first Monday of each month 6:30p.m. - City Hall.

Menlo Park City Council
The Menlo Park City Council holds meetings every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the City Council Chambers located at 801 Laurel Street. You can subscribe to receive the agendas and minutes by e-

mail when they are published. An agenda is posted in advance of the weekly meeting, and past agendas and minutes are filed by the date they were held. If you have questions about an agenda please call the City Clerk at 650.330.6620.

Menlo Park City Council Members

Heyward Robinson
Mayor
(650) 208-1512

Richard Cline
Vice Mayor
(650) 228-5166

John C. Boyle
(650)906-7163

Kelly J. Fergusson
(650) 327-4533

Andrew M. Cohen
(650)327-5332

Menlo Park Boards, Commissions, Committees

Arts Commission
Bicycle Commission
Environmental Quality Commission
Housing Commission
Las Pulgas Committee
Library Commission
Parks and Recreation Commission
Planning Commission
Transportation Commission

San Mateo County Bd. of Supervisors

Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, Fourth District

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors meets on March 3, 17, 31, & April 14,28 2009 in the County of San Mateo Hall of Justice & Records 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063. Roll call at 8 a.m. 9 a.m.

Regular & Consent Agenda Items.

State Officials

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-445-2841
Fax: 916-445-4633
Email: governor@governor.ca.gov

Assembly Member Ira Ruskin
District Address
5050 El Camino Real
Ste.117
Los Altos, CA 94022
650 691-2121

Senator Joseph S. Simitian
District Address
160 Town & Country Village
Palo Alto, CA 94301
(650) 688-6384

Preventing cancer deaths in women

By Gerald F. Joseph, Jr, MD
EPA Today Contributor

Fear of developing breast cancer—the second most common cause of all cancer deaths in women—tops the list of health concerns for many women.

This is a legitimate worry considering that in 2009 more than 192,000 women in the US will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and more than 40,000 women will die because of it.

Being a woman and getting older are the two main risk factors for breast cancer. Family history, personal history of certain cancers, no pregnancies or first pregnancy later in life, starting your period before age 12, menopause at age 55 or



Gerald F. Joseph, Jr., MD

after, obesity, alcohol intake, and use of some types of hormone therapy (HT) can also increase a woman's risk.

You can learn more about your risk of developing breast cancer and other cancers at www.ProtectAndDetect.org.

Breast cancer is often related to prolonged exposure to

the hormone estrogen, and excess fat tissue promotes estrogen production. Maintain a healthy weight or shed extra pounds to help control estrogen levels.

Women who drink two or more alcoholic beverages a day are more likely to develop breast cancer than women who drink less. Limiting your consumption can help lower your risk.

The use of combined estrogen-progestin hormone therapy can increase the risk of breast cancer. ACOG recommends that women use the lowest dose necessary to relieve menopausal symptoms for the shortest amount of time possible.

Women with breast cancer have up to a 98% survival rate

when it is caught at an early stage. Earlier detection and advances in treatment have led to the gradual decrease in breast cancer deaths.

Regular mammograms are crucial to identifying tumors when they are most treatable, but unfortunately, the number of women being screened has declined.

Women ages 40–49 should have a mammogram every 1–2 years. Women age 50 and older should have a mammogram annually.

If you have certain risk factors, such as being a carrier of the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene, your doctor may suggest mammography screening at a younger age. High-risk women should discuss their prevention options with their doctors.

All women should have their breasts examined by their doctor annually. Performing breast self-exams are also a good way to get to know your breasts and understand what's normal for you.

As a national sponsor of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists encourages women to focus on breast health.

For more information about breast cancer, treatment options, and how to get free screenings and low- or no-cost prescription medication, go to the website for the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, www.nbcam.org.

HIV/AIDS march gets valuable attention

By Danielle Castro and Nozipo Wobogo
East Palo Alto Today

Every 91/2 minutes, someone in the U.S. is infected with HIV 70% of which is in minority communities. 50% of total new infections are among African Americans. African Americans represent 50% of all those newly diagnosed, so this means that every other one of those persons infected every nine and a half minutes is African American.

This statistic is astonishing

considering that African Americans comprise approximately 13% of the U.S. population nationwide. Considering these sobering statistics, the San Mateo County Health System STD/HIV Program sponsored an HIV Awareness March to raise community consciousness and to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS.

In welcoming those who had gathered October 16 at 5 p.m. for the march in front of Jones Mortuary, located in East Palo Alto, David Lewis, San Mateo County STD/HIV Education

and Prevention Community Program Specialist shouted through his hand held blow horn that the march was being held "not only to remember those we'd lost to the AIDS pandemic, but to acknowledge those that will soon become infected."

The march this year marked the first time that a concerted effort was made to include local youth in an HIV/AIDS march. Lewis said, "We've been fighting this deadly disease for over twenty five years, and it's imperative that we pass the torch to our young leaders. This disease will continue to ravage its way through our communities if we don't continue to advocate for awareness and HIV education..." he said.



Photo courtesy of Nozipo Wobogo
Marchers in front of the East Palo Alto Municipal Building.

Although the press was notified, very few members of the press showed up at the actual gathering in front of East Palo Alto's City Hall. Several of the march's organizers said that this lack of awareness and response are unfortunately more often than not the case when it comes to HIV/AIDS.

So much stigma and misinformation still exist that HIV/AIDS continues to be a very sensitive issue.

After a prayer from Reverend Mary Frazier, Lewis introduced a diverse line-up of speakers, including Mayor Ruben Abrica, Lonnie Barker, Gerardo Garcia, Matt Geltmaker, Omowale Satterwhite, Pastor Andre Harris and others. The speakers included local young leaders, elders, faith based leaders, community members as well as health officials.

Matt Geltmaker of the San
continued on page 5

FREE DELIVERY!
TEL (650) 853-0860
EAST PALO ALTO, MENLO PARK, REDWOOD CITY
TONY'S PIZZA
820 WILLOW ROAD
MENLO PARK, CA
OPEN 7 DAYS 10AM - 10PM

**Commercial and Residential
Permit Expeditor & Outreach Services**

Please contact

Patrick Brock
of
BROCK & COMPANY
2111B University Avenue
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
650-799-8563 cell
650-326-9972 fax

**Why Menlo School?
Come Find Out.**

Rigorous. Engaging. Joyful.

Middle School Open Houses: 11/8/09 1:00 pm; 12/3/09 6:00 pm
Upper School Open Houses: 10/21/09 6:00 pm; 12/6/09 1:00 pm

Menlo School 50 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton, CA 94027
650.330.2000 ext. 2600
www.menloschool.org

Plan for Ravenswood Business District

By Sean Charpentier
EPA Today Contributor

What is your vision for the Ravenswood Business District (RBD) and Four Corners area? Is it more jobs, more housing, more transit, or more parks? Or is it a combination of these or other items? The City of East Palo Alto (City) wants to know. The City just started an 18 month process to engage and empower the community to create a vision for the RBD.

The vision for the RBD will identify the desired land uses and densities, infrastructure investments to support the new land uses and preserve and improve the existing neighborhoods, the types of transit and potential connections with regional transit, and measures to reduce greenhouse gases.

The vision will form the Ravenswood/4 Corners Transit Oriented Development Specific Plan (Specific Plan) and an Environmental Impact Report. Given the small size of the City, the RBD offers one of the last opportunities for the City to address some of its most urgent challenges such



The plan for Ravenswood/Four Corners includes a series of community workshops, similar to this meeting led by DC&E in another community."

as high unemployment, low public revenue generation, and the lack of parks. Also, this is an opportunity for the City to decide if it wants to advocate for a connection to the potential future Dumbarton Rail project, which might connect East Palo Alto to BART and Caltrain.

The key to a successful Specific Plan is community empowerment and engagement. Mayor Ruben Abrica said "We really want to hear the community's vision. We need to hear everyone's voice to create a Specific Plan that generates jobs, creates revenue, and improves the quality

of life for residents. There are stakeholders for commercial development, affordable housing, parks and open space, roadway improvements, and public facilities that are interested in the future land uses in the RBD. The Specific Plan will need to incorporate and balance the needs of the different stakeholders and interests.

To prioritize community engagement, the City Council approved an 18-month process that includes over 17 public meetings and appointed a 7-member Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to guide the process. The CAC

members are Ken Alsman, Duane Bay, Alfredo Bryant, Kimberly Carlton, Douglas Fort, Bernardo Huerta, and Betsy Yanez. The CAC represents key community stakeholders and will provide recommendations during the Specific Plan process.

The Specific Plan has an 18 month process. The major tasks and deliverables include an Existing Conditions report; Market, Land Use, Parking/Traffic, and Fiscal Impact analyses; and a Specific Plan and EIR. A key section is the Land Use Alternatives. This is where the competing or complementary visions for the RBD will need to be merged into a single one that will form the basis of the Specific Plan. The total budget for the Specific Plan is \$645,781. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Station Area Planning Program is providing \$360,000 of the funding and the City and HUD are providing the remainder of the funding. The MTC's goal is to encourage compact and walkable development around rail transit and to reduce greenhouse gases.

The City hired Design, Community & Environment (DC&E), an East-Bay based planning consultant, to facilitate the Specific Plan process. DC&E was selected because of its experience leading collaborative public engagement processes.

The City had the first Public Kick Off meeting on October 8, 2009. There will be many more meetings, including tentatively scheduled CAC meetings in November and December 2009, and a Community Workshop to discuss Land Use Alternatives in the middle of January 2010.

Now is your chance to help the City create a vision for the RBD. For more information, or to be added to the mailing/email lists, please contact Sean Charpentier, RDA Project Coordinator II, at (650)853-5906 or dumbartonplan@cityofepa.org. Furthermore, the City has a webpage for the project at: www.ci.eastpaloalto.ca.us/ec/onomicdev/dumbarton.html

Sean Charpentier is the Redevelopment Project Coordinator II for the City of East Palo Alto's Redevelopment Agency

Fair Housing Act covers everyone

By Anika Stevens
East Palo Alto Today

In 1968, the federal government passed the Fair Housing Act, which prohibits landlords, real estate agents, home sellers, and banks from discriminating against people based on certain characteristics. As amended in 1988, the Act makes it illegal for housing providers to deny housing or treat people differently based on their race, religion, national origin, gender, familial status, or disability.

California has similar laws that protect people on the same bases as federal law; however the state recognizes additional circumstances



The above graphic symbolizes the peaceful outcomes Project Sentinel strives to achieve.

where discrimination is illegal: marital status, sexual orientation, sources of income, age, or any arbitrary reason. It is crucial for all housing providers to know and understand these protected categories, because violations of these laws carry serious consequences.

While there are some out there, most housing providers are not insidious actors that wish to inflict hardships upon marginalized communities. In fact, many housing providers who engage in illegal practices have no idea that they are violating the law. But whether or not they know their conduct is unlawful—and even when they have good intentions—housing providers are liable for their discriminatory acts.

Two areas of particular concern to housing providers are familial status and disability discrimination. Tenants in these protected categories have rights that may be difficult to understand at first glance.

The familial status classification protects households with children under the age of 18 from discrimination. Housing providers cannot deny or impose different terms and conditions on families because of the presence of minor children. This provision gets tricky when landlords become concerned with the safety of minor children and impose rules.

For instance, housing providers may be fearful of having families with small children living in second or third floor units. In addition to their concern for children's safety, landlords could fear that they are putting themselves at risk for liability if a child is injured in

a fall. So, in order to protect themselves and prevent injuries, landlords may choose only to rent out first-floor units to families with children. This type of practice, even though well intended, is illegal because it imposes different conditions on families with minor children, and steers them to specific units.

In January 2009, Project Sentinel, a fair housing organization, investigated a complaint of familial status discrimination very similar to this scenario. According to allegations in the complaint, a mother of two young sons, ages one and three, re-

continued on page 9

"Turning 65?"




**Confused about your Medicare options?
With our experience and personal service,
we will put you on the road to the right plan.**

Cordell Insurance Services
Gary L. Cordell ~ 650-322-6738
Ins. Lic. 05311262

HIV/AIDS March

Mateo County STD/HIV Program said, "This morning, while I was taking my shower I was thinking that during 91/2 minutes of my shower someone has been infected by HIV. We need to become more aware."

Lonnie Barker said that she lost her brother Stephen Smothers to the AIDS virus and was still grieving for him. "If you have loved ones who are infected, do not be afraid to speak of the risks of the disease. Tell others that there are more treatments. Come forward so we can help you." she said.

Geraldo Garcia, a San Mateo minister said, "It would be

good to find a cure but prevention is even better." Pastor Andre Harris, the pastor of the Born Again Christian Center in East Palo Alto said, "In our church, folks talk about AIDS. We have 10-15 members who are infected. I have condoms on my desk."

Lewis talked about how the event was a cooperative effort. He introduced McNair Knox, Executive Director of One EPA, one of those who worked with Lewis on the event. She told how poor communities everywhere are disproportionately affected by this disease. "When the disease comes knocking, you have to answer. Some of our young people in

continued from page 4

college dorm are saying no to condoms. Where will they be when HIV knocks?" she asked.

Toward the end, community members urged one another to get tested for HIV, and to realize that the disease does not discriminate. "Everyone should be tested for HIV", exclaimed Dr. Reverend Mother Mary Frazier

Danielle Castro is the Education and Prevention Supervisor for the AIDS Program at the San Mateo County Health Department.

Nozipo Wobogo is a long time community volunteer and a regular contributor to East Palo Alto Today.

From the Editor's Desk

Removing the chains of slavery and ignorance

Whenever I tape a television show, there is always something that my guests say that stays with me, sometimes in a very powerful way. In my last show which discussed the fight against crime, there was a lot said about the power of education. East Palo Alto's Chief of Police Ron Davis was one of my guests along with California State Assembly member Ira Ruskin.

On the show, Ruskin stressed the importance of education as a way to improve one's fate in life and he talked about what he wanted to do to shape the State of California's priorities so that education would be at the top of the list.

During the discussion Davis pointed out that some of the latest statistics show that many of those sitting in prison today are school dropouts and/or have very low reading levels. He said those who are not reading by the third grade are most at risk for later being incarcerated.

Given the relationship between prisoners and education, I can't help but wonder, if education is the way out of poverty and a lack of education is a contributing factor in our overcrowded prisons, why is it then that so many young people in our communities are turning their back on education by dropping out of school? It is all too clear that a lack of educational achievement severely limits one's earning power and opportunities in today's society.

When I think of the poverty rates and the disparities, at all levels, among people of color throughout this country, I am reminded of the poem *The Slave* by James Oppenheim who wrote:

They set the slave free, striking off his chains. . .

But, he was as much a slave as ever...

His slavery was not in his chains,

But in himself...

They can only set free men free.

And there is no need of that: Free men set themselves free.

So, I am left to ask, "Isn't it time that, as free men and women, we convey to our children that we need to con-

stantly strive to throw off all of the chains that bind us – those imposed by outside circumstances and those that are self imposed?"

It is just plain sad the complete disrespect that many have given and are giving to the sacrifices of so many ancestors who fought and in many cases died to experience freedom for themselves, for their children and for their children's

children. So many who came before us marched and many were brutalized when they sought to have the right to read and to improve their lives by having access to educational opportunities, which were so long denied.

So, it is now more than shameful that educational opportunities exist and so many young people are turning and have turned their backs on the very opportunities that were previously closed to them and to generations like them. It is, indeed, education that will allow this generation and future generations to escape the incidence of poverty, ignorance and imprisonment that still surround so many.

For those young people who would say that to excel in education is to act white, then are they saying that the best way for them to show that they are people of color and not white is to remain uneducated and illiterate? When is this nonsense going to stop?

Our children should be running to the schools and soaking up all of the information that their schools have to offer instead of dropping out and running away from school. Parents need to be talking to their children's teachers to see what they are doing in school and to see what their children need to do to successfully meet, complete and, in some cases, exceed the school's requirements.

Parents, grandparents, guardians, older siblings, mentors, et al. who cannot get to the school can at least call and set up telephone appointments with teachers.

Personally, I must confess that I remember the many

continued on page 15



Henrietta J. Burroughs



Photo courtesy of the East Palo Alto Police Department
Eight new officers were added to the East Palo Alto Police Department on October 21 during a special "Swearing-In & Awards Ceremony" that was held at the Eastside College Preparatory School Auditorium in East Palo Alto. Shown are left to right: EPA City Manager Alvin James, Officer Veronica Briseno, Officer Raphael Masangcay, Officer Huan Nguyen, and Officer Delbert Thomas. Four other officers were also sworn in: Officer Bobby Magami, Officer Noah Serbin, Officer Victor Eti, Officer Clay Warford.

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

Protecting Girls from Problems

Dear Editor

I was happy to read, in your August-September paper, about the SiHLE Project, which is working with teen age black girls to reduce the infection of HIV because of unsafe sex with men.

As the article mentioned, SiHLE explains to these girls that abstinence, use of condoms, and fewer sexual partners are ways to reduce infection.

I hope that SiHLE also clearly explains to the girls that almost two thirds of black babies are born to single women, and that situation leads to poverty for many of those Moms and babies.

The best way for girls to avoid both AIDS and pregnancy is to get married before having sex with any man.

Girls should be taught that many men will promise anything to girls to have sex with them, some even promise they will marry the girls if they have sex first. That is usually a lie, since the man will find another sex partner if the current one gets pregnant.

It is much safer to behave one self and avoid major problems later in life.

Charlie Larson, Mt. View, CA

Thinking of Benjamin Ahmad

Dear Editor

I woke up with brother Benjamin Ahmad on my mind. It has been one year since he was killed in that tragic car accident.

If you note the anniversary of his death, please offer condolences from me and my entire family. Benjamin was as much a good son to my parents and Auntie Barbara Mouton as any.

He visited my Mom in Oakland at least once a month and was a man of his word. He was the model example of a good man, brother, uncle, father and friend.

He is deeply missed by his friends, family and community one year later.

Ricki Stevenson
Paris, France

Assessing the 2009 Youth Summit

Dear Editor

On Saturday, October 24, youth from East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and other neighboring cities gathered together to discuss problems in the community, take classes and learn about our city as a whole.

To me, the Youth Summit was an event that was supposed to bring

different ethnicities to one place and in relaxed discussions, talk about the positive and negative things that happen in the communities near East Palo Alto and in it.

Personally, I think that Youth Summit met the goals that were set because many people attended and expressed their opinions about concerns in positive ways and learned new things at the same time.

Since this was my first time going to the Summit, I didn't really know what to think of it. When I arrived, I found out that I knew many people that were there and I was surprised to know that there were so many young people in the community that were concerned about the happenings and wanted to help change it.

If I were in charge of the Youth Summit next year, I would have more open discussions and smaller groups so that quieter people could express their thoughts easily.

Overall, I recommend the Youth Summit to any young person in the community.

Armani Johnson
East Palo Alto

continued on page 12

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 agreement 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 the other.

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

We are committed to maintaining our independence by avoiding partnerships, investments or business relationships that would compromise the integrity of our news reports.

East Palo Alto Today

Publisher: East Palo Alto Center for Community Media
Editor: Henrietta J. Burroughs

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 or staff.

Addressing homelessness and poverty

Susi Feltch
EPA Today Contributor

Why are people homeless? For the National Coalition for the Homeless, two issues are responsible for the increase of homelessness. They are the lack of affordable rental housing and poverty. Another national organization, the National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that 40 percent of families facing eviction due to foreclosure are renters and 7 million households are living on very low incomes.

Homelessness and poverty are linked. Poor people are



Susi Feltch and passerby at a feed the homeless event at PAL Market.

frequently unable to pay for housing, food, childcare, health care and education. They must make hard decisions because they have a limited income to cover some of what they need. Because they are poor, they are just an illness, an accident or a pay-

check away from living on the streets.

I think there are two things that increase poverty: lack of jobs and the lack of public assistance.

Low wage earners have been left behind falling between the rich and the poor. Declining wages have put housing out of reach for many workers. In every state more than minimum wage is required to afford a one or two bedroom apartment taking 30% of a person's income, which is the federal definition of affordable housing.

So for 12 million Americans, more than 50% of their

paycheck goes to rent or housing costs, resulting in sacrifices in other necessary areas like health insurance, education and savings. Homeless shelters have many full time workers staying in their facilities.

Other major things that cause homelessness are lack of affordable housing, domestic violence, mental illness and addictions.

So what is East Palo Alto doing to help the problem of homelessness in our community? East Palo Alto does not have a shelter open year round so does that mean in East Palo Alto we don't have

any homeless? Where do our homeless get food and shelter? Who is responsible for the care of the homeless in our community?

When the founders of A Bridge 4 Success sat down and looked at the issues that face our youth and community, board member Pasepa Niu stated her concern for the homeless. "We are new on the block as far as nonprofits are concerned in East Palo Alto, but we have to start someplace. We mean what our slogan is, we are responsible for our community and

continued on page 13

Community Viewpoints

The Sequoia Union High School District is considering changing the starting time of the school day in all of its district schools to 9:05 a.m. As mentioned in the EPA Today article on page 2 titled Sleep study raises student awareness, the School Board for the Sequoia Union High School District was impressed with a presentation that showed that students do better in school when they've had more sleep. Many high school students in the East Palo Alto community must rise early to meet school buses by 7 a.m. So, several high school students shared their thoughts about having a later start to the school day. Here is what they said:



Rigoberto Maciel

Rigoberto Maciel 12th grade, Menlo Atherton High School

It seems to be a smart choice for Menlo-Atherton High School students to go to school at 9:00 AM, rather than at 8:00 AM—especially for those students who don't like waking up in the mornings.

There are a lot of students I know who have problems sleeping. They wake up early being very tired. They have a hard time learning anything from having to be up so early. They can't think well. So, having a late start for school might be very good for those students.

Starting school later will mean getting out later. There are students who will have problems with this

because they go to after-school programs after 3:30 PM. More students won't have opportunities to participate in these programs that help high school students to be successful in their lives.

The new schedule being proposed by Menlo-Atherton High School would be good and bad for the reasons that I've stated



Armani Johnson

Armani Johnson, 10th grade, Palo Alto High School in Palo Alto

I think starting school at a later time would be a great advantage for the kids that attend those schools.

But at the same time if that would make the students get out of school later, that's not a good idea. If the schools in the

Sequoia District are starting at a later time, then so should all the surrounding schools, as in schools in Palo Alto.



Ryan Coaquira

Ryan Coaquira, 12th grade, Menlo-Atherton High School

I really do mind Menlo-Atherton High School starting at 9:00 AM in the future.

I'll probably leave school at 3:30 PM, instead of the 2:20 PM time that I leave school now. This would make me late to the School After School for Successful Youth (SASSY) program here at JobTrain. It's a vocational training program that I come to after I get out of school at least three times a week.

I am a morning person. Most students might not mind getting out of school later in the day.

Even if it's starting school at 9 AM, it's bothersome for

me to get out of school later than I already do.

I like going to school early in the morning, so that I can just get it over with. I'd rather get out of school early than later.



Samara Trilling

Samara Trilling, 11th grade, Palo Alto High School in Palo Alto

I think it's a brilliant idea to shift the school day to a later start time.

Multiple studies have shown that increased sleep time improves performance and decreases stress, especially in teenagers. This would be a fantastic first step towards decreasing student stress, and I would hope that a decision in favor of a later start time would encourage other schools in our community to follow Sequoia's lead.



Paris Mills

Paris Mills, 12th grade, Woodside High School

I feel that it is a good idea for high school students in the Sequoia Union High School District to go to school later in the school day.

However, for those students who have after-school programs and jobs to go to, this might be a problem for them.

I hope that if students have to start their school day later than they do now, this won't be happening until after I have graduated from high school.

At Woodside High School, we have a schedule of starting our school day at 9:05 AM only on Mondays. We get out of school at our regular time at 3:10 PM. For the rest of the week, our regular time to be in

school is from 8:00 AM to 3:10 PM. That one day a week is to

So, this is why I hope that the planned change happens after I graduate from high school.



Miranda Shepherd

Miranda Shepherd, 10th Grade, Woodside High School

I think that starting high school later in the morning will help a lot of students. I think it would give students more time to get themselves ready in the morning for their school day. There are bad sides to this decision, though. It would give students an hour less to get their homework done. On the other hand, it would give students more time to sleep. Overall, I think starting the school day later in the morning would work better for most students, rather than start the school day at 8:00 AM.

Interesting facts about the YMCA

By Robert Hughes
East Palo Alto Today



Robert Hughes stands beside the U.S Green Building Council the EPA YMCA received in 2006

For more than 150 years, the YMCA has been a pioneering force in the United States. One could make the case that it is the most successful social institution this country has ever known.

One out of three Americans reports being a YMCA member at some point in life, but even more remarkable is how the YMCA has touched virtually all Americans in some way.

YMCAs invented basketball and volleyball. YMCAs pioneered camping, public libraries, night schools and teaching English as a second language. YMCAs introduced the world's first indoor pool and group swim lessons. YMCAs offered after-school child care long before "latchkey kids" had been given a name.

The YMCA was important in setting the stage and facilitating the right environment for ideas and organizations that

might never have started without them. The Boy Scouts of America, Camp Fire Girls, the Negro National League, Toastmasters, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, and Father's Day all got their start at YMCAs.

The YMCA helped found the United Service Organization, or USO, and the Peace Corps was patterned after a YMCA program.

Landmarks:

December 1851---First YMCA in the United States is founded in Boston, MA.

1853---Former slave An-

thony Bowen founded a black YMCA in Washington DC. The first African American to work in the U.S. Patent Office, he became an outspoken advocate for the education of black children.

1855---The "World's Alliance of YMCAs" is organized in Paris.

1856---The Cincinnati YMCA offers the nation's first known ESL courses.

1864---President Lincoln signs the Congressional Charter of the YMCA of Washington DC.

1869---The first YMCA buildings with gymnasiums are opened in Washington DC, San Francisco and New York City.

1869--- First black student YMCA is founded at Howard University.

1879---The first Sioux Indian YMCA was organized in the Dakota Territory.

1881---A YMCA staffer coined the term "body building" and developed exercise classes that preceded today's fitness workouts.

1881---The YMCA Department at the School for Christian workers later became Springfield College.

1881---The San Francisco YMCA opened a night school that grew into Golden Gate University.

1885---The world's first indoor pool is dedicated at the Brooklyn, NY YMCA.

1886---Dwight L. Moody conducts collegiate "summer School for Bible Study" for 225 college students, leading to the start of YMCA missionary work.

1891---The national YMCA creates a "Colored Men's Department."

1891---Basketball is invented as an indoor winter sport.

1891---Water football is first played at the Y's Springfield College pool. This innovation leads to various other water games, including water polo.

1895---William G. Morgan of the Holyoke, MA YMCA invents the game of volleyball.

1910---National YMCA

Secretary Edgar Robinson works with two Englishmen to found the Boy Scouts of America.

1910---YMCA leader Dr. Luther Gulick and his wife Charlotte found the Camp Fire Girls.

1910---World's first indoor filtered pool is built at the Kansas City YMCA.

1920---The first black baseball league to last a full season, the Negro National Baseball League, forms at a meeting at the YMCA in Kansas City, MO.

1924---Toastmasters International is started by YMCA Education Director Ralph Smedly at the Santa Ana, CA YMCA.

The YMCA is about people—all ages, races, religions and incomes. YMCAs exist to mold the kind of people who care about each other, who are firm in their own sense of worth and that of others, who try to foster understanding and respect, who take responsibility for their own lives and help

continued on page 9

Greens turn into means

opposed to salads from McDonalds," said 72-year-old Hartley. "I want to tell them where African Americans, specifically, come from. When I was growing up, there weren't a lot of McDonald's around, and we didn't have a lot of change in our pockets. So our menus had to do more with nutrition and being able to survive and thrive for the tomorrows. So we struggled for food, and that struggle brought us closer together - certainly as a family - and consequently as a community."



Photo courtesy of Anne-Marie McReynolds
Domanique Nichols, who is the granddaughter of Rev, Bob Hartley stands in the Harley's garden

Hartley is well aware of how youth violence is affecting his city. "There's a lot of disgust on our streets here. We had a young man killed on July 4th right outside. Kids on a bicycle came by and blew his brains out," he said at his home, "on a bicycle."

Hartley believes that bringing the youth back to their cultural roots through showing how food is grown and explaining the significance of the act of growing will help create a sense of community and steer them away from violence.

"There's a hard difference between smoking weed and growing greens. But if we can start young enough and hold their interest long enough, I think we'll certainly be able to persuade some change in a select group of young folk," he affirmed.

Backyard beacon

For Hartley, the vegetables that he grows and sells hold a culture, a history and a way of life. "I was raised in Texas, and backyard gardening was a part of my growing up. We

couldn't imagine a home without a garden, the two are synonymous, so I'm extremely familiar with the desire to garden and the appreciation for gardening."

The Hartleys started growing vegetables in their backyard after stumbling upon the garden at the East Palo Alto Charter School and after talking to Eron Sandler, who runs the school garden. Sandler invited them to a meeting with Collective Roots, an EPA-based organization aimed at educating and engaging communities in sustainable practices. Collective Roots helped the Hartleys to establish their prolific garden. "We were told we might become vendors at the farmers' market and that was attractive," Hartley recalled.

Hartley's approach to business at the farmers' market is one of sharing as much as possible. "We went around all the stores that carried collard greens and checked prices. Costco in Redwood City had them for \$1.79 a bunch; Oakwood had them for \$1.69. They were kind of small, so we bucked [ours] up and said \$1.50 ... that's cool."

'A local economy'

"This farmers' market is not the first farmers' market in East Palo Alto by any means, and the backyard gardener network is not the first association of growers in this city," said David Kane, 25, food system change coordinator for Collective Roots. "But it's different in that it allows local growers to make a little bit of money -- which I don't think you can discount the importance of -- by growing food here in East Palo Alto, sharing it with their neighbors ... [and] having a local economy where that money stays in this community." Kane added that the backyard gardener network "is almost entirely unfunded."

The Hartleys' attentive gardening has paid off, as every week their billowing collard greens are one of the first things to sell out at the farmers market. "We always sell out. In a half hour, I'm talking sports with my friends as they come by and we have nothing else to sell. Of course, we don't have a lot. But it's community," said Rev. Hartley.

Not a handout

"One of the things that is most exciting to me about the

Backyard Gardener Network is that it's not a delivery of service. We're not handing out food. People are not standing in line at the food bank or the food pantry," Kane said. "They're growing it here themselves like Rev. Hartley said. He's excited about sharing it with whoever will come and buy from him at a very reasonable price," Kane said.

The EPA Community Farmers' Market has since taken on an even larger significance for the Hartleys. While Hartley acknowledged that at-risk youth don't frequent the market, he said that their family members sometimes do,

continued from page 1

which provides a gateway to reach out to them.

"It's going to take a different approach to community organizing than I'm used to," he said. "I want to get into that mindset and start talking not about sons and guns specifically, but about greens and means, and how you can bring back some respect for each other."

To support the East Palo Alto Regional Backyard Gardener Network, please visit EPA Community Farmers' Market.

Emily Gong is a citizen journalist. Anne-Marie McReynolds is a reporter and photojournalist who works with Collective Roots.



Project Sentinel

DISCRIMINACION DE VIVIENDA

¿Eres una Victima?

Llame a Project Sentinel, Una agencia no lucrativa

1(888) F-A-I-R-H-O-U-S-I-N-G

1(888) 3 2 4-7 4 6 8