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A tribute to Bennie Mae Chilton... page 12

East Palo Alto Today



Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical

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East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

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EPA hard hit by COVID-19



In the above illustration, the City of East Palo Alto is shown in the listing of cities on the right with 1,194 cases of COVID-19 as of the third week in September, when these figures were released.- Graphic courtesy of <https://www.smchealth.org/data-dashboard/cases-city>

By Jui Sarwate

East Palo Alto has become the most pandemic-affected city in San Mateo County with the highest percentage of confirmed COVID-19 cases in relation to

its population size.

To show how COVID-19 cases in the city have jumped in the past few weeks, the August 13 update from the San Mateo County Health Department, showed 771 confirmed cases, which reflected 2.6% of the East

Palo Alto population (which was up from 1% of the population in July). Then there were 111 cases for every 10,000 residents. In August, there were now 260 cases for every 10,000 residents. Now, there are 385.4 cases for every 10,000 cases.

Although the surge in cases due to the potential effect of increased socialization were county-wide, the East Palo Alto community continues to experience COVID-19 disproportionately.

In his July 15 briefing, San

Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy explained a surge in cases as having "to do potentially with people getting back out there getting to work, socializing, and doing those types of things." With the opening of in-

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San Mateo County meal program extended

By Eva Barrows

Great Plates Delivered, a program that distributes healthy meals from local food providers to eligible seniors, has been extended through October 9, 2020. The program is part of California's emergency response to COVID-19.

Locally, the program is administered by San Mateo County. Since meal delivery began May 9, 2020, 2,553 seniors have been served 501,336 meals from 68 food providers. At a press briefing, San Mateo County Manager Mike Callagy said, "Great Plates Delivered is one of the most incredible things to



Photo courtesy of San Mateo County Health

come out of this crisis." Callagy went on to say, "It's really filling a need that whether it's a crisis or not, would probably be there."

Currently, Great Plates Delivered fulfills two main

goals: to safely provide nutritious meals three times a day to seniors with limited means to access food during the pandemic and to employ local restaurants and food providers who are struggling

financially during shelter in place orders.

Seniors eligible for the program include those aged 65 and older; adults 60 to 64, who are COVID-19 positive;

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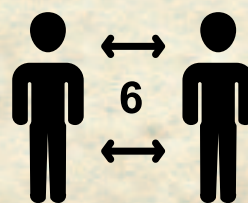
Youth News



**OUR COMEBACK DEPENDS ON
ALL OF US**

HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.

From visiting friends and family to dining out at a restaurant, remember to wash your hands, wear a face covering, and practice social distancing. Together we can get back to enjoying everyday life safely.



Learn more at smcgov.org

COVID-19

SYMPTOMS

- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Vomiting
- Congestion
- Difficulty breathing



SÍNTOMAS

- Dolor de cabeza
- Pérdida del gusto u olfato.
- Tos
- Fatiga
- Vómitos
- Congestión
- Respiración dificultosa

WEAR MASKS EVERY TIME YOU LEAVE YOUR HOME.

VERY IMPORTANT TO STAY SIX FEET APART.

CLEAN ANY SURFACE THAT IS TOUCHED OFTEN.

AVOID TOUCHING EYES, NOSE, AND MOUTH WITH HANDS.



USE MASCARA CADA VEZ QUE SALGA DE SU CASA.

MUY IMPORTANTE MANTENERSE A SEIS PIES DE DISTANCIA.

LIMPIE CUALQUIER SUPERFICIE QUE SE TOQUE CON FRECUENCIA.

EVITE TOCARSE LOS OJOS, LA NARIZ Y LA BOCA CON LAS MANOS.

WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WATER AFTER HAVING BEEN IN A PUBLIC PLACE, OR AFTER BLOWING YOUR NOSE, COUGHING, OR SNEEZING.

LAVARSE LAS MANOS FRECUENTEMENTE CON AGUA Y JABON DESPUES DE HABER ESTADO EN UN LUGAR PUBLICO, O DESPUES DE SONARSE LA NARIZ, TOSER O ESTORNUDAR.

Social distance to slow the spread of Coronavirus.

Distancia social para frenar la propagación del coronavirus.

Raging fires complicate California's fight against COVID-19

By Nicholas Morgan

Officials in San Mateo County held a press conference on this month and explained how the fires, some of the worst in recent years, are resulting in reduced virus testing and creating conditions for it to spread among survivors.

Mike Callagy, the San Mateo County Manager, said that the fires destroyed 22,750 acres in the county with numerous single-family, commercial structures and other structures being destroyed. However, he said the number of COVID-19 deaths and cases increased as the fires burned.

According to Callagy, six more people were reported dead as a result of the virus and the number of cases now stands at 9,427. Callagy added that the highest number of infections have been found in people between the ages of 20 and 40, and that Latinx Americans are the



Photo and caption courtesy of Menlo Fire Members of California Task Force 3 discuss their human recovery mission prior to leaving for the City of Chico's Base Camp.

most over-represented group in infections.

Data from the San Mateo County Health Department shows this to be a part of a county wide spread. Of the total number of cases, more than 4,768 of those infected are Latino and they also make up a fifth of all deaths. These statistics were recorded at the end of August.

The fight against the fires has made it more difficult to conduct testing, particularly in the affected areas. Poor air quality has made it unsafe to go outside or to conduct visits,

where testing could be provided by officials. Experts in nearby Washington state's health department noted that the air problems created by the virus complicate COVID-19 symptoms.

Adding to the difficulties created by the fires is how to maintain social distancing measures in locations that house evacuees, their families and first responders in such close proximity. In some nearby counties, evacuees are being set up in hotels and other makeshift shelters to reduce clustering

too many people together.

However, the entire situation was not cast negatively at Callagy's press conference.

San Mateo officials declared an end to evacuation orders effective immediately. At the time, the county's color warning was changed from green, suggesting a certain level of risk, to no color which means no risks to properties are present, a change from when the emergency was first declared on August 19.

Callagy also announced that COVID-19 testing would resume and up to 2,000 tests would be provided each day alone. At the time of his announcement, more than half of the available openings for testing were being filled.

New plans to increase testing further as the fire warnings receded were also declared.

"We were beating the state average I'd been asked to do 1,200 a day. We're doing 1,800 a day,"

Callagy told reporters, that, though numbers went

down due to the fires, he expected testing to increase.

"The state has now put in a framework that's putting a premium on testing at higher levels.... So, we are adjusting additional large scale testing sites to increase our total average test by at least 500 to 750 a day to meet these numbers," said Callagy.

On August 28, Governor Gavin Newsom detailed his Blueprint for a Safer Economy that based reopening plans for counties on a series of mandatory metrics for case rates and test positivity that would dictate plans to reopen their economies. Purple is the worst category and suggests the virus is widespread, and yellow is the lowest.

San Mateo County has moved away from purple in this framework. Callagy declared it was his goal to improve the numbers as soon as possible.

Nicholas Morgan contributes articles and reports of special interest to East Palo Alto Today.

How we can uphold our democracy this election season

By Nicholas Morgan

Former Georgia gubernatorial nominee Stacey Abrams described efforts to suppress votes nationwide ahead of the November 3 presidential election.

Speaking at a discussion hosted by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF) on Thursday, August 13, Abrams spoke about efforts across the United States that could suppress millions of voters before November. Drawing on the work of her national nonprofit Fair Fight, Abrams said it is important to look back on efforts to ensure access to the ballot to understand the current challenges.

"We have been able to really gin up over the last year an engagement and level of awareness that is critical, because voter suppression works best when people are convinced they cannot vote or should not vote," Abrams told SVCF President Nicole Taylor.

Comparing the present fight against voter suppression to previous ones, Abrams insisted that the strict laws passed after 2010



Photo courtesy of Ethnic Media Services SVCF President Nicole Taylor appears in this screenshot with Stacey Abrams and Larry Kramer, the president of the Hewlett Foundation.

pose new obstacles that replace outright intimidation. Voter suppression is no longer police batons and dogs, but it can be seen now in the strict voting laws enacted by many states post-2010

Some of these are well known like stringent voter-ID requirements, but others include "use it or lose it" laws that purge inactive voters from registrations.

She said that with the COVID-19 pandemic, these restrictions make it even harder for groups like young people and people of color to

cast a vote.

Abrams became a champion on voting rights following her narrow defeat in the 2018 election for Governor of Georgia, a race marred by allegations of voter suppression. Following this loss, Abrams founded three nonprofits focused on voting rights: Fair Count, Fair Fight 2020 and Fair Fight Action which has launched lawsuits challenging voter suppression in several states.

On the topic of mail-in voting, Abrams criticized the Trump administration for undermining the U.S Postal Service (USPS) which is responsible for delivering election ballots.

President Trump has consistently repeated his belief that voting by mail opens the door to fraud, something experts say is extremely rare, and he insists any outcome would cast doubt on the election's ultimate outcome. The president, himself, and the First Lady both requested mail-in ballots for the upcoming election.

Referring to President Trump's comments this week that he would refuse funding for USPS over mail-in voting, Abrams said he was willing to disrupt the election even at the cost of damaging American democracy. She added that these moves would not just hurt voters supporting his opponent, former Vice President Joe Biden, but also many of his own potential voters.

"When you break the machinery of democracy, you break it for everyone," said Abrams.

Abrams was also asked about the completion of the U.S Census for 2020. The initial end of the year deadline for filling out the Census was moved from October 31 to September 30 by the Trump administration, raising

concerns that the final count may be inaccurate. If the numbers for the census are inaccurate, Abrams said that the burden would mostly be felt by communities of color.

In California, officials have decried moving the census date to September as an attack on vulnerable communities like East Palo Alto, where there are many undocumented immigrants and homeless.

Currently, California has a 2020 Census self-response rate of 65.6%. With a self-response rate of 75.5%, San Mateo County ranks the highest in the state, while the City of East Palo Alto ranks the second lowest in the county with a response rate of 59.9%.

COVID-19 only complicates data collection for the census.

Without complete and accurate data that will be held for another decade, Abrams warned that it could drastically affect public policies that could include COVID recovery or immigration. She added that the lack of accurate data would also risk misrepresenting the U.S' racial and political make-up and

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Community News Briefs

A look at East Palo Alto's City Council candidates

There are seven candidates running for East Palo Alto City Council this year. Three of them, Lisa Gauthier, Larry James Moody, and Carlos Romero are all incumbents and rerunning as city councilmembers, while there are four newcomers, Webster Lincoln, Antonio Lopez, Stewart Hyland, and Juan Mendez.



Lisa Gauthier

Lisa Gauthier has been actively involved in the City of East Palo Alto's government as city councilmember, vice mayor and mayor.

She is an affairs manager at Study.com, a website that provides users an opportunity to further their education. Her campaign targets the city's development through transportation and housing.

She supports increasing

affordable housing, while advocating that current residents not be displaced. Gauthier also focuses on the workplace, looking to improve the city's economy and strengthen small businesses.



Larry James Moody

Larry James Moody is also an incumbent, who has served as the city's mayor. He is an employment specialist and job developer at JobTrain.

In his current campaign, he says that he wants to improve the city through projects he plans on developing to address the city's water supply.

Moody's campaign also focuses on local employment, transportation, public safety and housing development.



Carlos Romero

Carlos Romero, East Palo Alto's current vice-mayor has also served as mayor. He is an affordable housing advocate. He says that he hopes to build city recreational centers and strengthen the jobs offered within the city, while also making sure that the increase in jobs in the city wouldn't negatively impact the flow of traffic within the city.



Webster Lincoln

Webster Lincoln grew up in East Palo Alto and is a data scientist at Genentech,

where he works on projects focused on improvement and efficiency. He says that he will apply his skills to a number of projects he hopes to implement to improve the community for East Palo Alto residents; such as improving homelessness, fighting poverty and maintaining the availability of low-income housing.



Antonio Lopez

Antonio Lopez describes himself as a writer, scholar and advocate for the East Palo Alto community. If elected to the city council, he says that he plans on expanding the library, helping to promote small businesses, maintaining public safety on sidewalks, increasing parking, advocating for park bathroom accessibility, and developing more affordable housing, while ending single family housing zoning.



Stewart Hyland

Stewart Hyland, a non-profit housing director at Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County, is a long time city activist.

His campaign includes increasing career development for East Palo Alto residents, by bringing more jobs into the community while providing more funded affordable housing.



Juan Mendez

Juan Mendez is the youngest city council candidate. He currently serves as an alternate on the East Palo

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City, County, State & U.S. Government Meetings & Contacts

East Palo Alto City Council

The East Palo Alto City 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
Regina Wallace Jones
Mayor
650-709-9660
rwallacejones@cityofepa.org

Carlos Romero
Vice Mayor
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Lisa Gauthier
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lgauthier@cityofepa.org

Ruben Abrica
(650) 804-3347
rabrica@cityofepa.org

Larry Moody
(650) 644-9110
lmoody@cityofepa.org

East Palo Alto Agencies, Boards, Commissions, Committees

Planning Commission
Second and Fourth Monday

Rent Stabilization Board
Second and Fourth Wednesday

Public Works & Transportation Commission
Third Wednesday

Youth Advisory Committee
First Thursday of each month

Senior Advisory Committee
Meets first Wednesday of the even numbered months from 1:30p.m.-3:30p.m. - City Hall.

East Palo Alto Sanitary District
The East Palo Alto Sanitary District office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon and re-opens from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. for service. Reg-

ular Board Meetings are held the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm.

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. For questions about an agenda, call the city clerk at 650.330.6620.

Menlo Park City Council Members

Ray Mueller
Mayor
650-776-8995

Cecilia Taylor- Mayor Pro Tem
650-589-5073

Catherine Carlton
650-575-4523

Drew Combs
650-924-1890

Betsy Nash
650-380-3986

Menlo Park Boards, Commissions, Committees

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

San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Warren Slocum 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. 650-691-2121

State Officials

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Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-445-2841
Fax: 916) 558-3160

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

State Senator Jerry Hill
District Address
1528 South El Camino Real
San Mateo, CA 94301
(650) 212-3313

U.S. Government

U.S. Congresswoman Jackie Speier
San Mateo Office
155 Bovet Rd, Suite 780
San Mateo, CA 94402

Phone: (650) 342-0300
Washington, DC:
(202) 225-3531

Governor Newsom signs legislation to protect California's workforce amid the COVID-19 pandemic

Governor Gavin Newsom today signed two bills as part of his worker protection package, SB 1159 by Senator Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo) and AB 685 by Assemblymember Eloise Gómez Reyes (D-San Bernardino). SB 1159 expands access to workers' compensation and makes it easier for first responders, health care workers and people who test positive due to an outbreak at work to get the support they need, including necessary medical care and wage replacement benefits. AB 685 ensures timely notification to employees and local and state public health officials of COVID-19 cases at workplaces. This notification will help workers take necessary precautions such as seeking



Gov. Gavin Newsom

testing, getting medical help or complying with quarantine directives.

"Protecting workers is critical to slowing the spread of this virus," said Governor Newsom. "These two laws will help California workers stay safe at work and get the support they need if they are exposed to COVID-19."

"In the age of Covid-19 our essential workers risk their lives and the lives of their loved ones in our fields, hospitals, grocery stores, meatpacking plants, restau-

rant kitchens and countless other businesses in our state," said Assemblymember Reyes. "COVID-19 infections and deaths disproportionately affect the Latino, Black, and Asian Pacific Islander communities. Communities that make up the majority of our state's low-wage workers. By notifying the public and workers of potential exposures as required under AB 685 we allow workers to take appropriate steps to protect themselves and their loved ones while also bolstering the response of public health officials."

SB 1159 (Hill) expands access to workers' compensation by creating a rebuttable presumption for front line workers -- health care workers, firefighters and peace officers. Creating a presumption removes bur-

dens of access to workers' compensation for those workers who most likely got infected at work. Additionally, the bill establishes a rebuttable presumption when there is a workplace outbreak over a 14-day timeframe.

Under AB 685 (Reyes), employers must report an outbreak to local public health officials. Employers must also report known cases to employees who may have been exposed to COVID-19 within one business day. This bill strengthens Cal/OSHA's enforcement authority by providing clear authority to close a worksite due to a COVID-19 hazard and reducing the timeframe for COVID-19 citations.

Governor Newsom has enacted other components of his worker protection package in recent weeks. Last

week, he signed AB 1867, legislation that immediately ensured access to paid sick leave for every California employee, closing gaps in federal and state law. He also advanced significant funding for worker and employer outreach, education and enforcement activities related to COVID-19.

This worker protection package builds on the Newsom Administration's ongoing efforts to protect workers, among them expanded child care, access to testing and building a pipeline of personal protective equipment to help workers stay safe on the job. The Administration has also released robust workplace safety and health guidance that emphasizes masks, distancing, cleaning, hand washing, screenings and staying home if feeling sick.

Weeks before early voting in California, young activists target black and bown Millennials, Generation Z-ers

By Quinci LeGardye

Early voting in California will begin Monday, October 5. Registered voters will be able to either mail in or drop off their ballots from that day until the day before Election Day, Monday, Nov. 2.

In a deeply divided American electorate, both Democrats and Republicans have been pushing efforts to motivate their respective party bases to get out and vote. And in an election year when a few votes in a handful of swing states will likely determine who will win the U.S. presidency, poll watchers are predicting that young people could be the deciding vote in several places.

"Don't let anyone keep you from exercising your sacred vote. Make your plan to vote. Grab your vote and head to the polls the first day they are open," said California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, calling out young people in his speech at the Democratic National Convention in August.

Across California, young voters are speaking out about the issues that concern them this election, and decisions that will affect their future. On Sept. 11, Power California, a

civic engagement organization that encourages young people of color to participate in government, hosted their "Fight For Our Future Campaign Kick-Off."

Young activists from all corners of California spoke about issues coming up in the November election to launch the campaign, which aims to reach more than 150,000 California voters between the ages of 18 and 35 through virtual phone banking and texting.

Annie Gonzalez, the actress known for her role as Lidia Solis on Netflix's comedy-drama series "Gentefied," hosted the virtual event. She addressed the struggles that young people of color are facing in the lead up to the election.

According to Power California's 2020 Youth Poll, 46 % of young people surveyed had difficulty buying food, household supplies or medicine during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 67 % said their state government is not doing enough to address the impact of COVID-19.

"Young people of color have been hit hard by these crises, and their needs and futures must be centered in this election, and always during the recovery, from young



<https://www.publicdomainpictures.net>

essential workers risking everything to take care of us to college students unsure about their future to everyday young people struggling to afford rent," said Gonzalez.

Kendrick Sampson, activist and actor known for his role as Nathan Campbell on HBO's popular comedy-drama series "Insecure," addressed the young people watching the event as well. He stressed the importance of activism and participation.

"I'm inspired by all the young people. It's what keeps me going and motivated, because y'all are leading the movement across the country. Young people like yourselves are rising up and fueling movements for justice, from Black Lives Matter and calls to defund the police to climate change and immigrant rights. You are the leaders and the moral compass of our nation in every major movement for justice

that has been true in our past, and it is still true today."

Tyler Okeke, a 19-year-old organizer with Power California, asked young people to sign a letter asking Gov. Newsom to endorse Proposition 15. The ballot measure would require commercial and industrial properties to be taxed at their market value. According to Ballotpedia, 40 % of the revenue generated will fund school districts and community colleges.

"It will require decisive action from our elected leaders, especially leaders like Governor Newsom," he said. "We need leaders who will put people over corporations and take steps to meet California's most essential human needs while recognizing that young people are the central force of this future that we want for this state."

Ixchel Arista, a 15-year-old youth organizer with Oakland Kids First, advocated for Measure QQ, a ballot initiative in Oakland which will allow 16 and 17-year-olds to vote in school board elections.

"Students feel the most impact as we spend most of our lives at school, yet have no say in decisions being made for our education. We need to be able to decide

who is making these impactful decisions," said Arista.

Te'Ausha Garcia, a civic engagement organizer with Californians for Justice in Fresno, said, "It's important that we fight for the solutions that we need, because who else will fight for us? We have to be willing to stand up and fight for what we want. Otherwise the change we desperately need will not be showcased. We must stand up for our rights and really name what it is that we need."

"We must continue to fight for our right to the future that we deserve. The right to have our most basic human needs met: Clean and fresh air and water, housing, healthcare and education. The right to be free and to live with dignity and without discrimination, the right to determine the future of our democracy and our economy, and we will not stop until we secure these rights. We will not stop until we secure these rights," said Eugene Vang, a 19-year-old activist from Merced, who organizes with 99 Routes and Power California.

This article by Quinci LeGardye is reprinted with permission from California Black Media.

Back to school will be a different time for students

By Supervisor Warren Slocum



Supervisor Warren Slocum

It's back to school time! And this school year will start off very different and challenging for students.

Back-to-school is on all parents' minds right now, and in what form our students will attend school – whether it be by distance learning, in-person or a hybrid version. Let me share with you the projects we are working on in the County and in my office to ready students for the coming school year during this pandemic.

Every August, the County Human Services Agency

(HSA) Children's Fund prepares backpacks stuffed with school supplies for elementary, middle, and high school students who are low-income or foster children. This year, our office partnered with HSA to include a COVID-19 kit in each of the

700 backpacks to prepare these students for the coming school year during this pandemic. Each COVID-19 kit contains a face mask, hand sanitizer, wipes, a water bottle, USB drive and headphones for distance learning.

And speaking of distance learning, this pandemic highlights the universal need for internet access for all in this County. It's why Supervisor Don Horsley and I asked our Board of Supervisors to approve a pilot project to provide internet access for the most disadvantaged students. The pilot will include the Ravenswood City School District, Redwood City School District and the La

Honda-Pescadero Unified School District. As of this writing, most of these districts have announced plans to start school with improved distance learning and this access is critical for these students and their families.

With food insecurity rising during these troubling times, our Board of Supervisors also just approved a pilot project to provide \$1 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES) for the purposes of establishing a pilot FREE meals program to reduce food insecurity among ALL students in ALL school districts in San Mateo County, if they choose to participate.

For more information on

CONTACT US

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SMC_Census@smcgov.org

@SMC_CommAffairs

what's happening in District 4 and the County, sign up for my newsletter at: <http://eep-url.com/dsLbyz>

San Mateo County meal program

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FOOD & GROCERIES

- Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, Bing Center in San Carlos: (650) 610-0800
- CalFresh/EBT Online: (800) 223-8383
- WIC California: (800) 223-8383
- Great Plates Delivered: Home Meal for Seniors: (800) 675-8437
- Ecumenical Hunger Project: (650) 323-7781

seniors exposed to COVID-19, and seniors who have an underlying health condition. Those applying for the Great Plates Delivered program also have to meet other criteria involving their income and their participation in other government food programs.

In praising the program, Callagy said, "Over 10 million dollars has been put back into the community through restaurants who are employing folks who would have been otherwise unemployed."

Great Plates Delivered is jointly funded through federal, state, and county assistance. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides 75% of the funding, the State of California 18.75% and San Mateo County pays the remaining 6.25%, which amounts to \$634,165 to date.

The program was set to expire on September

9, 2020. "I'm happy to report that FEMA funding will be extended to October 9, 2020, so we will continue another month, which is great," said Callagy. He also stated that the county would have sponsored the program through September if the state did not.

Based on the need, the state may extend funding for the program beyond the October end date. Michelle Durand, San Mateo County's chief communications officer, said the program has previously been renewed one to two days before the closing date.

The county is accepting new applications for food delivery assistance. To apply for free meals through the Great Plates Delivered program, call 1-800-675-8437 weekdays from 8 AM to 5 PM. For additional information about the program, go to <https://www.smchealth.org/post/great-plates-delivered-faqs>.

SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Our mission is to empower and increase the entrepreneurial capacities of socially and economically diverse residents.

Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center is shifting our priorities to meet your needs. Schedule a one-on-one consultation

Small Business Capital

Has your business been affected by Covid-19? Do you need help navigating the PPP or EIDL Loans or Grant Applications? Renaissance is available to work with you. For more information, or to schedule a FREE one-on-one consultation contact: crasmussen@rencenter.org

Small Business Classes

Take our small business classes to learn business basics and develop networks. Get an overview of target market analysis, fundamental business operations, and basic business finance principles. Currently Online.

One-on-one Consultations

Currently offering FREE consultations to businesses regardless of past participation in our program. All Small Businesses Welcome!

Strategic Workshops

We are offering a variety of free workshops based on our clients current needs: Legal, How to Sell Online, How to Pivot & Adjust Your Business, SBA Live Q & A webinars. Check our website for schedule.

All classes are free or low cost. Scholarships available based on income.

Register at: rencenter.org/calendar

Visit us!
1848 Bay Rd,
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

Contact us!
(650) 321-2193
crasmussen@rencenter.org

From the Editor's Desk

Getting a seat at the table!

For years, members of minority groups in America were given the crumbs that fell from the table and they rightly complained that they were underrepresented in the halls of power and excluded from having a seat at the table.

Protesters around the country say that this is still happening.

Census 2020 supporters are urging everyone to participate in the census and let their voices count as one way of gaining access to power and resources.

Newly-released Census 2020 data shows that in the third week of September, San Mateo County, with a self-response rate of 78%, ranks as the number one county in California, in having the most residents who have submitted their Census 2020 questionnaire. This puts San Mateo County in the lead for having the highest response rate in the state. Even California's response rate is 68.8%.

Two San Mateo County cities, Hillsborough and San Carlos, both with a response rate of more than 80%, rank among the top 10 cities in the state with the highest response.

Guess which cities in the state have the lowest response rates. If you guessed that East Palo Alto is among them, then you're right. East Palo Alto has a response rate of 64.7%, which it must be noted is several points higher than its 2010 rate.

The city ranks under Menlo Park, which is at 76.5%, but above Compton at 63.4% and above Bell, which has a response rate of 64.2%.

East Palo Alto's self-response rate is above that of southern states like Alabama (62.9%) Georgia (61.9%), Mississippi (59.8%) and Florida (63.1%), which all fall under the national response rate of 66.3%.

But, believe it or not, there are those states like West Virginia, Idaho, Maine, Hawaii and Vermont that have a 99% response rate.

See more rankings at <https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html>

If the residents of East Palo Alto want to have a seat at the table, then they will have to participate, whenever the opportunity arises where their voices can be heard.

Participating in the 2020 Census is one of those opportunities. If people feel that as a group they are pushed aside by the system and treated as if they don't count, then they never will count until they step up to present themselves, demand their seat and pull back the chair at the table.

Census 2020 allows everyone to present themselves and demand that seat.

So, let us all do what we need to do in responding to the census to allow ourselves to count by being counted!

In doing so, we will no longer be invisible. In allowing ourselves to be seen and heard, we can demand our fair representation in the halls of power and get the seats to which we are all entitled.

Doesn't it make sense, then, for all of us to respond to the census as quickly as possible? In being counted, our communities will get the money that they deserve.

So, fill out and submit your 2020 Census form now, if you haven't already done so.

East Palo Alto can be among the cities with the highest 2020 Census response rates and you can help make that happen!

Let's begin to put East Palo Alto at the top of those lists that reflect the best!



Henrietta J. Burroughs



Photo courtesy of Alanna Stevenson
East Palo Alto police officers are shown kneeling with protesters during Black Lives Matter marches that took place in East Palo Alto last spring over the murder of George Floyd in Minnesota.

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

Vote for Measure V

Dear Editor:

This November third, East Palo Alto residents will be voting for an important local ballot measure that will help shape the future of our community.

East Palo Alto's Measure V will help fund affordable housing acquisition, redevelopment, and rehabilitation, by instituting a modest two percent tax increase on out-of-town guests staying in East Palo Alto hotels and short-term rentals of 30 days or less.

During the foreclosure crisis of the late 2000s, many community members lost their homes—a major source of their wealth—and were forced from our community. East Palo Alto lost long-time families and small businesses, destabilizing the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hurtled us into a new age of economic uncertainty. With community members out of work or losing income, the fate of their homes and their place in our community is up in the air once again.

This time, we have the opportunity to stabilize housing and prevent some of the negative outcomes we saw during the Great Recession.

For example, the estimated \$390,000 Measure V will yield annually will help tenants to purchase, with assistance from the City and local non-profits, the house or apartment building about to be sold out from under them.

Measure V focuses on preserving existing housing for EPA residents, and allowing many the ability to remain rooted in East Palo Alto.

Preservation is key to preventing displacement. Keeping existing housing affordable for EPA residents—returning college graduates, our reentering residents, and legacy families—will give very valuable but exceedingly vulnerable community members the opportunity to stay here.

Measure V is fair. Our tax on out-of-town guests has not been raised since it was adopted by voters in 1998—more than twenty years ago! We have yet to catch up with

neighboring cities. And we are not the only city in the region taking this approach. Three other cities, including the City of San Mateo's Measure W, would similarly raise their hotel Transient Occupancy Tax by two percent.

East Palo Alto's five Council members unanimously voted to place Measure V on the ballot, and the ballot measure has garnered support from many community groups and leaders.

Now we're calling on our neighbors to make the vote that demonstrates we ALL deserve a place to call home. Let's all Vote Yes on Measure V!

Carlos Romero
Vice Mayor, East Palo Alto
EPAforV@gmail.com

Estimada editora:

Este 3 de noviembre, residentes de East Palo Alto votarán por una medida electoral que ayudará a formar el futuro de nuestra comunidad.

La Medida V de East Palo Alto ayudará a financiar la

continúa en la página 21

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-in-chief: Henrietta J. Burroughs

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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

Why I led a protest march in East Palo Alto

By Alanna Stevenson



Alanna Stevenson supported me individually.

I did the protest because mainly when the Ahmaud Arbery story came out, it didn't sit right with me. But we had gotten justice by getting people arrested so I thought nothing else would happen any time soon. But the George Floyd incident happened and I had to do something. Another innocent black man was killed.

After that I took action. I sent a flyer out before I asked for permission (from my parents) and the word started to get out! Then, I figured I needed to start planning the event. I had to meet with the police and city staff/council along with community youth leaders who

I thought that this was not going to be a big turnout and that people would doubt me because I am 15 years old. But there was a big turn out. I was happy that the program went better than planned. I was excited when I saw the congregation coming. I liked all the speakers, they did a good job and even better than I could have thought. Each speaker made an impact. We had youth, an elder in the community, youth allies, young

adults, a police officer, community leader and myself. We spoke about racial inequalities, white privilege, brutality, what we can do to help each other/mental health, and my ask from our police department. And, it was wrapped in prayer of peace.

As I reflect back on that moment, I would keep everything the same. My commitment is to continue to raise awareness about Black Lives Matter and start making a change. I hope to work with the City Council to help their vision of starting a youth commission. I want to continue to use my voice and platform to raise awareness of cultural inclusion within the police and

maybe do something at my school.

This was a great experience because I never saw the community come together like that. Let's continue to come together to use our voice by...

- Registering to Vote: <https://registertovote.ca.gov>

- Signing petitions: Text FLOYD to 55156 OR sign the petition www.colorofchange.org

- Learning about unmasking biased: www.unmaskingthebiasphere.com

- Supporting a local youth organization to help youth, like me, find their voices.

Below is a list my favorite organizations that have helped me to use my voice:

- Boys and Girls Club Peninsula - East Palo Alto

www.bgcp.org

- Black Student Union at Menlo Atherton High School www.facebook.com/mabsu13/

- Young Life in East Palo Alto www.younglife.org

- 49er Academy High School Program www.49er-sacademy.org

- Live in Peace www.livein-peace.org

- StreetCode www.street-code.us

- Youth United for Community Action (YUCA) www.youthunited.net

Thank you to everyone in the community who came out! It was beautiful. I love my community

Alanna Stevenson is an East Palo Alto resident, who is a rising junior at Menlo Atherton High School.

Is the English language dying?

By Michael Uhila



Michael Uhila

Aloha, Moshi Moshi, Namaste, Talofa. Do you have a language preference? You want English to go, I'll give it to you and a container to put it in. How did the English Bible get here? From Aramaic to Hebrew to Greek to Latin and lastly we got the King James version. Every English translation after the King James version dilutes the meanings. We started with water and now we got diet coke. No disrespect to the biblical scribes or the generations of readers, but look at where we are now.

Today, some people think that English is dying and everyone isn't from England, who speak English. At some

airports, there are signs in Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Mandarin, and braille for the visually impaired. What country is SFO in?

One year at Heathrow, I heard every language except English. Really? Heathrow is in England? English words change. " Words are stupid words are fun, words can have

you on the run" – taken from Wordy Rappinghood by Tom Tom Club.

The Bible called them lame and today the same people are physically challenged. When a soldier was overwhelmed during battle in World War I and his brain couldn't take it anymore, what he had was called "shell shock." Today that's called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The dump is now a recology center and secretaries are office managers. What they call a lift in England is an elevator in America. No language is better, just different.

After my mother suffered a stroke, the part of her brain that could access non-English languages was not operative.

Language has physiology to it because the brain says NO. She can speak English slowly, but every other language is challenging. What Gwan, as my Jamaican friends would say.

With political correctness, English adds more syllables and squeezes the life out of words. The waitress is a server and the computer is a server too. Is English dying? License plate numbers are clearer than Sexy Sadie. Top Ramen instructions are more attainable than proposition 13 and routing numbers get more attention than a dying derelict. English classes divide people from advanced to intermediate to beginners.

Does anyone care to read

about the life of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Virginia Wolf or Iceberg Slim? No, I need English so I can get a job! Everyones got an opinion about English and English class is closed today. Do you judge a language by its content or by its context? Incomplete sentences, informalities and incompetence are popular. Time to kill English with chocolate karma (Sanskrit for action)

Remember the orator became a Chatty Cathy. Remember when gay meant you were happy and not homosexual. Remember when racists didn't care how educated you are in front of their shotguns. You could whistle Blue Bayou or sing Just A Closer Walk

continued on page 21

Observing Hispanic Heritage Month

Speaker Nancy Pelosi

"During Hispanic Heritage Month, our nation honors our country's vibrant, hard-working, entrepreneurial and patriotic Latino community. This year, we mark this occasion as our nation confronts a coronavirus pandemic that has inflicted a disproportionate and devastating impact on communities of color, bringing to light the health and economic disparities faced by many Latinos and Latinas — with millions unemployed, food-insecure or at risk of

being evicted from their homes.

"Instead of joining Democrats to lift up our Latino community and all Americans in need, the Trump Administration continues to double down on its hateful anti-immigrant agenda. From its barbaric family separation policy, its unconstitutional sabotage of the Census and its cruel ending of DACA and Temporary Protected Status for nearly 400,000 immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean, there is no limit to



Speaker Nancy Pelosi

the depths this Administration will go to to undermine our immigrant communities.

"Our Latino community has always been a central part of our American story, strengthening and enriching

our nation, and making America more American. This month and every month, House Democrats are committed to lifting up our Latino community and opposing the Trump Administration's campaign of hatred and xenophobia. That is why we stood strong to protect the Census, protect immigrant families at the border and passed the American Dream and Promise Act to provide relief to our courageous young Dreamers and hard-working TPS and DED recipients. And unlike this

Administration, Democrats continue to fight for our fellow Americans who call Puerto Rico home as they continue to recover from devastating hurricanes and earthquakes. Democrats will never stop fighting to honor our heritage as a nation of immigrants as we work to build a brighter future for the Latino community and for all Americans."

Nancy Pelosi is Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and issued the above statement in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Wishing trees in East Palo Alto hold hopes for the future

By Indira Selvakumaraswamy

For six weeks this fall - from September 15 to October 31 - various locations in East Palo Alto and Palo Alto will host wishing trees. There are four wishing trees set up locally in East Palo Alto- Jack Farrell Park, University Square Park, outside of the parking lot of Ravenswood Family Health Center and at Bell Street Park.

What are Wishing Trees?

The concept of wishing trees is from ancient times. Trees were used to manifest wishes and this practice continues to this day, sometimes in traditional ways, but other times taking new forms. In 1996, Yoko Ono, experimen-



Photo courtesy - Canopy Wishes are shown attached to a tree on University Avenue.

tal artist and wife of the late musician John Lennon, set up a project called the WISH TREE (She in turn was inspired by the wishing trees found in the temples of Japan.). She set up a tree, alongside which she placed pens, tags, and a note inviting visitors to write a wish for

peace and tie it to the tree.

Yoko Ono has invited others around the world to join her in sharing their own visions of a better world. In the uniting spirit of this project, the communities of East Palo Alto and Palo Alto have established wishing trees at several local sites together. All of the wishes that are contributed during this project will be gathered at the end of October and sent to the Imagine Peace Tower in Reykjavík, Iceland, where they will be added to the collection of wishes from around the world.

Partners from around East Palo Alto have come together to host the Wishing Trees in East Palo Alto, including the City of East Palo Alto, Canopy and like-

mind organizations and individuals that are working towards a more just, equitable and peaceful community. The Peninsula Peace and Justice Center (PPJC), Youth United for Community Action (YUCA), and EPA City Councilmember Lisa Gauthier have also provided their support, along with other local groups.

A map of the locations and more information on the Wishing Tree project in East Palo Alto can be found at canopy.org/wishing-trees.

Community members are invited to come to the trees to write down their wishes and attach them to the trees, as physical manifestations of their hope for the wishes to come true. Each of the wishing trees has materials for

you to write your wishes on. Wishes can also be shared online on Facebook at facebook.com/groups/wishingtrees or through social media posts that include the hashtag #CommunityWishingTrees.

Trees are a universal symbol of hope, life, and resilience.

They can establish in mountainside crags with minimal soil or moisture, they can grow to hundreds of feet from humble seeds, and with their crowns in the heavens and roots beneath the earth, they remind us of the balance needed between our spiritual and physical lives.

We will be thrilled if you can join us and be a part of this project! Again, you can get more information at canopy.org/wishing-trees.

Bay area programs and organizations receive grants to fight COVID-19

By Taylor Leatherman

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI) today announced \$1.3 million in grants to Bay Area programs and organizations that are providing critical health services and addressing the needs of individuals and families facing increased economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These grants include:

Health Care and Direct Services:

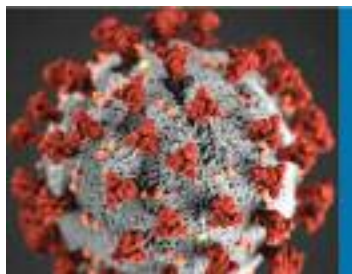
- \$500,000 to the Mission Asset Fund for the San Mateo County Immigrant Relief Fund to support low-income immigrant families impacted by COVID-19 and lockdowns, and who are ineligible for federal relief.
- \$250,000 to the San

Francisco Latino Task Force to support a "test to community care" model for testing, and an aftercare community wellness team that provides direct services and support for the Latinx community, particularly residents who test positive for COVID-19.

- \$250,000 to the Rafiki Coalition for Health & Wellness to support COVID-19 testing, tracing, and health services for Black and African American communities in San Francisco.

- \$50,000 to Chinese Hospital in San Francisco to support their leadership and response to COVID-19 in the community.

- \$50,000 to Silicon Valley Community Foundation's COVID-19 Childcare Project, which supports private child-



care providers who have limited financial means and do not qualify for other relief funding. Childcare providers receive emergency grants and technical assistance in accessing federal and state funds.

Educational Support and Digital Access:

- \$200,000 to Redwood City School District to strengthen remote learning and help educators assess progress and support students throughout distance

learning.

- More than 1350 WiFi hotspots to the San Mateo County Office of Education, local school districts, and schools, for student use for the 2020-2021 academic school year.

From culturally competent health services, to financial assistance and support, these organizations and community-led programs are serving people disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, including Black, Latinx, and other communities of color.

"We sought input from community leaders and organizations on where the need was greatest and what is required urgently to help stabilize and support those most impacted by the pan-

demic," said Cristina Huezo, Director of Community at CZI. "We are grateful to these organizations for their frontline efforts to address health disparities, provide access to critical services for individuals and families, and bridge the digital divide for students."

This \$1.3 million in additional funding follows an initial \$5 million in grants to support emergency relief efforts in the Bay Area. To date, CZI has committed more than \$65 million to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more at: <https://chanzuckerberg.com/covid-19/>.

Taylor (Moore) Leatherman is the community communications manager for the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative.

How a student support program made a difference

By Ivan Temes

With all the challenges facing young students in East Palo Alto this summer and many families having to live together due to economic circumstances what were some of the students who faced difficult circumstances regarding how to participate in on-line school courses supposed to do?

Many parents were essential workers and could not be home to support their children—on top of that often not being knowledgeable in needed areas of computer support. Young people mostly did not have comput-



Pastor Deborah Lewis-Virges tutors a young child.

ers, some are not proficient in English and others were in the fourth grade with second grade reading skills.

How could they keep up with the children taking classes in the Ravenswood District and other areas? Where was the 'miracle' going to come from? Coming to the rescue was St. Mark AME Zion Church in East Palo Alto and Pastor Deborah Lewis-Virges and a cast of others primed to

be of service.

A devoted preacher and powerful pastor in areas supporting youth, prison reform and homelessness she was deeply concerned about the fate of marginalized students and was able to allocate two large rooms and an outside area at the church to create innovative educational programs for youth ranging in age from six to twelve. The Ravenswood Educational Foundation jumped in with some financial assistance and food was provided through Ravenswood and the Second Harvest Food Bank. Manzanita Works also assisted with vital program support. In order to ensure the

quality of food the children needed twice a day volunteers sometimes purchased additionally needed food to ensure ideal nutrition. An initial four-week full day program was established and went so well that a second eight-week session was established, ensuring three months of excellent educational assistance to youth in many different circumstances. There was no childcare as the sessions were focused on education.

Ian Knighton, an educator from Sacramento, was a key factor in setting up the successful program. As he said, "The children need positive social interactions and the church

is a vehicle. Distance learning is a whole new challenge for everyone."

The children were provided with computers so they could participate in the Zoom classes from their school. They often needed additional support and this was provided by community volunteers from organizations including Project WeHope, One East Palo Alto and Live in Peace. The teachers were well-trained and provided a safety net for the students.

While the church had guidelines for discipline and fellowship they were sensitive to youth of varying religious

continued on page 20



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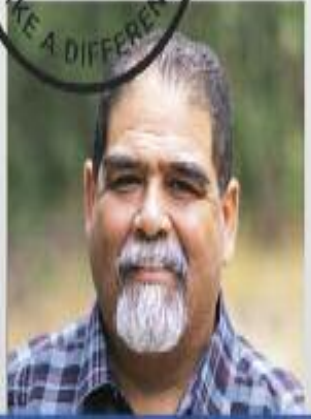




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Answer confidentially online, by phone or by mail starting March 2020.

For more information, text COUNT to 650-200-2743*
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*Message and data rates may apply. Text STOP to no longer receive messages.

Lifecycles

A tribute to Bennie Mae Chilton on turning 99

By Geramina Goodspeed

Bennie Mae Chilton was born on May 26, 1921 into a large family; the youngest of seven children, she gained the nickname “Little Sister” honestly.

She was born in Marshall, Texas during the Jim Crow era, which was a system where racial segregation dictated most aspects of life for all African American people.

This included where they could eat, work and live. Though times were often difficult growing up in the South, Bennie Mae never complained.

Her parents, Hayes and Elizabeth Price raised her to show an abundance of strength and discipline. She understood the importance of listening to her parents and remained respectful at all times.

She took pride in her duties, whether it was working outside handling the livestock, picking cotton, or simply doing



Bennie Mae Chilton gets a hug from her granddaughter, Geramina Goodspeed.

domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning, and washing.

Bennie has always put her heart into everything she sets out to do. At age fifteen, she met her husband Hubert Goodspeed. After marrying, they had three handsome sons.

In 1943, Bennie Mae and her family moved to San Francisco, California where she began working at Learners clothing. Her duties included putting attire together and displaying the clothing on mannequins. This

brought much business to the store, as she was very talented.

In 1964, Bennie Mae decided to move to East Palo Alto, California on Cooley Avenue, where she still resides today. Soon after, she began working for the County of San Mateo for several years, where she later retired.

After retiring, Bennie Mae would consistently travel to Texas every year to visit her family. Her goal was to keep the connection between the family strong, no matter the distance.

She loved going to church every Sunday, gardening, traveling and, occasionally, visiting the casinos from time to time. Bennie Mae has always been a go-getter, hard driven, independent woman, who has never depended on anyone to do anything for her.

I believe Bennie Mae’s longevity is due to her healthy eating habits, to exercising, to getting plenty of sleep, and

most of all, to putting all of her faith in God.

My grandmother is an extremely strong, loving, and trustworthy soul. Throughout the years, she has provided me with so much wisdom, advice, and even criticism.

The times I have shared with her have been the ultimate blessing. Bennie Mae Chilton is an impeccable woman, who loves all of her family, unconditionally!

Since this is a cause for a special celebration: Happy 99th birthday to the matriarch of our family!



Bennie Mae Chilton gets a big kiss from DeRob Wright, her oldest grandson.

We thank you for the immense joy you have shared with us over your 99 years.

Wishing you many more years of good health, overwhelming happiness, amazing grace, and perfect peace of mind.

Your children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren love you so much!

Eternally,
Geramina Goodspeed



Standing in the middle, Bennie Mae Chilton is surrounded with love by three of her granddaughters: Geramina Goodspeed, on the left and Tischelle Goodspeed and Keley Goodspeed on the right.

POETIC VOICES

Welcome to Poetic Voices—a new feature offering by Poetess Kalamu Chaché, the East Palo Alto Poet Laureate. She is curating this monthly feature to primarily give voice to the people of the East Palo Alto and Belle Haven community of Menlo Park in sharing their poetic expressions with the world. If you would like to be considered for publication in the future, please email her directly with your request to: kalamu_pro@hotmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you!

Celebrating Your Legacy

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
We are here to celebrate you
Because you did the things
You said that you would do.
You left us with a legacy
And a workable plan of action
That can still be used by all
Throughout the world, in every nation.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
We still have so much work ahead
To help others understand the power of your words.
We still remember what you said.
We’re determined to carry forth your dream,
In all we try to do and say.
It’s the best way that we can demonstrate
Our respect and love for you today.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
We are still celebrating your legacy
Because it serves as a foundation
For how life is to be lived by all of humanity.
You’ve left a great legacy for us.
We thank you for your vision and wisdom.
May we forever stand firm on
The principles of equality, justice, and freedom.

© Poetess Kalamu Chaché 2005

Lifecycles

Bobbie Jean King Spencer - October 27, 1933 - May 30, 2020



Bobbie Jean King Spencer

Bobbie Jean King Spencer was born on October 27, 1933 in Camden, Arkansas to the late James L. King and Elizabeth King Caviness. She was the fourth of six children. Bobbie attended grade school in Camden. She accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as her savior at an early age and she was baptized at the St. Paul Baptist Church in Camden. Bobbie was well known for her love of music and she sang in the Youth Choir. One of her favorite

hymns was "Just a Closer Walk with Thee", and one of her favorite passages of scriptures was the 23rd Psalm.

While attending Lincoln High School she was a cheerleader, and she graduated with honors as the salutatorian in 1952. After graduation from high school, she enlisted in the United States Navy. She served two years activity duty. While in the Navy, she met a fellow sailor, Curtis R. Spencer, and they were married in 1954. This union was blessed with (7) children: six sons and one daughter. As a Military family, they relocated multiple times throughout the Country. So much so, that each child was born in a different state of the country. After her first husband retired from the Navy, the family eventually settled in East Palo Alto, California.

Bobbie was a devoted wife and mother. While living

in East Palo Alto, she joined the Open Bible Baptist Church under the leadership of the late Rev. Edward Butler. While raising a family, Bobbie worked a variety of jobs, including "stay at home mom." Once her children were old enough and responsible, she started working as a School Bus Driver. In 1977, Bobbie starting working for SamTrans as a county bus driver. She worked there for approximately 10 years before retiring.

As an "empty nester," she relocated ultimately back home to Camden, Arkansas. She lived there until the onset of the disease Alzheimer's. In 2008, Bobbie moved back to East Palo Alto where she lived with her daughter and primary care provider. She joined the Faith Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of Rev. Floyd J. Purdy, now pastored by Rev. Robert L.

Cowan. She enjoyed participating in Bible Study, Sunday School, Prayer Meetings and the worship services.

Most people who knew her would characterize her as a strong willed and independent woman. She would often insist on things being done a certain way- her way. They would also say when Bobbie gave you her word, you could "take that to the bank." After a long battle with Alzheimer's and the other health complications, Bobbie was called home to be with the Lord on May 30, 2020.

Bobbie is preceded in death by her sisters: Katherine Renix Cook, Shirley Brewster, her only brother Charles Renix and her daughter-in-law Jillian Spencer.

She leaves to cherish her memories her sisters: Gracie Moore (Camden, Arkansas.), Mary Langley (Arkadelphia, Arkansas.); all her children: Curtis R. Spencer, Jr. (Tonyeil) of Parker, Colorado;

Alvin Spencer (Joyce) of East Palo Alto, California; Derrick Spencer of Magnolia, Arkansas; Carlos Spencer (Wanda) of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Sonja Spencer of East Palo Alto, California; Dwight Spencer of Hampton, Virginia; Kyle Spencer of East Palo Alto, California; her (21) grandchildren: Agyemang Spencer, Akilah Spencer (Mark Riggs), Aisha Spencer, Dulani Spencer (Lisa), Jason Spencer (Keyana), Rebecca Spencer, Carlos Andre Spencer, Shuan Moore, Keyana Spencer, David Dukes (Roberta), Tyone Dukes, George Dukes, Tara Dukes, Niara Spencer, Kamilah Spencer, Bakari Spencer, Shakira Spencer; (14) great grandchildren, and one more on the way; (4) great-great grandchildren; (1) goddaughter, Iris Henry, and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and friends and additionally her beloved Faith Church family.



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Ravenswood Family Health Dentistry
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'Oku tali lelei 'e he Kautaha Ravenswood Family Health Network ha taha pē, tatau aipē pe koeha e tu'unga fakapa'anga pe nofo fonua.

2020 CENSUS

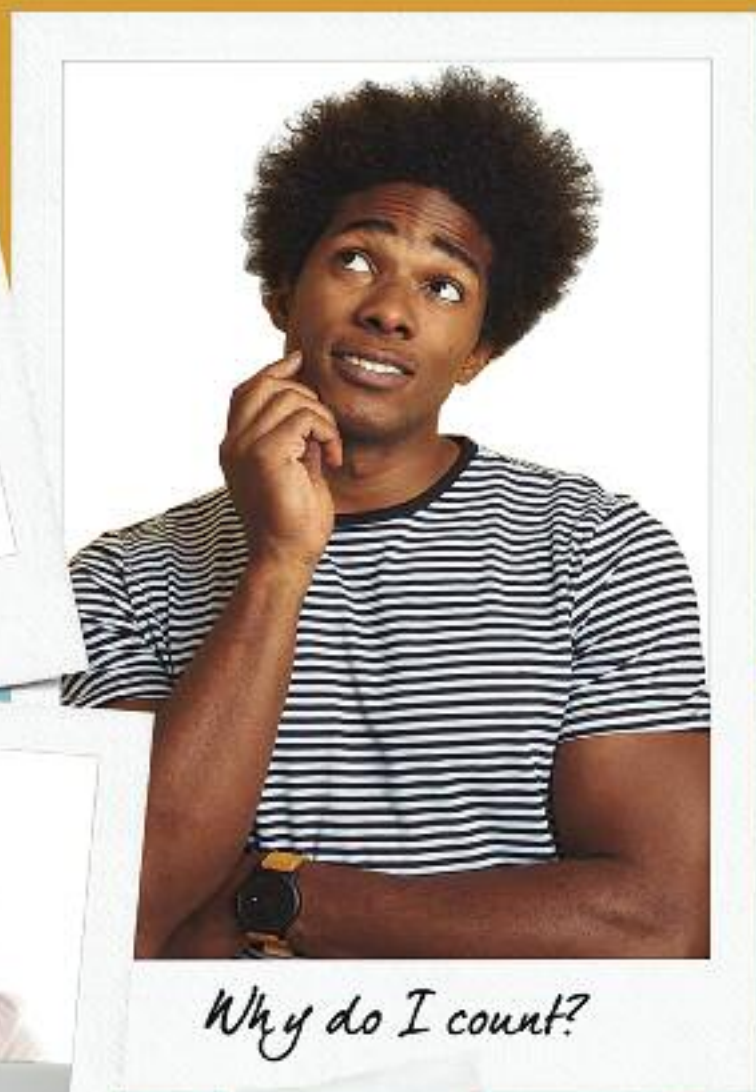
Be Counted

Take The Census Online Today!

Data derived from the Census is used to determine political representation, identify needs, and influence funding allocations in our communities for the next 10 years. There is no time to waste with so much at stake. Make the decision to count. Take the Census online today at WWW.MY2020CENSUS.GOV. Questions? Visit CALIFORNIACENSUS.ORG or call [844-330-2020](tel:844-330-2020) for answers.



Have Questions About the Census?



Don't Hesitate to Ask Online or By Phone!

Your right to know is just as important as your right to count. Take advantage of the Census hotline's callback option by calling **844-330-2020** to get your questions answered. Then, complete the Census by phone or online at **MY2020CENSUS.GOV**.



Broadband and equity for all now

By Giores- Flores-Garcia

The coronavirus pandemic has led to the closing of schools and businesses for several months, exposing the deep Digital Divide facing many of our parents, students in k-12 and those in community colleges. El Concilio of San Mateo County and Hagar Services Coalition are partnering to close the Digital Divide in San Mateo County by asking local public and private agencies to join us partnership to help get the word out to all so that eligible constituents of this county can have access to Affordable Internet and Computer Offers.

All new partnerships will join with the statewide nonprofit The California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF) whose mission is to close the "Digital Divide" in California, particularly targeting the underserved communities, so that parents can be secure



that their children will not be left behind. The goal is to provide affordable Internet options that increase the number of low-income households with Internet access at home. Internet access at home is critical to achieving academic and economic success and access health and human related services such as housing, employment, trainings, food, housing, health and other basic resources.

COVID-19 has exposed and amplified the impact of the Digital Divide as well as overall systemic injustices. We are focusing on a critical need that grows larger every day. One in eight California

households are either not connected or have only sub-standard connections to high-speed Internet at home. This Digital Divide is inextricably linked to the pernicious, persistent Achievement Gap and its twin -- the Opportunity Gap

In addition, the nonprofit student advocacy organization Education Trust-West reported in early April, after school closings were in place, that of 1,200 K-12 California parents surveyed:

- 38% of low-income families and 29% of families of color are concerned about access to distance learning because they don't have a reliable home Internet connection.

- 50% of low-income and 42% of families of color lack sufficient devices at home to access distance learning.

In San Mateo County, we know in 2019 that the Ravenswood City Elementary School had 86% of their

enrollment participated in the Free Lunch Program. If we ever need more evidence of the need for this service, we certainly have it now to understand how critical it is to make broadband infrastructure improvements and technology investments not only for the wellbeing of our students but all. The COVID-19 health crisis, recent wildfires and other disasters underscore why every resident must have a reliable home Internet connection to: communicate during emergencies, access medical professionals online, help isolated populations stay connected and drive economic development activity to save and create jobs.

Rose Jacobs Gibson, former San Mateo County Supervisor and President/CEO of Hagar Services Coalition and Gloria Flores-Garcia, Associate Executive Director of El Concilio of San Mateo County, are asking agencies

to strongly support this partnership to help ensure that there is equal access to computing devices and reliable, affordable home Internet across the board, so that all can feel secure in knowing that no one be left behind for lack of either.

The California Emerging Technology Fund has been working with experienced California education leaders and are asking state legislators, commissioners of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and 58 County Office of Education superintendents to "strongly support this and other bold initiatives to help ensure there is equity among all California households.

To find out how you can partner in this effort, contact us at (650)330-7442, hagerservicescoalition@gmail.com or for more information, visit www.cetfund.org,

Eleventh hour save for California renters facing eviction

By Sunita Sohrabji

AB 3088, an emergency bill to stave off evictions for 4.3 million California renters, was passed at the 11th hour on August 31 by the California State Legislature. But Assemblyman David Chiu, chair of the Housing and Community Development Committee, who headed up the effort to get a bill passed before the Legislature went into recess, said the measure is a temporary fix to the long-standing crisis of affordable housing in the state.

"This is not the bill that I had wanted to pass," said Chiu at a Sept. 2 briefing organized by Ethnic Media Services. Chiu had introduced AB 1436 in June, and said his original bill offered much more significant set of solutions for tenants.

"There was much more that I wanted in the final bill, much more that I fought for at the negotiation table, and so much more that is needed to protect tenants. But the choice we were faced with wasn't between AB 3088 and a stronger version, but between the bill that we just passed versus nothing. The consequences of doing nothing are just too dire to comprehend," said the Assemblyman, who represents San Francisco. Chiu noted that the eco-



CA State Assemblymember David Chiu

nomie hit of the pandemic has disproportionately impacted people of color: three quarters of those facing evictions are Black or Latinx, he said.

"AB 3088 is an imperfect but necessary solution to a colossal problem, but it is not the ultimate solution to covid-19 evictions," said Chiu, stating it was a temporary fix until the Legislature comes up with a more permanent solution, and perhaps one that includes a new White House administration.

"Our hope is that in late January, we may have a new federal Administration that could provide financial relief to struggling landlords and tenants," he said, noting that the Trump Administration has not engaged with Congress on the critical issue.

AB 3088 was signed into law Aug. 31 by California Governor Gavin Newsom. The bill protects tenants who faced eviction beginning Sept. 2, the day after the California Judi-

cial Council's statewide moratorium on evictions expired. The Council had stated it would not renew the moratorium, leaving the state Legislature scrambling to come up with a solution before they went into recess Aug. 31.

AB 1436 gave tenants a 12-month grace period to pay back rent which had accrued during the emergency period. Tenants could not be evicted from their homes during that period, which stretched out to April of 2022.

The bill also protected small landlords with four or fewer units from being foreclosed upon for a year. AB 1436 passed through the Senate Judiciary committee Aug. 18 and then cleared the Senate Appropriations committee two days later.

But the California Apartment Association — which vehemently opposed the bill, saying it would allow even those who could pay their rent to skip payments — negotiated heavily with members of the Senate and the Governor's office, to get a more landlord-friendly bill passed.

AB 3088 was introduced on Aug. 28. The bill extends the state's eviction moratorium to Jan. 31, 2021. Tenants must sign a declaration under penalty of perjury showing proof of economic hardship related to COVID-19. The declaration

must be signed before Oct. 5. Chiu clarified at the briefing that a tenant's savings would not be taken into account for determining hardship.

Tenants must also pay at least 25 percent of their rent during the grace period which began Sept. 2. If a tenant is unable to come up with 25 percent of their rent for one month, they would still be protected if — by Jan. 31, 2021 — they had managed to pay off 25 percent for all five months.

The remaining rent, plus rent owed before the bill passed, would be converted into a civil liability. Landlords can take their tenants to small claims court beginning Feb. 1, 2021, but they cannot evict them for past due rent.

The bill would also enact the COVID-19 Small Landlord and Homeowner Relief Act of 2020 which mandates that mortgage servicers must work with small landlords and property owners to ward off foreclosures.

A short while after Chiu's briefing with EMS, Newsom, at his daily noon press briefings, announced his "Housing is Key" initiative, aimed at providing resources to renters and landlords experiencing economic hardship due to COVID-19. The campaign will be run by the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency and can be viewed at www.housingiskey.com.

"Having a home is fundamental to all that we do," said BCSH Secretary Lourdes Castro Ramirez, during the governor's press briefing.

The governor also updated reporters on the status of Project Roomkey, which provided shelter to homeless people during the pandemic. Thus far, 22,000 people have been moved into 16,400 rooms at 344 hotels or motels, announced Newsom. 55 counties and three Native American tribes have been served.

The state has allocated \$1.25 billion in aid for housing in this year's budget. \$600 million of that will be given over to Project Homekey, an initiative allowing the state to purchase motels, hotels, and similar structures to convert them into permanent housing.

"Shelters only solve sleep. Housing provides stability," said Newsom, adding:

"COVID has allowed to create a necessary manifest on housing and self-sufficiency."

One hundred thirty eight applications have already been approved. The state expects to buy up those properties by the end of the year at market or below market rates.

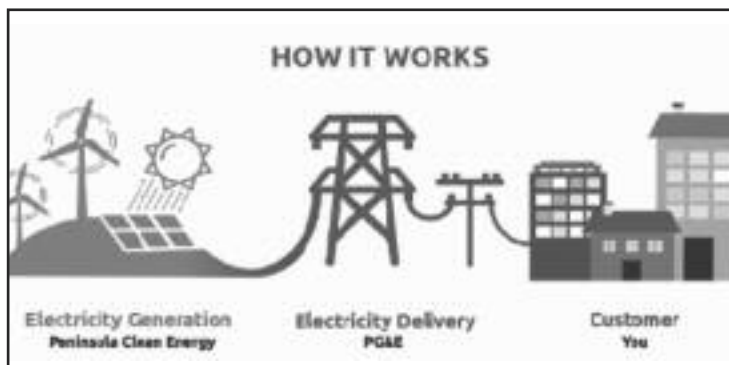
This article by Sunita Sohrabji is reprinted from Ethnic Media Services.

Renewable Energy in San Mateo County: Why and How

By Iliana Nicholas

For over a century, most of the major sources of energy have come from fossil fuels—coal, petroleum, and natural gas. A consequence of using fossil fuels to power our everyday lives is that they produce greenhouse gas emissions. These gases trap heat, prevent warmth from escaping from the Earth's atmosphere, and contribute to the growing and intensified climate change realities of today. Fossil fuels are limited in our natural world, emit carbon dioxide during combustion, and require burning or extreme extraction that damages our ecosystem.

Efforts are underway to change how we consume and produce energy to reduce future greenhouse emissions. An alternative to fossil fuel energy is to invest in the harvesting and use of



renewable energy sources. Unlike fossil fuels, these alternatives are cleaner and nonpolluting because they are derived from natural self-replenishing resources. Some examples of renewable energy sources include solar, wind, water, and geothermal.

Solar energy, for example, is generated by the sun and is most commonly captured by solar panels. Silicon cells found on solar panels absorb and convert sunlight into electricity. Solar panels can be installed on residential buildings, allowing homeowners and renters to

personally participate in the transition to clean energy, on commercial and local government buildings, and on utility properties. Thankfully, the sun and its sun rays are active year-round.

Wind energy, or wind power, is generated by air flows that occur naturally in the atmosphere. Have you ever been outside on a windy day and been struck by the powerful wind? Similar to a fan, wind turbines have blades that are hit by the wind's energy. The blades spin, powering a generator that then creates electricity. Wind farms, like those seen

in California valleys, are placed to harvest great amounts of wind energy.

Water energy, or hydropower, captures the power of water. All you have to do is stand in front of a flowing river or stream or watch the ocean waves to see that water is full of power. Water energy is captured by flowing water, in most cases in dams, turning a waterwheel or turbine that is attached to a generator that produces electricity.

Geothermal energy uses a piping system to capture and extract steam and hot water from underneath the Earth's surface. These power plants are more commonly found in areas with natural hot springs. Although the thought of drilling underground might sound alarming, natural heat is continuously produced inside the Earth (think of erupting volcanoes) and is captured by monitoring when the tem-

perature is at its hottest point.

Harvesting and using renewable energy sources to reduce and eliminate future production of greenhouse emissions calls for us to tap into the sources of energy that are replenished by nature. One way you can help this transition is to switch your own primary source of energy from fossil fuels to renewables. For most residents of San Mateo County, a switch to partial

renewable sources has already been completed for you: In 2016, San Mateo County residents were automatically enrolled to receive 50 percent renewable, clean energy in their homes. But how did the switch to partial renewables happen?

In 2002, in California, Assembly Bill 117 and Senate Bill 790 allowed for the formation of Community Choice

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Energía renovable en el Condado de San Mateo: Porque y cómo

	Península Clean Energy ECOplus	Península Clean Energy ECO100	Generación de Electricidad de PG&E (Las que eligen salir de PCE)	PG&E Elección Solar
Energía renovable	50%	100%	38%	100%
Energía libre de gases de efecto invernadero	85%	100%	35%	100%
Energía eléctrica generada por tarifas	\$0.27781	\$0.28781	\$0.11752	\$0.07311
Costo de transmisión de electricidad	\$0.15241	\$0.15241	\$0.15241	\$0.15241

Durante más de un siglo, la mayoría de las principales fuentes de energía provienen de combustibles fósiles: carbón, petróleo y gas natural. Una consecuencia del uso de combustibles fósiles para alimentar nuestras vidas diariamente, es que producen emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero. Estos gases atrapan el calor, evitan que el calor se escape de la atmósfera y contribuyen a las crecientes e intensificadas realidades del cambio climático. Los combustibles fósiles son limitados en nuestro mundo natural, emiten dióxido de carbono durante la combustión, y requieren quemaduras o extracción extrema que dañan nuestro ecosistema.

Se están realizando esfuerzos para cambiar la forma en que consumimos y producimos energía para reducir las futuras emisiones

de efecto invernadero. Una alternativa a la energía de los combustibles fósiles es invertir en la cosecha y el uso de fuentes de energía renovables. Hay alternativas que no son combustibles fósiles, estas alternativas son más limpias y no contaminan el medio ambiente porque se derivan de los recursos naturales de auto-reposición. Algunos ejemplos de fuentes de energía renovables incluyen solar, eólica, agua y geotérmica.

La energía solar, por ejemplo, es generada por el sol y es capturada con paneles solares. Las células de silicio que se encuentran en los paneles solares absorben y convierten la luz solar en electricidad. Los paneles solares se pueden instalar en edificios residenciales, lo que permite a los propietarios e inquilinos participar personalmente en la transición a la energía limpia, en edificios comerciales, lo-

cales del gobierno, y en propiedades de servicios públicos. Lo bueno es que el sol y sus rayos solares están activos durante todo el año.

La energía eólica es generada por los flujos de aire que ocurren naturalmente en la atmósfera. ¿Alguna vez has estado afuera en un día ventoso y te ha golpeado el poderoso viento? Como un ventilador, las turbinas eólicas tienen cuchillas que son golpeadas por la energía del viento. Las cuchillas giran, alimentando un generador que luego genera electricidad. Los campos eólicos, como los que se ven en los valles de California, se colocan para cosechar grandes cantidades de energía eólica.ge

La energía del agua, o energía hidroeléctrica, captura el poder del agua. Con estar enfrente a un río o arroyo que fluye o mirar las olas del océano, se puede ver que el agua está llena de energía. La energía del agua es capturada por el flujo de agua, en la mayoría de los casos en represas, girando una rueda hidráulica o turbina que está conectada a un generador que produce electricidad.

La energía geotérmica utiliza un sistema para capturar y extraer vapor y agua caliente de debajo de la su-

perficie de la Tierra. Estas plantas de energía se encuentran más común en áreas con aguas termales naturales. Aunque la idea de perforar bajo tierra puede sonar alarmante, el calor natural se produce continuamente dentro de la Tierra. Piense en un volcán en erupción, que obtiene la energía desde adentro de la Tierra.

El uso de fuentes de energía renovables para reducir y eliminar la producción futura de emisiones de efecto invernadero nos obliga a aprovechar las fuentes de energía que la naturaleza repone. Una forma de ayudar en esta transición es cambiar su propia fuente primaria de energía de combustibles fósiles a energías renovables. Para la mayoría de los residentes del condado de San Mateo, ya se ha completado un cambio a fuentes renovables parciales: en 2016, los residentes del condado de San Mateo se inscribieron automáticamente para recibir el 50 por ciento de energía limpia y renovable en sus hogares. Pero, ¿cómo sucedió el cambio a las energías renovables parciales?

En 2002, en California, el Proyecto de Ley 117 de la Asamblea y el Proyecto de Ley 790 del Senado permitieron la formación de pro-

gramas Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) o Community Choice Energy (CCE). Estos programas capacitan a los gobiernos locales para comprar energía de proveedores de energía alternativa en nombre de sus residentes, empresas y cuentas municipales. La participación en estos programas es voluntaria, lo que permite a los consumidores elegir el tipo de energía que desean consumir y apoyar. En California, hay 21 CCAs en funcionamiento, y siete solo en el Área de la Bahía. En el condado de San Mateo desde 2016, nuestro CCA local es Peninsula Clean Energy.

Peninsula Clean Energy proporciona a las ciudades, pueblos y áreas no incorporadas del condado de San Mateo el control local sobre su suministro de electricidad. Peninsula Clean Energy también es una agencia del gobierno local, con una junta comunitaria con representantes de cada área a la que sirven. Además de proporcionar energía renovable limpia a sus consumidores, las ganancias de Peninsula Clean Energy y se reinvierten en las mismas comunidades. Reinvierten a través de nuevos proyectos y programas energéticos que reducen aún más las

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Renewable Energy

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Aggregation (CCA) or Community Choice Energy (CCE) programs. These programs empower local governments to purchase power from alternative energy suppliers on behalf of their residents, businesses, and municipal accounts. Participation in these programs is voluntary, allowing consumers to choose the kind of energy they want to consume and support. In California, there are 21 CCAs in operation, and seven in the Bay Area alone. In San Mateo County since 2016, our local CCA is Peninsula Clean Energy.

Peninsula Clean Energy provides San Mateo County's cities, towns, and unincorporated areas with local control over their electricity supply. Peninsula Clean Energy is also a local government agency, with a community board with representatives from each area they serve. In addition to providing clean renewable energy to its consumers, Peninsula Clean Energy's earnings are reinvested into the same commu-

nities. They reinvest through new energy projects and programs that further reduce greenhouse gas emissions in local communities.

In 2019, Peninsula Clean Energy helped the City of East Palo Alto draft reach codes for new construction. Reach codes are building energy codes that are adopted by municipalities to require new residential and commercial buildings to include energy efficiency designs and amenities. In the same year, Peninsula Clean Energy launched their Drive Forward Electric program where they partnered with Peninsula Family Services, a local nonprofit, to provide participants with up to \$4,000 toward the purchase of an electric vehicle. Peninsula Clean Energy also supports and sponsors local community events put on by community-based organizations. There are many more programs and projects in the pipeline for Peninsula Clean Energy, such as partnering with SamTrans to electrify



their transportation fleet and the development of plans and infrastructure with municipalities for the placement of backup power systems for natural disasters or outages.

Today, residents in San Mateo County are enrolled in Peninsula Clean Energy and benefit from 50 percent renewable energy in their homes. So, how does that work? And is it possible to receive 100 percent renewable energy?

Our region's utility provider is PG&E, and its infrastructure delivers electricity to our residential, commercial, and city-operated buildings. In the past, PG&E billed residents for energy generation, transmission, and distribution. Under a CCA like Peninsula Clean Energy, generation costs for renewable energy are paid to

Peninsula Clean Energy. Transmission and distribution costs continue to be paid to PG&E because PG&E delivers the electricity from the grid to your house, maintains the power lines, reads your meter, and sends you a single bill. This breakdown is included in the bill showing transparent pricing and cleaner energy provided at lower rates.

Making a switch to 100 percent clean, renewable energy power in your home is possible with Peninsula Clean Energy. Current consumers who receive 50 percent renewable energy under ECOplus, the default automatic option, can upgrade their service to ECO100 in order to use only renewable energy sources. On average, the change in energy cost to make the switch is an additional \$4.25 per month.

One way to think about switching to 100 percent clean energy is that it is an investment in reducing your personal carbon footprint and helping meet local and

state collective goals toward a greenhouse gas-free environment. When we reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and lower greenhouse gas emissions, we contribute to positive impacts on our climate. Peninsula Clean Energy consumers collectively save an estimated \$18 million annually on their utility bills and avoid an estimated 144,660 metric tons of carbon emissions each year — the equivalent of removing 30,713 cars from the road annually just by transitioning to 100 percent clean energy.

For assistance on making the switch to ECO100 or for help understanding your utility bill, contact your local Peninsula Clean Energy outreach team at Acterra: Action for a Healthy Planet at crc@acterra.org. Additionally, if ready to make the upgrade now, please visit Peninsula Clean Energy's website at <https://www.peninsulacleanenergy.com/opt-up/>. **Iliana Nicholas**, Program Associate at Acterra: Action for a Healthy Planet

Energía renovable

continúa de la página 17

emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero en las comunidades locales.

En 2019, Peninsula Clean Energy ayudó a la Ciudad de East Palo Alto a redactar códigos para la conservación de energía para nuevas construcciones. Estos códigos para la conservación de energía son adoptados por los municipios para exigir que los nuevos edificios residenciales y comerciales incluyan diseños y servicios de eficiencia energética. En el mismo año, Peninsula Clean Energy lanzó su programa Drive Forward Electric donde se asociaron con Peninsula Family Services, una organización sin fines de lucro, para proporcionar a los participantes hasta \$4,000 para la compra de un vehículo eléctrico. Peninsula Clean Energy también apoya y patrocina eventos comunitarios locales organizados por organizaciones comunitarias. Hay muchos más programas y proyectos en curso para Peninsula Clean Energy, como la asociación con SamTrans para electrificar su flota de transporte y el desarrollo de planes e infraestructura con los municipios para la colocación de sistemas de en-



Photos courtesy of Acterra

energía de respaldo para desastres naturales o interrupciones.

Hoy, los residentes del condado de San Mateo están inscritos en Peninsula Clean Energy y se benefician del 50 por ciento de energía renovable en sus hogares. Entonces, ¿cómo funciona eso? ¿Y es posible recibir energía 100 por ciento renovable?

El proveedor de servicios públicos de nuestra región PG&E, y su infraestructura entrega electricidad a nuestros edificios residenciales, comerciales y operados por la ciudad. En el pasado, PG&E facturó a los residentes por la generación,

transmisión y distribución de energía. Bajo una CCA como Peninsula Clean Energy, los costos de generación de energía renovable se pagan a Peninsula Clean Energy. Los costos de transmisión y distribución continúan pagándose a PG&E porque PG&E entrega la electricidad de la red a su casa, mantiene las líneas eléctricas, lee su medidor y le envía una sola factura. Esta explicación está detallada y incluido en la factura que muestra precios transparentes y energía más limpia provista a tasas más bajas.

Cambiar a una energía 100 por ciento limpia y renovable en su hogar es posi-

ble con Peninsula Clean Energy. Los consumidores que reciben 50 por ciento de energía renovable bajo ECOplus, la opción automática predeterminada, pueden actualizar su servicio a ECO100 para usar solo fuentes de energía renovables. En promedio, el cambio en el costo de energía para hacer el cambio es de \$4.25 adicionales por mes.

Una forma de pensar en cambiar al 100 por ciento de energía limpia es que es una inversión para reducir su huella de carbono personal y ayudar a cumplir los objetivos colectivos locales y estatales hacia un futuro libre de gases de efecto inver-

nadero.

Cuando reducimos el consumo de combustibles fósiles y las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero, contribuimos a los impactos positivos en nuestro clima. Los consumidores de Peninsula Clean Energy ahorran colectivamente un estimado de \$18 millones anuales en sus facturas de servicios públicos y evitan aproximadamente 144,660 toneladas métricas de emisiones de carbono cada año, el equivalente a eliminar 30,713 automóviles de la carretera anualmente solo con la transición al 100 por ciento de energía limpia.

Para obtener ayuda para cambiar a ECO100 o para comprender su factura de servicios públicos, comuníquese con su equipo local de Peninsula Clean Energy en Acterra: Action for a Healthy Planet mandando un correo electrónico a crc@acterra.org. Si está listo para realizar la actualización, visite el sitio web de Peninsula Clean Energy en <https://www.peninsulacleanenergy.com/opt-up/>.

Iliana Nicholas, asociada de programa en Acterra: Action for a Healthy Planet

EPA hard hit

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door businesses, service workers returned to their positions working for restaurants, retailers, and other socially-conducive businesses throughout July and August.

The City of East Palo Alto reports that 55% of their residents are more likely to be employed in service occupations compared to the 27% of residents in the entirety of the county. The report also states that 45% of residents earn lower incomes (in the range of \$15,000-25,000) and 10.6% of residents live without health insurance compared to the 4.9% in the rest of the county.

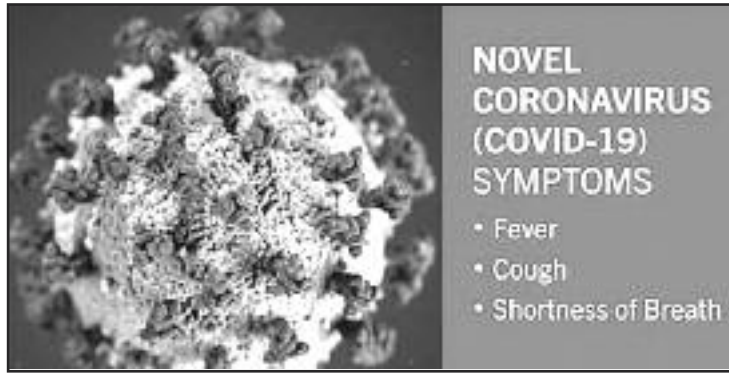


Photo courtesy of San Mateo County Health

The large percentage of the East Palo Alto population involved in the service industry needing to go back to work correlates with the increase in cases across the city.

East Palo Alto includes a percentage of immigrants that is higher than the San Mateo County average. Additionally, about one-third of East Palo Alto residents speak Spanish, with another

four percent who are fluent in another language than Spanish, along with not being fluent in English.

The lack of multilingual, culturally-relevant medical education and general avoidance of healthcare in communities of immigrants, who may fear ramifications of immigration policy, have halted any flattening of the curve.

Coronavirus testing takes place in East Palo Alto on Aug. 21, 8 a.m. to noon at the Lewis and Joan Platt YMCA's back entrance at 2160 Euclid Ave.

San Mateo County officials urge residents with non-medical, non-emergency

questions about the coronavirus can call 211 or 800-273-6222 at any time, day or night. Those calling from landlines and cellular telephones in San Mateo County can speak with a 211 operator who can provide translation services available in 180 languages.

Jui Sarwate contributes articles and reports of special interest to East Palo Alto Today. This article updates her original one titled, Youngest city in San Mateo County hard hit by COVID-19, which appeared on the EPA Today website on August 20, 2020

Renaissance helps local businesses



Do you know who these masked people are? Call the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center in East Palo Alto and find out. Under the leadership of Timothy Russell, its program director and Crystal Rasmussen, the program manager, the organization has helped local businesses survive and get funding. Russell on the left shows the COVID-19 relief check that was awarded to Debrah Turner from Above All Insurance. Rasmussen stands in the background as one of the organization's counselors stands on the right.

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Nuestra misión es empoderar y aumentar las capacidades empresariales de los residentes, social y económicamente diversos.

Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center está cambiando nuestras prioridades para satisfacer sus necesidades. Programe una consulta individual.

Capital De Pequeños Negocios

Si necesita los dólares creados por Covid-19, queremos ayudarle a conseguirlos. El programa de \$100,000 de la ciudad de East Palo Alto está disponible para ayudarle a obtenerlo. Póngase en contacto con el programa de asistencia al negocio (CANTE) en canter@renaissancecenter.org.

Clases De Pequeños Negocios

Tenga acceso desde hoy a programas gratuitos para ayudarle a aprender más sobre los negocios. Desde cómo crear un plan de negocios hasta cómo encontrar clientes y los principios básicos de las finanzas personales. ¡No dude en inscribirse!

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Community News Briefs

continued from page 3

Alto Planning Commission. Mendez grew up in East Palo Alto and studied within the Ravenswood School District,

He says that he plans on putting residents' interest before economic development by funding affordable housing projects, changing traffic conditions and providing youth of the community with more educational opportunities to improve unemployment rates and bring about public safety.

The Ravenswood City School District Board Candidates

The Ravenswood City School Board also has seven candidates, who are competing for the two seats on the school district Board of Education.



Marielena Gaona-Mendoza

Marielena Gaona-Mendoza is the sole incumbent, running for a second term. She said that she is an advocate for special education in the district and she wants to increase student attendance.

Gaona-Mendoza also

plans on further improving the technological aspect of student education, and hopes to incorporate parent involvement to shorten education gaps in the community.



Bronwyn Alexander

Bronwyn Alexander was a public school teacher at Belle Haven in Menlo Park for many years. Since she disagreed with the way the district is working, she decided to run for school board. She is against the Tinsley program, and would like to work towards improving schools for kids in the community. She hopes to support plans to improve student literacy skills and use the influence of the board to help schools operate and improve teacher stability.



Joel Rivera

Joel Rivera is a construction labor manager with experience in administrative and district level work. He said that he plans to focus on the budgeting of school funds to improve the education that is offered and advocates for students to attend schools locally.



Mele K. Latu

Mele K. Latu, a community collaborations manager for the Emerson Collective, said that she has nonprofit experience and is an advocate for social change.

Her focus is on behavioral health, where she wishes to execute a project to provide Ravenswood City School District students with support, which she believes will help provide students with the best opportunities to access an education.

Latu plans on strengthening the school board community to improve school curriculum.



Jenny Verghese Bloom

Jenny Verghese Bloom is a Ravenswood parent who hopes to implement her own personal experience to make the community better.

She currently works as a college counselor and her experience in education is something she considers a strength as she hopes to positively change the Ravenswood City School District by making the classroom environment better for all students and by helping parents stay informed.



Julian Alberto Garcia

Julian Alberto Garcia is an educator, who ran unsuccessfully for the school board in the last election.

He said that he has chosen to run again in the hope that he will be able to continue with his plan to improve the technical divide in the community—something that is even more apparent now during the pandemic.



Zeb Feldman

Zeb Feldman is a senior business representative at CEMA Operating Engineers Local 3, where he thinks his role as a contract negotiator gives him conflict resolution and management skills and financial experience.

He believes that his skills could be useful to the Ravenswood City School Board by bringing positive changes to the district's budgeting process, employees and community funding gaps.

All of the above candidate profiles were written by Giselle Garcia.

Many thanks to the Palo Alto Weekly for contributing some of the featured candidate photos.

Uphold our democracy

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serve the president's own political ends.

Asked what should be done to protect the right to vote before November, Abrams praised California and its officials as leaders for setting the example of how to encourage voter participation despite the disruption caused by the coronavirus.

Mail-in voting in California made up a large portion of ballots in recent election cycles. According to statistics from the CA Secretary of State's office, over 8 million votes were cast by mail in the 2016 presidential race and in the 2018 midterm elections. In the midterms, mail-in ballots accounted for 65% of all votes made.

This June, Governor Gavin Newsom signed a bill into law that allowed universal mail-in ballots to be sent to every registered voter.

Secretary of State Alex Padilla also announced new efforts to inform voters on how to vote safely in November.

Improving access to information as Padilla's office is working to do is how Abrams believes voter suppression efforts can best be overcome nationwide. She encouraged people to become aware of voter suppression, to spread information about it and to encourage others to become active participants in their elections.

"We have to tell them not to be afraid of suppression, but to be aware of it and angry about it. And the best way to express your anger is to overwhelm the system with your participation."

Nicholas Morgan contributes articles and reports of special interest to East Palo Alto Today

Student support program

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backgrounds and faith groups. Some had special dietary needs. The students participated in Zoom classes and also worked in groups. They often read to each other as part of the learning process. The police and fire departments both visited and were impressed. When I spoke with brothers Naim and Isaiah they were excited to be able to take three classes—Spanish, English and Art—and to be learning in both the academic and creative areas.

Personalizing the tutoring was also a challenge as a few students were two years behind in reading levels. Support was also provided by church members with experience in child-

hood development, behavioral therapy, athletics, computer technology and culinary arts. Once a month a Fun Friday program was included in the agenda and the kids loved it.

Breakfast and lunch, preceded by a prayer, were provided. When I visited the children were spaced apart and eagerly lined up for the lunch of chicken, corn and vegetables being cooked by Pastor Virges' husband, Clyde, her partner in life and the ministry. They KNOW about children, having three adult sons, two daughters and four grandchildren.

This shows that someone with a passion and commitment, surrounded by wonderful support per-

sonnel can truly make a difference in unique situations. As Steph Curry, the great Warriors basketball star who himself has been involved with East Palo Alto youth said recently, 'Our job is to embrace the opportunity and better the person next to you.'

Pastor Virges and her team certainly did that. She added, "Small things do really make a difference and impact our children in heartfelt and very real ways."

The 12-week session was an educational lifesaver for these youth and should have an impact on their being up to speed with others when school resumes in the Fall.

La Medida V de East Palo Alto

continua de la página 8

adquisición, el desarrollo y la rehabilitación de viviendas asequibles. Aumentará un moderado 2% al pago de impuesto de huéspedes de hoteles o alquileres a corto plazo de 30 días o menos.

Durante la crisis bancaria a finales de la década 2000, muchos miembros de la comunidad perdieron sus hogares, una de las principales fuentes de su riqueza, y se vieron obligados a dejar nuestra comunidad. East Palo Alto perdió familias y pequeñas empresas, desestabilizando a la comunidad.

La pandemia de COVID-19 nos ha llevado a una nueva era de incertidumbre económica, porque muchos residentes han perdido sus trabajos e ingresos.

Esta vez, tenemos la oportunidad de estabilizar la vivienda y prevenir algunos de los resultados negativos que vimos durante la Gran Recesión.

La cantidad estimada de \$ 390,000 que la Medida V rendirá anualmente ayudaría a que los inquilinos puedan comprar, con la ayuda de la Ciudad y organizaciones sin fines de lucro, una casa o un edificio de apartamentos que esté a punto de venderse.

La Medida V se enfoca en preservar las viviendas existentes y en permitir que nuestros vecinos sigan residiendo in EPA.

La preservación es clave para prevenir el desplazamiento. Mantener las viviendas a un precio asequible para los residentes de East Palo Alto (incluyendo a graduados universitarios, personas anteriormente encarceladas, y familias que lluevan mucho tiempo residiendo aquí) brindará a valiosos pero vulnerables miembros de la comunidad la oportunidad de quedarse aquí.

La Medida V es justa. Nue-

stro impuesto no se ha elevado desde que fue aprobado por los votantes en 1998, ¡hace más de veinte años! Hay que ponernos al corriente con otras ciudades. Y no somos la única ciudad de la región que quiere aumentar su impuesto hotelero: la Medida W en San Mateo también está adoptando un aumento de 2%.

Los cinco miembros del Consejo de East Palo Alto votaron unánimemente a favor de colocar la Medida V en la boleta, y la medida ha obtenido el amplio apoyo de muchos grupos y líderes comunitarios.

Ahora estamos pidiendo a nuestros vecinos que voten y demuestren que TODOS merecemos un hogar. ¡Vote-mos sí por la propuesta V!

Carlos Romero
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EPAforV@gmail.com

Taking Another Look at the 2020 Census

Talking with Henrietta



Photo courtesy of Talking with Henrietta

From top left going clockwise, Ama Nyamekye, show host Henrietta J. Burroughs, Marianna Yamamoto and immediately below, An Le, Stephanie Kim, center and far left, David Tucker, Stephanie Kim and An Lin are shown on the set of the Talking with Henrietta show which was recorded via Zoom.

This show can be seen on Channel 30 on the Midpeninsula and on the Internet at the days and times on Sundays@5 p.m., Mondays@2 p.m., Tuesdays@8 p.m., Wednesdays@2 a.m., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., Thursdays@8 p.m., Fridays@3:00 a.m. and 12 p.m. and Saturday at 10 a.m. Talking with Henrietta also appears on Channel 27 on Wednesdays at 10:30 p.m.

Get more information about this show on the East Palo Alto Today website at www.epatoday.org/tv.html#census2020anotherlook

Is the English Language dying?

With Thee. English is not exclusively spoken at Denny's. Some writers get handed The Elements of Style to sharpen their writing. God knows I've been trying, I spent thousands of hours in libraries just to motivate myself to be a writer. Today apropos the dying English language....

There's an argument that says we're in America, so speak English please. I beg to differ, Americans. Location doesn't matter anymore. Nobody around here understands the English in the U.S. Constitution unless they've mastered constitutional law. The right to free speech protects us from not wanting to speak your English compared to Monty Python English. You could have a girl-

friend and a wife on the side because English won't matter.

What's your political agenda? Bernie Sanders can plagiarize The Communist Manifesto and make it sound like American Girl Scout cookies. Elizabeth Warren can dress like a librarian, speak like a sorority (from the Latin word Sororita) sister and appeal to the Harvard graduate. Joe Biden could say, "I'm a Democrat," but he looks like he's selling tombstones for the Baby Boomers. English anyone? I hear Mandarin, Portuguese, Samoan, Tongan, Spanish and French more than English. English, anyone? I had a manager, who had a degree in English from Stanford University and she could diagram a

sentence like a professional editor, but she managed people like an amateur welfare case worker. What a waste of space!

The court of law doesn't even trust an eyewitness to a deteriorating language. The English language is inadmissible and maybe that's why Latin is still used for nolo contendere. Too many derivatives. The word Abbot is from the Hebrew Abba which means father. Molested is from the Spanish word molestia, which means to disturb. What happens when English doesn't communicate anything to you anymore? Turn on your

Facebook page and do this? How about when you feel like ,but you still have to

Maybe you can start the preservation of the English linguistics department at your start up company. I find myself speaking less to people on the phone and texting more. My conversations are shorter and to the point, because I hate people, but I love Lucy Liu. Stupidity is so human that it's beyond language.

Euphemisms and technical talk overplay our earwaves. Cc'd you, selfie my cheating heart, like this and that or yada yada yada is heard more than kindly remove your mask you degenerate peasant. Text your Addy, or LOL at fabric softener is common. English like thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's pianist sounds like a Jimmy Swaggart sermon that nobody

requested. People say perfect too much and not enough please. Overused words like great, greatest and greater than have been used by President Trump like he's selling America's greatest hits soundtrack. Take this language to be your lawfully disposable scrap mixer.

Surprisingly, while English is now more widely spoken than any other language on earth, some hold the theory that English is dying and the more complex we get as humans, the more a new language will arise. Here we are. So, in the future, with all of the languages that one hears spoken, is it plausible to ask, "Why did English die?"

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Support the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media

The East Palo Alto Today newspaper is published by the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media, a nonprofit agency that was formed in January 2003 to create media outlets in East Palo Alto and provide the type of positive, relevant information about the community that is not easily found elsewhere. If you like what you see in East Palo Alto Today, then we ask that you enable us to serve the community better. You can do this by completing the partnership card below and mailing it with your tax deductible donation which will go directly to the center's media efforts. You can read more about the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media online at www.epamedia.org. You can also donate to the center at the EPA Today and the EPA Media websites. Please contact us if you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.



Name: _____ Phone # _____

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Yes, I am interested in becoming a partner with the East Palo Alto Center for Community Media. Please accept my tax-deductible donation as a personal contribution _____ or as a contribution on behalf of my organization _____.

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ \$500 _____ \$1,000 _____ \$2,000

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_____ Please check back with me about becoming a donor.

*The East Palo Alto Center for Community Media is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation - CA # 20-1415500

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Why We Count



We Count For What Matters

For every person left uncounted, California could lose up to \$1,000 per person each year for the next ten years. That's \$1,000 less per person per year for the next 10 years for health care services, parks, and roads that support our local communities. Exercise your right. Secure services and resources that matter to your community. Count today online at [MY2020CENSUS.GOV](https://my2020census.gov) or by phone at **844-330-2020**. Questions? Utilize the hotline's callback feature!



Support Black Families.

Count For Our Parents
And Our Children.
Count For Our Community.

Complete the Census form.
By Phone: 844-330-2020
Online: my2020census.gov



TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO TAKE THE U.S. CENSUS!

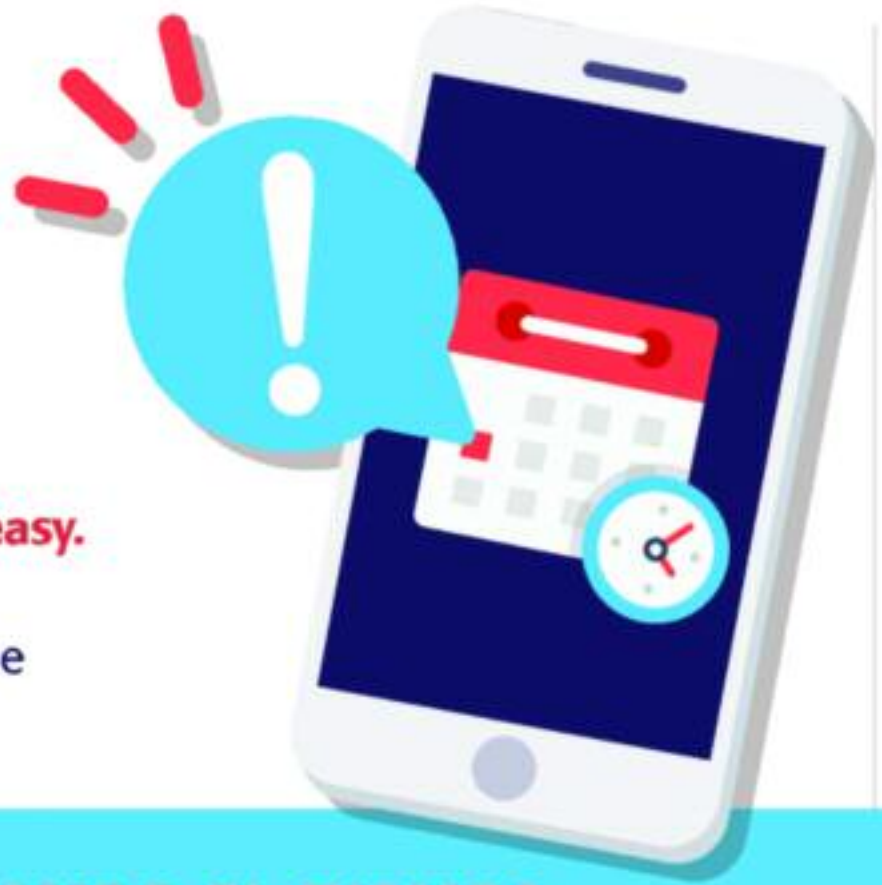
Don't miss the September 30 deadline. COMPLETE YOUR CENSUS TODAY!

Now, more than ever, your voice is needed. It's not too late for you to get counted and do your part for our community. **Every person counted means up to \$10,000 for our community for:**

- Schools
- Healthcare
- Emergency Services
- Housing

Completing the census is fast and easy.

You can get counted right now at **my2020census.gov** or over the phone at **1-844-330-2020**



¡SE ESTÁ ACABANDO EL TIEMPO PARA COMPLETAR EL CENSO 2020!

No pierda la fecha límite del 30 de septiembre. ¡COMPLETE EL CENSO HOY!

Ahora, más que nunca, se necesita su voz. No es demasiado tarde para hacerse contar y que se escuche su voz para su comunidad. **Cada persona adicional que sea contada significa hasta \$10,000 en fondos para:**

- Escuelas
- Atención médica
- Servicios de emergencia
- Viviendas

Responder al censo es rápido y fácil.

Puede ser contado en **my2020census.gov** o por teléfono al **1-844-468-2020**



By law, the census is confidential. Your responses are private and cannot be shared.

Por ley, el censo es confidencial. Sus respuestas son privadas y NO se pueden compartir.