



EPASD celebrates anniversary page 2



National youth scholar page 15



Hats off to change page 11

East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

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East Palo Alto to lose city manager

Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

It came out of the blue in the form of an exchange that lasted only one minute and 28 seconds. If one weren't paying close attention, it would have been easy to miss. But as



E.P.A. City Council Meeting
09/15/09
City Manager Alvin James

short as it was, the announcement was something of a bombshell, since it carries major repercussions for the City of East Palo Alto. It started out as a routine "Reports Out of Closed Session" presentation during the East Palo Alto City Council meeting on Sep-

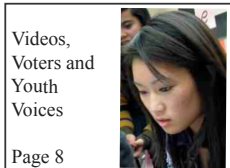
tember 15. In speaking about the second item on the report, East Palo Alto's Mayor Ruben Abrica stated that the City Manager Alvin James and the city council engaged in contract negotiations in a closed session prior to the night's meeting. Abrica said that

James' current employment contract expires this October 19, but James and the council did not reach an agreement during the negotiations. Abrica then invited James to make a statement. It was not clear whether James had thought continued on page 11

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Proposing University Center



The above picture shows an architectural drawing of the mixed use project proposed by Clarum Four Corners LLC for the intersection at Bay Road and University Avenue in East Palo Alto. See story with more details about the project below.

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

The City of East Palo Alto, Clarum Four Corners LLC, and Shuman

Partnership, which is doing business as Pal Market, are discussing a development agreement for the property at the southwest cor-

ner of Bay Road and University Avenue. Once the three parties sign the agreement, then Clarum Four Corners and the

Shuman Partnership can begin construction on University Center, a mixed use complex containing retail stores and housing.

The site for University Center is known as the Ravenswood Industrial Redevelopment Project Area for continued on page 16

A significant victory for tenants

By Henrietta J. Burroughs
East Palo Alto Today

Many people in the audience appeared to listen intently as Matthew Fremont and Chris Lund gave a special presentation to the East Palo Alto City Council to update the council on the housing issues involving the city's largest real estate management company, Page Mill Properties.

The usual buzz in the council chambers quieted when their presentations began. Fremont and Lund spoke separately, on behalf of the Fair Rent Coalition, a local East Palo Alto tenants organization.

They made their presentations at the council's September 15 meeting. Fremont, who was the first to speak, explained the legal judgment that

he, East Palo Alto resident Eric Oberle and the other plaintiffs won in their class action lawsuit against Page Mill. He characterized Page Mill as having engaged in a year of "scorched earth litigation."

Fremont said that the plaintiffs in the lawsuit brought a motion before the San Mateo County Superior Court arguing that the separate limited liability corporations (LLC's) that



Matthew Fremont addresses the East Palo Alto City Council.

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An anniversary celebration

By Nozipo Wobogo
East Palo Alto Today

With fragrant flowers and bright decorations in blue, the East Palo Alto Sanitary District (EPASD) celebrated its 70 anniversary under a huge patio cover that provided shelter from the hot sun.

Many residents and friends of the East Palo Alto community shared the festive occasion with family, friends and colleagues. East Palo Alto City Council member Peter Evans, Palo Alto City Council member Yoriko Kishimoto and other local officials joined the festivities.

All were treated to an afternoon of music, food and a variety of activities. There were even special activities for chil-



Photo courtesy of Isadore Evans II, of the Total Picture
Some of the local residents who attended are shown dancing at the event.

dren. The gathering gave attendees the opportunity to greet friends, engage in lively conversation and have fun in a relaxed atmosphere.

As guests arrived, amidst a décor by Rabiah Zahra, they

were invited to dine on food provided by a variety of caterers, including: Joann Wright, Three Brothers Tacos, Firehouse Grill and (D)Licious Cakes and Catering.

While they enjoyed the

food, guests were able to listen to the sounds of the Wobogo Jazz Ensemble, Equanimous Jones and later in the day, to the Los Altenos band.

All of the performing artists and artisans were from the East Palo Alto community or intimately associated with it. As the Los Altenos band played, EPASD board member Betzabe Yanez invited the audience to get up and dance. Some of the audience accepted her invitation.

Glenda Savage, the president of the EPASD Board of Directors, opened the program by welcoming everyone and introducing her colleagues Vice President Edrick Haggans, Secretary Joan Sykes-Miessi, and Directors

Betzabe Yanez and Goro Mitchell. Haggans shared some EPASD history with the audience.

Sykes-Miessi then presented Vulindlela Wobogo with a special plaque acknowledging him as the first district manager of the EPASD.



Photo courtesy of Isadore Evans II, of the Total Picture
Event attendees go through one of the food lines at the EPASD celebration

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Creating a downtown for East Palo Alto

By Skye Ontiveros
EPA Today Intern

East Palo Alto --as we know it--differs from a majority of the cities in the Bay. It's fairly young, it's fairly small, and it doesn't have a downtown. But over the next few years a tremendous change is coming to EPA.

In January of 2007 the City Counsel and Planning Commissions were in a meeting when the topic of building a



Annie Loya from YUCA shows a visitor to the fair posted information about East Palo Alto.

downtown in Ravenswood Business District (RBD) came up.

Since the idea, they managed to gather sponsors and supporters such as; Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Renaissance EPA, and even Harvard University to fuel the project. But what's so special and different about this project is the community controls a bulk of the planning process.

"We're trying to make this process as broad as possible, we want to represent all groups." Carlos Romero the Community Planning Facilitator states. And after two and a half years they finally put their plan in action.

On Saturday, August 29, Youth United Community Actions (YUCA) as well as Community Development Institute

(CDI) and other organizations gathered at the East Palo Alto City Hall to "kick off" the planning process.

The goal was to spread awareness and get residents excited about being involved. Approximately 130 residents visited City Hall to give ideas and get information.

"Today's the start of new ideas and it's important they get involved, because if they don't the city will take control" Goro Mitchell of YUCA says while Carlos Romero states "It's the beginning of the visionary process." Stationed activities, snacks, balloons, and an encouraging video were placed to welcome the days participants.

When a resident, Bennie Ranbin was asked why it's important to have a downtown in



A picture of some of the decorations at the Build EPA fair.

EPA, he answered "It builds jobs... People have a reason to hold their head up high, and be proud of where they came from. It's a positive change." While others are just happy about additional affordable housing. But the concerns of more traffic and the possibility of a jail in the area were still raised.

The plan is to build downtown to cover all of the RBD. (180 acres and 160 would be

developed) Small business and local entrepreneurs are welcomed and supported in this process, while large franchises such as Wal-Mart will be avoided.

The planning process will take place over the next six months with a series of meetings, which will give everybody a chance to share their ideas and make their voice heard.

Fair organizers said that there will be more Build EPA meetings so community residents will have other chances to make their views known.

All interested residents are encouraged to email: etb.epa@gmail.com with any questions they may have.

Skye Ontiveros is a college student who is an intern with East Palo Alto Today.

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Community News Briefs

An informational meeting about Page Mill Properties

East Palo Alto officials held an informational meeting with Wald Realty, the court appointed firm selected to manage the East Palo Alto properties owned by Page Mill Properties.

In addition to East Palo Alto Mayor Ruben Abrica and the city's Police Chief Ron Davis, the meeting included representatives from the Menlo Park Fire District, Wachovia and Wells Fargo bank.

In opening the group, Abrica said that the purpose of the meeting was to address health and safety issues pertaining to the East Palo Alto properties owned by Page Mill and to open communications with all



Photo courtesy of the Fair Rent Coalition Map shows Page Mill Properties' holdings in East Palo Alto.

of the parties now involved in the management and protection of those properties.

The current health and safety issues surrounding the apartment complexes arose because Page Mill Properties had for a time closed its management office at 5 Newell Court and had moved out all of its office equipment, apparently

abandoning the properties.

The informational meeting was also an introduction to the duties that Wald Realty had assumed with respect to Page Mill's properties.

Since Page Mill Properties missed several mortgage payments to Wells Fargo this past summer, the bank filed a legal complaint and got a temporary restraining order to prevent Page Mill from using whatever money it had received in rent payments for other purposes.

In response to Well Fargo's complaint, the court appointed Wald Realty to be the receiver in charge of Page Mill's East Palo Alto properties.

During the informational

meeting all of the parties present expressed their concerns about the apartment complexes and their interest in keeping the properties secure, safe and habitable places in which to live.

It was stated that Wald Realty would use the same management office at 5 Newell Court to manage Page Mill's properties and would maintain the same employees who worked for Page Mill.

The informational meeting answered some questions but left others unanswered. One key question is: What will happen to the 12 lawsuits Page Mill Properties brought against the City of East Palo Alto?

Another question remaining: Is Page Mill Properties going into foreclosure? While the

company has not declared foreclosure yet, some think that Page Mill might be going in that direction. So, there might be more informational meetings to come.

Good news for local bus riders

Those in the community who rely upon SamTrans for transportation might feel a sense of relieve in knowing that the proposed route reductions and cutbacks the transportation agency adopted will not have a severe impact on local bus riders.

At the September 15 East Palo Alto City Council meeting, Council member Carlos Romero reported that the bus

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The SiHLE Project - fighting HIV/AIDS

Dr. Amie Ashcraft
EPA Today Contributor

Every year thousands of African American women and girls are diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African-American women account for 66% of estimated AIDS cases among women aged 13 and older who were diagnosed in 2005, but only 12% of the U.S. population of women.

Most of these women are infected by their heterosexual male partners. Therefore, it is extremely important to reduce risky sexual behavior in order to decrease the chances of contracting the disease.

There is a new HIV preven-

tion intervention for African American girls targeted at reducing risky sexual behavior called SiHLE (pronounced "SEE-lay").

SiHLE stands for Sistas In-forming, Healing, Living, and Empowering, and is designed girls ages 14-18. It is a culturally competent program that emphasizes ethnic and gender pride, and enhances awareness of HIV risk reduction strategies such as abstaining from sex, using condoms consistently, and having fewer sexual partners. SiHLE was originally designed to be held in a group setting.

The sessions included behavioral skills practice, group discussions, lectures, role-playing, and take-home



Photo courtesy of Sociometrics Two young women stand near the Sociometrics office in Los Altos.

exercises. SiHLE has proven successful at helping girls reduce their risky sexual behavior.

Recently, Sociometrics Corporation in Los Altos created a multimedia, computer version of SiHLE. The new version is taken on the computer in two 40 minute sessions and girls can take it by themselves. Like

the original group version, the computer version of SiHLE encourages girls to explore their personal values and how they impact behavior, teaches them to communicate their needs and desires effectively, instructs them on how to ask their partner to use condoms, and demonstrates proper condom use.

We are conducting a research study to see just how well the computer version of SiHLE works to reduce African American girls' risky sexual behavior, and we need girls to participate in what is called an outcome study.

An outcome study is generally conducted in order to determine whether a program such as SiHLE is effective in

changing knowledge, attitudes and behaviors.

The study is currently taking place, and girls participating in it will earn \$100 in Target gift cards. Girls must be African American, ages 14-18, and have been sexually active at least once in order to participate.

For more information on SiHLE or to sign up to participate, please contact Dr. Amie Ashcraft, the project director, at ashcraft@socio.com or call 650-949-3282, ext. 208.

Dr. Amie Ashcraft, Ph.D., M.P.H. is the senior research associate at the Sociometrics Corporation which is located at 170 State Street, Suite 260 in Los Altos, CA

City, County & State Government Meetings & Contacts

East Palo Alto City Council

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

East Palo Alto City Council Members

Ruben Abrica - Mayor
(650) 321-4001

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

A. Peter Evans
(650) 321-1009

Carlos Romero
(650)328-4363

Laura Martinez
(650)714-5337

East Palo Alto Boards, Commissions, Committees

Planning Commission
Second and Fourth Monday

Rent Stabilization Board
Second and Fourth
Wednesday

Public Works & Transportation Commission
First and Third Wednesday

Youth Advisory Committee
First Thursday of each month

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

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

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

Menlo Park City Council Members

Heyward Robinson Mayor
(650) 208-1512

Richard Cline Vice Mayor
(650) 228-5166

John C. Boyle
(650)906-7163

Kelly J. Fergusson
(650) 327-4533

Andrew M. Cohen
(650)327-5332

Menlo Park Boards, Commissions, Committees

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

San Mateo County Bd. of Supervisors

Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, Fourth District

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

Regular & Consent Agenda Items.

State Officials

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

Assembly Member Ira Ruskin

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

Senator Joseph S. Simitian

District Address
160 Town & Country Village
Palo Alto, CA 94301
(650) 688-6384

Grandparents caring for grandchildren

By Debbie Armstrong
East Palo Alto Today

A grandparent's love and support has a positive impact on children, particularly in the early years of a child's life. According to the Foundation for Grandparenting, when kids develop a strong bond with their grandparents, they feel more stable and even do better in school.

Researchers have also found that these relationships between older and younger

generations have long-term benefits for grandparents and grandchildren.

There are at least 56 million grandparents in the country, with the U.S. Census Bureau reporting that more than 4.5 million children live with their grandparents.

In honor of National Grandparents Day which took place on September 13, First 5 San Mateo County recognizes the important role grandparents play in the lives of young children. Below are helpful tips on

how grandparents can support their grandchildren in their

Pass on Traditions

Sharing stories helps develop a child's mental, verbal and communication skills.

Share family stories with grandchildren. Remember, children love to hear what their parents were like as kids!

Provide kids with wisdom and guidance – grandma and grandpa can be great role models.

Describe the "good old

days" in ways that help kids understand their own life and the world around them.

Move and Groove

Healthy eating and exercise are important. A grandparent can help a child develop a healthy lifestyle even at a very young age.

Keep physically fit together – indoors and outdoors – by stretching, playing hide-and-go-seek, dancing or walking around the neighborhood.

Limit a child's time watch-

ing television, on the computer or playing videogames so they can have a more active lifestyle.

Pass the peas – or oranges, apples and broccoli! Help your grandchildren develop healthy eating habits by encouraging them to eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables every day.

Create Teachable Moments

Reading to children and playing creative games at an

continued on page 8

All male fair serves worthy purpose

By Marcus Turner
East Palo Alto Today Contributor

For the fourth year a dedicated group of concerned people, from some of the most stellar organizations in East Palo Alto and the County of San Mateo, gathered together at the Martin Luther King Park on Daisy Lane in East Palo Alto for a much needed effort. They were participating in the All Male Fair.

The idea for the All Male Fair was birthed in June 2005 at the Open Door Church of God in Christ which is located at 1108 O'Connor St in East Palo Alto.

The fair has become an annual outreach for the male population in East Palo Alto. The event mostly caters to men who might be: in rehabilitation for drug and or alcohol abuse, on parole or probation, of low income or out of work.

The purpose of the All Male Fair is to improve the lifestyle of the male population in East Palo Alto by putting the men in



Victor Lopez of El Concilio assists a passerby at the fair.

contact with organizations that can provide them with resources and services to enable them to improve their lives.

Organizations and services that were represented at the fair include: The African American Community Health Advisory Committee, the Human Service Agency Family Services & Fatherhood Collaborative, the Human Service Agency Workforce Development, One East Palo Alto, Quest, the San Mateo County HIV Van, the San Mateo County Library, the Sponsored Employment Program, and El Concilio.

This year, thanks to

Pamela Biltz from the San Mateo County Library, fun-filled activities were added to the event and there were games and prizes. Such activities were not present during the fairs that took place in previous years.

The reason for trying this approach this time was because as Pamela Biltz and Gary Beasley, from the Human Service Agency Family Services & Fatherhood Collaborative, individually said, "This is a hard audience to reach."

But, in acknowledging the fact that it is difficult to reach certain populations in the city, Dr. Faye McNair-



Two female volunteers at the All Male Fair pass out information to a mother and her two children.

Knox from One East Palo Alto said quite well a year ago, "We need this in East Palo Alto."

Marcus Turner is a volunteer for several organizations in the East Palo Alto community.

Save your teeth, avoid dental costs and discomfort

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

An apple a day may help keep some doctors away, but unfortunately not the dentist.

Dentistry is one field of medicine whereby prevention can eliminate needless costs, and discomfort associated with dental disease and treatment.

Although tooth decay is

more commonly caused by poor diet and poor hygiene, less is known about the adverse effects of stomach acid in otherwise healthy people and in those with an acid reflux disease called GERD.

GERD has been mainly known for causing heartburn, lung and esophageal problems until recently.

Studies such as those by the Medical College of Wisconsin now suggest that gas-

tric acid reflux and regurgitation can result in eroded, carious teeth and gum disease, as well as sinus infections.

Since most damage by the stomach acid appears to occur at night when less gravity, swallowing, and protective neutralizing salivary secretions are available, many suffers go without symptoms.

Upon a dental exam the location and pattern of decay and erosion along with bad

breath can suggest GERD, which will help the physician in the diagnoses so that treatment can be initiated.

Without medical attention, excessive stomach acid may continue to cause erosions of the teeth, possibly leading to unnecessary tooth loss, as well as adversely affecting one's overall health.

Good hygiene using a baking soda toothpaste, restricting sugar in the diet, drinking

more water, and using a strong fluoride application daily after brushing are helpful while undergoing medical therapy for GERD.

Work with a dentist and physician to keep your body healthy.

Dr. Virginia P. Humphrey, II is a doctor of dental surgery (DDS). She maintains a dental office at the Ravenswood Shopping Center. You can get more information about her from her ad below.

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Other hours by appointment



POLICE & RACE RELATIONS

“THE NEW DIALOGUE”



Chief Ronald L. Davis

The controversy surrounding the recent arrest of Harvard University Professor Henry Louis Gates by the Cambridge Police Department underscores the complex, emotional, and challenging nature of police and race relations.

When evaluating an incident of this nature we must avoid the tendency to fall into one of two divergent views: 1) simply categorize all officers as being racists if they stop a person of color, or 2) ignore our country's troubling history of police abuse in communities of color and label minorities as being overly sensitive if they deem certain police actions as unreasonable. Both perspectives are dangerous oversimplifications of the issue that can only lead to further mistrust of the police and greater racial divide in our communities.

The Gates' incident revealed the divide that remains with regards to race relations despite the significant advances made over the past 30 years and the election of President Obama. In many ways, this incident removed the false sense of racial harmony that followed the historic election. Although most Americans viewed the election of a black President as significant progress in race relations – defining what this progress represents is where the views differ.

For many non-minorities, the election signaled the end to the lingering effects of slavery, segregation and our troubled history with regards to police and race relations in this country. In other words, if we have a black president why do minorities still view the Gates' arrest (and other similar issues) through a race-based lens?

For many minorities, however, the election represented a different progress – it increased their entitlement to the American dream, lowered their level of tolerance with regards to racial discrimination, and increased their outrage with police abuse of people of color. In other words, if we

have a black president why am I still being stopped and abused by the police?

For some, these differing views were masked by the adulation of the election until the Gates' incident sent them on a collision course and sparked an old debate centered on the question of who's right, who's wrong.

To truly improve police and race relations we must end the old debate and engage in a “new dialogue” that transcends that question. By its nature, the answer to who's right suggests that someone must be wrong. Thus, the debate is limited to legality and fails to address the issue of legitimacy for which there is a distinct difference. Legality simply requires the police action to comply with existing law. Legitimacy, however, requires that action meet a higher standard and achieve public approval.

Sir Robert Peel, founder of the first modern-day police force in 1829, states: “The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.” This is not to suggest that the police condone illegal behavior. Nor does it suggest that policing strategies be

based on public opinion. Sir Robert Peel also stated, “Police seek and preserve public favour not by catering to public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.”

Peel's comments suggest that, in a democracy, the means of crime control are as important as the end. If the means (the how) are disparate and result in inequities, whether intentional or not, the police will lose their legitimacy despite the legality of the actions or the level of success. In other words, achieving crime reduction provides little solace to communities; especially those of color, that feel more victimized by the means used to achieve the reductions than the actual crimes.

Police officers often struggle with this concept; not because they are insensitive to their communities. To the contrary, most officers want to serve their communities and make them safe. That is why they chose the profession. Officers struggle because the concept of legitimacy appears to defy logic: Why would a community that is adversely affected by crime and violence view legal police actions that successfully reduce crime and

violence negatively?

The answer is simple – history. Our history of negative police and race relations has created generational mistrust of the police; especially in communities of color. Stories of police abuse are handed down generation to generation, validated by personal experiences and high-profile incidents such as the recent Oscar Grant shooting caught on videotape.

To remove this mistrust, the police must understand this history, its' impact on minority communities, and factor the concept of legitimacy into the way service is provided. Using this framework allows the police and the community to engage in a new dialogue about race relations and ask a different question: How do we enforce the law impartially while achieving legitimacy? The answer to this question not only addresses police and race relations; it is the basis for “advanced” community policing and effective crime-fighting strategies.

History has proven that the police can have a powerful impact on race relations. If police actions can spark race riots

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City holds special gun buy-back event

By Nozipo Wobogo
East Palo Alto Today

East Palo Alto's one-day “Gun Buy-Back” event on Saturday, September 26, netted the East Palo Alto Police Department more than forty guns in four hours.

One gun owner Bruce Clark, who participated in the buy-back program said, “This feels great. I wanted to get rid of the two guns I owned, but did not know what to do or who to see. I came to use the ATM and noticed that this was going on by accident. It was so convenient,” said Clark who turned in two guns.

The idea for the buy-back event took root several months



A picture of some of the more than 40 guns that were turned in in East Palo Alto.

ago when a twelve-year old child accidentally shot a two-year-old toddler in East Palo Alto. This shooting incident was the direct impetus for the “Gun Buy-Back” program and caused several in the city to take action.

Vice-Mayor David Woods was one of those who decided

that something needed to be done. Woods initiated Saturday's gun buying event in conjunction with the East Palo Alto Police Department.

In referring to the shooting of the toddler, East Palo Alto Police Chief Ronald Davis said, “This and other shootings underscores the proliferation of guns in the community.”

To further illustrate the problem, two gun murders took place within three months of each other earlier this year on Hunter Street, which is not far from the gun buy-back event.

In speaking about the success of Saturday's event, East Palo Alto Police Captain John Chalmers said, “A woman

whose father was a retired police officer told us that when her father died, she no longer wanted his guns in the house so she bought them here.”

Having served on the East Palo Alto Police Department for twenty-one years, Captain Chalmers said that he has



Some of the rifles collected during the East Palo Alto Police Department “Gun Buy-Back” event.

seen the damage wrought by guns.

Vickie Porter, who works for the city and was present at the event, said she liked the program. Porter said “It's good because it gets some of the guns off the street.” Another city employee said, “It's great that the community sees that we care and we're willing to do something about it.”

Those turning in guns received gift packages that included like a \$50 American Express cash card and a \$100 gift certificate which was donated by Hewlett Packard. The first 75 people who turned in guns received two tickets to a San Jose Sharks game.

Interesting and useful ideas to consider

By Michael Uhila
East Palo Alto Today

East Palo Alto was incorporated in 1983.

University Avenue belongs to the State of California

The East Palo Alto Municipal Building belongs to the County of San Mateo

Depending on where you stand you can cross the San Francisquito creek and be in

Palo Alto or East Palo Alto.

All of East Palo Alto waste water goes to the Palo Alto waste water treatment 2501 Embarcadero Way in Palo Alto, CA before going to the Bay.

Besides voting you MIGHT want to try the following things to make East Palo Alto a better place for YOU

1. Research
2. Question any and all au-

- thority
3. Learn and know the laws
4. Helping others is helping yourself
5. Adjust to the changes that occur
6. Try learning about other people's cultures.

Michael Uhila is an East Palo Alto resident who is a regular contributor to East Palo Alto Today.



Photo courtesy of Mike Alexander
A picture of the Pope/Chaucer Bridge over San Francisquito Creek.

From the Editor's Desk

Let us end all forms of violence

For the past few years, many have been mobilizing others in the community to stop the violence. These efforts have led to the Peace March, the Anti-Gang Task Force, the Sponsored Employment Program, the Youth Summit and other efforts designed to promote peace and build community. All that has been done along these lines to stop the physical violence that is taking place is commendable.



Henrietta J. Burroughs

But there is another type of violence that is being committed that we need to stop. It comes in the form of verbal abuse. One finds it taking place in private conversations and in public meetings. It takes the form of put downs, of one-upmanship, of name calling and of personal ridicule. Many of us know people who consistently engage in this type of behavior.

Organizations with ethical codes of conduct have taken an important step in having guidelines that demand that employees and volunteers show each other common courtesy and respect.

People who feel good about themselves don't really feel the need to go out of their way to show other people up, put them down, hold them up to ridicule or try to denigrate them in various ways.

Verbal abuse can damage the soul and the psyche just as much as physical violence can damage the body. Verbal abuse leads to emotional trauma just as physical violence leads to bodily injury.

Physical violence leaves marks on the body. Verbal violence leaves marks that might not be obvious. But the scars resulting from the emotional trauma that verbal abuse causes can be just as real as physical scars. They can also last a lifetime.

People who subject others to public ridicule do not show that they are better, wiser, more intelligent or stronger than the person whom they are holding up to ridicule.

They are showing that they are as out of control as the person who picks up a gun or a knife and uses it to hurt another human being. People who feel good about

themselves don't have to berate other people to build themselves up.

Just as people who have been abused are more likely to abuse others, people who go after others with cutting remarks only reveal their own pain or their fear of being wounded themselves. Could it be that they are demonstrating their own insecurity and feelings of weakness? Are they acting out of their own fears?

When someone does this constantly, the question becomes, "What are they hiding about themselves that makes them try to deflect attention onto someone else?"

Feeling good about oneself is an inside job that reflects outward. If you feel good about yourself, then this feeling of goodness radiates to other people -- in the form of openness, kindness, warmth, tolerance, helpfulness and understanding.

The Barbara Mouton Multicultural Wellness Center, which opened in East Palo Alto in June, was established as a center for healing with the recognition that being emotionally and mentally healthy is as important as being physically fit.

Since violence begets violence and one form of violence can easily lead to another form of violence, we must be inclusive when we call for an end to the violence taking place in the community.

It's time that we also demand an end to the verbal violence we see taking place. We can start with ourselves. We must begin to accept ourselves with all of our varying hues and outward differences. When we respect and value ourselves, we can more easily respect and value others.

By daily showing that we appreciate and value ourselves and each other, we can move forward to become the best that we can be.

Leading by example, we can encourage the best of one another. By acting in this way, we all can set a positive standard for others. This is truly a way to build a community.



Photo courtesy of Art Lim

The Equanimous Jones Quartet is shown above performing in East Palo Alto at the festivities that were held on August 29 to mark the East Palo Alto Sanitary District's seventieth anniversary celebration. See story on page 2 of this issue.

Letters in East Palo Alto Today

School Text Books found in dumpster

Dear Editor

In response to the article [written by Marcia Perez about finding new school district textbooks thrown in the dumpster], the brand new curriculum she found would not be used in the classroom for instruction.

The books she found were not current curriculum that is approved by the State Board of Education and that is considered curriculum that meets an essential program component for schools that are in program improvement.

At the site level, every teacher and staff member was given the opportunity to peruse through the portable to pick up whatever they found that would enhance the classroom environment and make instruction more effective.

Our site's after school program coordinator collected approximately 50 books that made up class sets of Harry Potter novels. There were other books found that will be incorporated into the ASP.

Additionally, the maintenance director also explained to me that whatever the site

does not keep, materials will be distributed to other sites (ie. desks and chairs).

If there are other clarifying questions I can respond to, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,
Gina Sudaria
Ravenswood City School District

[Editor's note: Readers can read Marcia Perez' original article A high hidden cost to pay for inefficiency in East Palo Alto Today online at <http://www.epatoday.org/current.html>. Her article is on page 8.]

Passage of the Right to Repair Act

Dear Editor

We often hear members of Congress talk about the challenges facing small businesses and the need to help them compete. Passage of the Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act (HR 2057) is a chance for Congress to demonstrate their commitment to small businesses throughout the country.

The Right to Repair Act simply requires that vehicle man-

ufacturers provide car owners and their trusted neighborhood repair shops with equitable access to accurate service and repair information. Allowing these small businesses to compete on a level playing field will ensure the long term survival of a competitive automotive repair industry.

Many of our members have small businesses that have been in their family for generations. They are not seeking an unfair advantage, nor are they looking for access to the proprietary information protected by the bill. Instead, they are asking Congress to ensure that they are able to compete fairly now and in the future.

We encourage all vehicle owners to visit www.righttorepair.org to send a letter to their congressional representatives urging them to support passage of the Right to Repair Act.

Sincerely,
Paul Fiore
Executive Vice President
Service Station Dealers of
America and Allied Trades
(SSDA-AT)
paulf@ssda-at.org

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.

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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.

Examining racially biased policing

Bernardo Huerta
EPA Today Contributor

As a member of the African American Leadership Summit and the Coalition For Change, a group established to plan and implement follow up actions to the November 9, 2008 march/rally to end racial profiling by the Palo Alto Police Department, I was asked by Dr. Faye McNair-Knox to meet with the Palo Alto Police Department for its study, "A Comprehensive Agency Program for Producing Fair and Impartial Policy," which took place May 20, 21 and 22 at the Crowne Plaza Cabaña Hotel in Palo Alto.



Bernardo Huerta

In attendance were other agencies such as the San Francisco Police Department, the San Jose Police Department, the East Palo Alto Police Department, the U.S. Department of Justice and Palo Alto community members. The goal of the conference was to allow the local and federal agencies to continue working on their racially biased policing policies.

The presenter of this vast information in social ecology was Dr. Lorie Fridell, an expert on racial profiling who has consulted nationwide. Fridell is the former director of research at the Police Executive Research Forum and an associate professor in the Department of Criminology at South Florida.

The focus of the study was in-depth on elements to consider for implementing a comprehensive response policy which include: policies prohibiting racially biased policing, police recruitment and hiring, training, leadership/supervision and accountability, outreach to diverse communi-

ties, assessing institutional practices/priorities and measurements.

By far the San Francisco Police Department had more preparation with a commissioner who knew the sociological issues verbatim, who had daily email records with all arrest information on 1,100 participating residents, showed Google maps; presented records of what the police had done to create dialogue to ease tensions at stops and presented a racially balanced group of specialized supervisors.

Our East Palo Alto Police Department has Police Chief Ron Davis who has been a

lecturer on the subject of police profiling. He has high contact with community based organizations in the city and he is highly aware of the distrust that community residents have in the police. After all, throughout this country's history, the police have been the enforcers of Jim Crow Laws in the South.

The EPA Police Department is working on its own racial profiling policy. Since East Palo Alto is a city with people of color with a chief of police of color who is an expert and lecturer on this subject,

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Making sense/cents for the city

R.B. Jones
EPA Today Contributor

There are several ways a city can be recognized as a "beautiful" city. It must at least offer food, clothing, livable shelter, public safety, street improvements, and youth programs.

In order for citizens to qualify their city as a "beautiful," "viable," and "the place to live city," it must provide the basic qualities of life. However, none of these can be provided without a steady source of income. How leadership utilizes its assets and authority is key.

The city of East Palo Alto like all other cities has two (2) ways of recognizing income. Let's define and examine these two (2) ways:

*Property tax- The nation and the entire world economy has been adversely affected

by the devaluing of homes/property. East Palo Alto is probably still the leader in foreclosed property, meaning very little or no taxes are being paid or collected. Our city is hell bent on providing more "low income" and more "below market rate" housing, when housing already meets this criteria. We need to put more energy into supporting businesses that generate taxes, rather than continuing to build housing that attracts people who we can not protect and provide for.

*Retail sales tax- This is the real solution to the success of my community. When the Ravenswood 101 shopping center was envisioned the plan was to house businesses that would bring dollars INTO the community. Yes, the residue effect would be for those of us in the community



R.B. Jones

to have access to goods and services, but the overall more important goals were to create a TAX base by selling goods and services that are taxable, along with some job opportunities.

According to the original vision of the many people in this community and the many hours spent in meetings to plan the City's future and according to the current city staff, our city council/planning commission is within days of making the most devastating decision in the City's history.

The City is poised and

ready to allow a grocery store (NOT A SUPERMARKET) to come into our regional retail shopping center. In their public staff report, the City's staff stated in clear terms that they were not prepared to make such a recommendation and would leave the decision up to the council.

The staff proved that because grocery stores produce little or NO TAXES it would not be in the City's best interest to allow a grocery store in that center. They go on to state that there would be NO synergy between a grocery store and the rest of the businesses in the shopping center, meaning that the possibility of sharing customers is none or nil. As a matter of fact, the relationship between a grocery store and the existing businesses would be negative in most instances.

This grocery store would

compete with California Bank and Trust in that it has check cashing, money wires, and money transfer capability. Apart from that, this grocery store would compete with Taco Bell, McDonalds, Togos, Jamba Juice, and Firehouse Bar and Grill because it will include an extensive hot food (in house or to go) service and parking would be the issue for the entire center. Staff says that this grocery store would employ 40-45 people and now the store says that they will employ between 175-225 people and in their presentation to the Planning Commission, it appears the pay will be between 7 and 10 dollars per hour, therefore not empowering any of the employees. As well, according to the largest union in the northern California area that deals with grocery

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We need to ask if the world has gone mad

Rebecca Matthews
EPA Today Contributor
A view on Congressman Ted Wilson & others

A few weeks ago, we read about Congressman Joe Wilson, Serena Williams, and Kanye West in the news along with stories about just everyday people stabbing, shootings and snatching kids off the streets.

What happened to: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you?" Does anyone have any CORE VALUES anymore?

Does anyone have any sense of what is right and what is wrong?



Rebecca Matthews

OK I have to say Serena must have been harassed somewhat by the judge because she called a foul and it was clear there was no foul on Serena. This may or may not have been her first run-in with that particular judge, it seemed to be more to the story than

what we saw. Serena has had a stellar track record for decency and good manners.

Kanye West must have had too much Hennessy on the red carpet. I don't know what he was thinking.

But Congressman Joe Wilson should have known better than to call President Obama a liar when he was speaking to Congress. No where in history have we seen such disrespect for the office of the President of the United States. Wilson should be removed from office, because his track record is somewhat cloudy. Even former President Carter, who is a southerner also, says he thinks Wilson is racist. He's

not racist because he didn't stand with President Obama on issues, its because 1) He voted to keep the confederate flag waving; 2) he came out strongly against Strom Thurman's daughter saying he was not her father. Joy Bahar of ABC TV's The View, said, "If it looks like a duck, and acts like a duck..." This despicable behavior while the President of the United States is speaking is definitely deserving of a reprimand.

Thank God Congress did the right thing.

"With the official sharp rebuke by the full House ... (240-179), Congress has now

weighed in with its sanctions against Joe Wilson. Congratulations to the seven Republicans who had the courage and integrity to cross party lines and do the right thing by voting "aye" on the resolution." -- Peter Balbus (FB)

But do we want people in office that are racist? People who draw lines between the haves and the have nots? Can they make fair decisions about what is right and just for the people in general? What are things coming to and what do we want for our world?

Rebecca Matthews is an East Palo Alto resident and one of East Palo Alto Today's original supporters.