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# East Palo Alto Today

Providing news that is relevant, informative and critical



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East Palo Alto and Belle Haven

Spring 2012

Vol. 6 No.28

## Residents demand benefits from Facebook

By Henrietta J. Burroughs  
East Palo Alto Today

Sixty community residents held an evening meeting with representatives from Facebook to discuss the company's plans for interacting positively within the

East Palo Alto and Belle Haven communities.

The evening event was the culmination of a series of joint meetings the residents of the two cities have held. In their previous meetings, the residents focused on the potential impact that the

Facebook campus might have on the area and the benefits that could be derived from the company's presence in the community.

Facebook captured the attention of local residents and city officials in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park when the company an-

nounced that it would move into its current Menlo Park location at 1601 Willow Road. The move took place six months ago.

During this particular community meeting to discuss Facebook's impact, the focus was on how to access job training, em-



Photo shows several residents who attended the community meeting

### Inside News



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## Best Buy is leaving EPA



Photo by Henrietta J. Burroughs

Best Buy, Inc. announced in April that it will close more than 40 stores throughout the U.S. The Best Buy store in the Ravenswood 101 Shopping Center in East Palo Alto is one of the stores that is slated to close. The official closing date is date is May 12, 2012.

ployment opportunities and the grant money that the company had set aside to benefit community nonprofits.

In speaking of Facebook's relationship to both East Palo Alto and Belle Haven, local resident Dorsey Nunn told the group that there should be "at the core of the social networking system, a sense of social justice."

"I need to say, I'm not trying to resource my nonprofit, I'm not trying to turn a dollar on Facebook. The only thing that I'm trying to acquire is the ability for the community to access greater services....If this is one of those unique minutes, one of those unique moments, ...[then] this conversation is a real important conversation," Nunn said.

The gathering, which was held at the Onetta Harris Community Center on April 18, came one day after a Menlo Park City Council meeting in which city of-

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## Lawsuit filed by the Estate of Sorieli Torres

By Traci Moore  
East Palo Alto Today

The City of East Palo Alto denied the claim that was filed against the city by the family of Sorieli Torres. On March 2, 2012, the family of Sorieli Torres filed a claim against the City of East Palo Alto for what the family feels was

Sorieli's "wrongful death."

Sorieli was the seven year old who was struck and killed at Bay Road and Gloria Way on September 28, 2011, as she walked to school with her mother and her two younger sisters.

The claim against the city was filed on behalf of Sorieli's parents, Guadalupe Zamora Medina

and Gabriel Torres Aguilar, by attorneys Arnold Casillas and Daniel W. Gillette, who represent the law firm of Gregory W. Moreno & Associates in Montebello, California.

The claim was filed against the city because the claimants charged that the city "designed, constructed, owned, operated,

controlled or maintained the roadway... at and near the intersection of Bay Road and Gloria Way... and was responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the roadway..."

The lawsuit noted that the city knew about the danger posed to

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Teaching Music in the schools

page 12



## Creating East Palo Alto's destiny

By Alba Sanchez  
East Palo Alto Today

East Palo Alto youth want their voices to be heard. They want EPA residents and the city's leaders to realize that they have learned about the past of their city, they know the present and they

are willing to work hard to build a better future.

East Palo Alto City Hall was packed with people attending the presentation of East Palo Alto: Creating our Destiny, a music video and documentary series about the complexity of combining economic development, commu-

nity identity and public space in the City of East Palo Alto. Everything was done to encourage people to get involved in their community.

Youth from the History through Hip Hop (HHH) program of The Mural Music and Arts Project (MMAP) along with students of the Urban Studies and Rebooting

History from Stanford University have been working together to make the videos that were shown during the event. The students conceptualized and filmed the videos, composed the soundtrack, wrote the lyrics and performed in

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### Inside

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- Youth News

# EPA welcomes delegation from Beijing China

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

A small delegation from the Republic of China's Ministry of Civil Affairs visited East Palo Alto to obtain information about the city's rent stabilization ordinance. The delegation was sponsored by the United States-China Exchange Council (USCEC), a Bay Area nonprofit which supports the idea that the U. S and China share a common objective of peace, cooperation and friendship.

Through the support of the USCEC, 23 ministers from Beijing and several of its nearby provinces met with East Palo Alto's Vice Mayor Ruben Abrica, Council member Carlos Romero, City Manager ML Gordon, Interim City Manager Ron

Davis, City Attorney Kathleen Kane and members of the City's Rent Stabilization Board, which included Rent Stabilization Program Administrator Carol Lamont, the board's Chairperson Midge Dorn and board member William Webster.

The ministers, who represented housing and social service departments in China, visited East Palo Alto to get ideas that they could use in dealing with low incomes residents in China, who needed various social services in their communities.

During their two-hour afternoon meeting, which was held on February 21 in the East Palo Alto City Council chambers, the officials heard Abrica share his recollections about the events that lead up to the 1984 election, in which the majority of East



East Palo Alto's Vice Mayor, Ruben Abrica, third from the left, is joined by Rent Stabilization Program Administrator Carol Lamont, fifth from left and City Council member Carlos Romero. They are shown with several members of the delegation of ministers.

Palo Alto's voters approved the Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Law.

He spoke about the many problems East Palo Alto's tenants faced and "some of the abuses that were perpetrated by some managers and landlords," which led to the enactment of the new law.

Following Abrica, Webster discussed some of the problems that resulted after Page Mill Properties made its huge purchase of rental properties on the West side of East Palo Alto and immediately raised rents and started the wholesale eviction of many tenants.

Romero then told how the city adopted and East Palo Alto voters approved a new and

stronger ordinance that was designed to protect the city's tenants and prevent further evictions.

Kane described some of the key elements of the new ordinance and the hearing process that is available to tenants and landlords in case of rental disputes. He presentation discussed the rent controls, eviction protections and the penalties that the ordinance provides.

Dorn talked about the structure of the Rent Board, which includes tenants, landlords and homeowners; how the board develops regulations to implement the ordinance, recommends budgets to the city council for the program, ap-

proves annual registration fees for landlords, holds hearings and ties action to gain compliance and undertakes community programs to educate city residents about the rent ordinance.

As the last presenter, Lamont reported on the results of the enforcement of the ordinance; namely, the registration

fees paid, the certificates issued, the petitions that have been filed seeking rent reductions, rebates for rent overcharges and how the hearing process is conducted.

At the end of the presentations, members of the Chinese delegation asked questions of the presenters and praised the work of the Rent Stabilization Board. One delegate even promised that the delegation would "study more of East Palo Alto's good practices when they returned to China."

After the meeting which included simultaneous translations into Chinese, there was an exchange of gifts between East Palo Alto officials and the Chinese delegation.



Photos by Henrietta J. Burroughs

Members of the delegation are shown listening to the presentations that were made during their visit to East Palo Alto.

# East Palo Alto has an acting police chief

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

The appointment of East Palo Alto Police Chief Ron Davis as the city's interim city manager left a major question for city residents. Many of them asked, "If Davis is the interim city manager, then who will head the East Palo Alto Police Department?"

Now that question has been answered. On March 5, the day he officially started in his

new position as interim city manager, Davis announced that he had selected Federico Rocha, who was a captain in the East Palo Alto Police Department, as East Palo Alto's Acting Police Chief. Rocha first came to the community's attention when he became the director of the East Palo Alto Operation Ceasefire program, an anti-violence program that was based on a national program, which is credited with achieving a 50% reduction in

crime involved shootings.

Before his recent appointment as the city's Acting Police Chief, Rocha was the Interim-Captain in charge of the East Palo Alto Police Department's Investigations and Operations Divisions. Rocha has had a distinguished career that included two tours of duty in Vietnam. His service in Vietnam earned him a Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

Later, he received the Medal of Valor and the Medal of Merit

for his service in the Oakland Police Department. In 2003 Rocha was nominated by President George W. Bush to serve as the United States Marshal for Northern California. His nomination was unanimously confirmed by the United States Senate. He served in this position for seven years until he retired from federal service in 2010.



**Federico Rocha**  
Acting Police Chief

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**(650) 248 - 0119**  
**J. Samuel Díaz**  
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*Treasured Memories*  
Create a Memorable Legacy  
for your Family Member or Friend

Creating a remembrance or memory page on the East Palo Alto Today website allows you, your friends and your family members to leave a memorable legacy in honor of a deceased friend or family member. To see the Treasured Memories section on the EPA Today website, go online to:

[www.epatoday.org/treasured\\_memories/index.html](http://www.epatoday.org/treasured_memories/index.html)

# Community News Briefs

## Take Back event has a big yield

Nearly 40 residents from throughout the area visited the booth the East Palo Alto Police Department set up this past Saturday to bring their unused medications.



Palo Alto resident Eleni Coltos brings her unwanted medications to the Take Back event.

The collection was part of the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration's national Take Back event on Saturday, April 28. The event was designed to keep drugs out of our waterways and out of the hands of small children, teens and older adults who would misuse and abuse prescribed medications

and over-the-counter drugs. The local Take Back event was held in front of the Best Buy store in East Palo Alto from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

By the time the event ended, the East Palo Alto Police Department hauled away 106.8 pounds of unwanted medications.

Read the complete article about the event on the EPA Today website at [www.epatoday.org](http://www.epatoday.org)

## Signing an agreement with Facebook

East Palo Alto residents will soon know whether the East Palo Alto City Council will approve an agreement with

Facebook that would give the city equal approximately \$1,150,000 over the term of the approximately \$1,150,000 over the terms of the agreement.

The city's negotiating team consisted of Councilmembers Carlos Romero and David Woods. They were assisted in the negotiations by Community Development Director John Doughty, and City Attorney Kathleen Kane.

The agreement will come before the council during the council's regularly scheduled meeting on May 1, 2012.

## No Criminal Charges

The San Mateo County District Attorney, Stephen Wagstaffe, decided not to file criminal charges against Fern White-Parker who struck and killed 6-year old Sorielli Torres

as she walked to school with her mother and her two younger sisters on September 28, 2011.

The DA's office issued a press release that stated "While this is obviously a tragic case for all involved, we have concluded that the evidence does not establish that Ms. White-Parker has committed the crime of vehicular manslaughter or any other violation of California statutes.

"Siorelli Torres's mother has been informed of our decision in this case and at this time we view the matter as closed"

she continues to attend the meetings of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

According to her Chief Legislative Aide, Charisse Lebron-Cannon, she is expecting a full recovery.

Lebron-Cannon said, "Her tireless dedication to address economic inequities, protect affordable housing, and enhance the county's criminal justice efforts remains unchanged...and San Mateo County residents can be assured that this will be the case for the remainder of her tenure."

## District 4 Update

San Mateo County Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson is undergoing treatment for breast cancer. While she is officially on a leave of absence,

## East Palo Alto's Pocket Park

One of ML Gordon's last official duties was the dedica-

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# One East Palo Alto City Council member is out of the race

By Henrietta J. Burroughs  
East Palo Alto Today

For several months, two East Palo Alto City Council members have been competing with six other candidates for one vacant seat on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

Now, one of those council members, David Woods, has been disqualified from the race.

Woods' candidacy officially ended when he was notified on Monday, April 23, by the San Mateo County Clerk-Recorder's office that he was no longer qualified to be a candidate.

According to Meaghan Hassel Shearer, the county's candidate filing officer, Woods was disqualified because he failed, after sev-

eral attempts, to submit the full mandatory filing fee of \$1,171.46 within the required time.

Woods, like the other candidates was in the race to replace Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, who is being termed out of office at the end of this year.

Jacobs Gibson represents District 4, which includes about 150,000 people and encompasses East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Redwood City.

Woods had even acquired Jacobs Gibson's endorsement shortly after he declared his candidacy in October 2011. (See EPA Today article on Woods' campaign kick-off).

Now with Woods' elimination, there is one East Palo Alto City Council member, Carlos Romero, left in the race.

Romero will now compete against Mayor Kirsten Keith and Council member

Andy Cohen, both of Menlo Park; Redwood City Planning Commissioner Ernie Schmidt; Board member on the San Mateo County School board members Memo Morantes; Redwood City School

Board member Shelly Masur and Warren Slocum, former San Mateo County chief elections officer and assessor-county clerk-recorder.

The ballots for the November 2012 election are

being completed and information about the race will soon be posted on the San Mateo County website: [www.shapethefuture.org](http://www.shapethefuture.org).

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# City council members make difficult staff cuts

By Henrietta J. Burroughs  
East Palo Alto Today

The East Palo Alto City Council made the decision that many city residents and some city staff members had anxiously awaited. The council made the difficult choice of deciding which staff members to layoff.

For several weeks, the council had reviewed and debated three options it had been given by East Palo Alto's City Manager, ML Gordon. All three options entailed the layoffs of city staff members, whose positions were located within the city manager's office, the city's Community Development Department (CDD) and the police department.

After considerable debate and public comment, the city council voted 4 to 1 to keep three city employees with the option of retaining a fourth employee at the city manager's discretion. Council member Peter Evans abstained from voting. The council's vote was made at the end of a special council meeting that was held on

Tuesday, February 28.

The employees, who were retained at salaries considerably below their current pay, included three employees in the Community Development Department: Russell Averhart, the RDA division manager; Carlos Martinez, the RDA project coordinator and Sean Charpentier, the RDA coordinator II and a fourth employee in the city manager's office, Marie McKenzie.

The employees will be retained as economic development coordinators, which is a new position that was created, under one of the restructuring plan options the council had been presented.

Prior to making their decision, council members were told that staff cuts were needed because of the loss of redevelopment funds, which were caused by the California Supreme Court's decision last December to eliminate redevelopment agencies statewide. The city's top staff said the court's decision meant that, unless the city took action, namely, making staff cuts, the city would face a \$1.0 million to \$1.6 million deficit, which

would have to be absorbed by the city's General Fund, which already had a budget deficit.

The council considered as its first option, the elimination of three positions from the city manager's office: the administrative analyst, the executive assistant to the city manager and the information/relations manager for a savings of \$325,090. This option also entailed the elimination from the CDD of four positions: the public works inspector, the RDA division manager, the RDA project coordinator and the second RDA coordinator for a savings of \$497,487. Also included was the elimination for the police department of two police captains for a savings of \$415,522. In all, there would be a total savings of .

The second option involved the elimination of everyone involved in option one and the hiring of three economic development coordinators for a cost of \$114,411 each. The economic development coordinators would have the task of finding ways to increase the city's revenues. Option two would

save \$894,866.

The third option involved the elimination of the three positions in the city manager's office, the two police captains and only the public works inspector in the CDD. This option would save \$330,495.

During the community forums at the council meetings where the layoffs were discussed as a "proposed restructuring plan," city residents were especially passionate in expressing their opposition to the elimination of the RDA division manager, the RDA project coordinators and the information/relations manager.

They argued that in at least one case the employee, whose job was up for elimination, had been with the city since 1983, when East Palo Alto became a city and was an irreplaceable resource, when it came to having knowledge of the city's institutional history. The employees who might be laid off were an invaluable asset. Several residents who addressed the council argued that the employees who were slated to be laid off from the CDD and one in the city manager's office were experienced, provided

continuity and had knowledge and skills that would be indispensable in the city's economic recovery.

Other residents who spoke said that they did not understand why the city would lay off employees on the one hand citing a huge budget deficit and at the same time hire other employees at comparable salaries.

In the end, the council voted on several motions that were a modification of option 2. The final motion which was made by David Woods was adopted by the council unanimously. But in adopting the final motion, which was also a modification of option 2, even Woods and several other council members acknowledged that given the reductions in salaries each of the retained employee would receive, several might choose to leave the city on their own.

The council's adopted restructuring plan with the salary reductions and the accompanying staff layoffs will take effect in 30 days.

# How to avoid paying IRS taxes after losing your home

By J. Samuel Díaz  
East Palo Alto Today

As everyone knows, losing one's home is a difficult adjustment and there are things to do before, during and after losing one's home. If you lost your home via a foreclosure or short-sale or deed in-lieu and you then received a 1099-C form mailed to you from the bank that lent you the money for your lost mortgage, then you should read further.

This indicates the lender wrote off a portion or all of the money it failed to collect and is reporting it to the IRS for tax reasons. By law, the lender has to mail a copy of this 1099-C form to notify the borrowers that the bank has preferred to forgive the remainder of the money owed.

Under normal conditions, having a deficiency forgiven by the lender would require

the borrowers to report it to the IRS as money earned. And under normal conditions, the borrowers would then pay a tax to the IRS.

That is under normal conditions. Understand that today's situation is not normal. The Mortgage Debt Relief Act of 2007 declared that no such tax would be applied to borrowers whose lenders forgave their home mortgages. The legislation was extended to include all home mortgage deficiencies that were written off by lenders from 2007 to 2012.

Of course, with any legislation, there are certain conditions to be met. Please make sure to talk with your tax accountant who prepares your IRS and FTB tax forms to make sure he/she is using the updated and correct IRS tax forms available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). In particular, IRS tax form 982 needs to be up-



J.Samuel Diaz

dated. Please consult with your tax accountant or professional so that you clearly understand how the Mortgage Debt Relief Act of 2007 applies to your situation and so that you understand your tax preparer is preparing your tax forms correctly!

The alternative is to pay taxes that may not apply to your particular tax situation. Last year, for instance, I dis-

covered one of my former clients unwittingly owed around \$12,000 to the IRS for the loss of his home to foreclosure. I met with him and reviewed the paperwork, including form 1099-C and discovered the error. His tax accountant was using an obsolete IRS 982 form!

Because of another error in his tax forms from years past and after getting his tax preparer to correct the errors and to use the updated forms, it turned out the IRS owed him money and gave him a tax credit of around \$6,000. That is a difference of roughly \$18,000! So this gentleman who duly paid his taxes every year discovered that investing the time to correct errors was well worth the effort!

Please take the time to review your tax papers and to look for a form 1099-C from your

lender if you lost your home in 2011. If the lender forgave the loan deficiency on your home mortgage in 2011, you should then expect to receive this form in January or February of 2012.

Sometimes lenders simply mail the form to the last known address, which may still show the address of the foreclosed property. So please make sure to go to the U.S. Post Office and request that your mail be forwarded to your new address.

If, for some reason, the 1099-C form did not arrive in time, you should be able to have your tax forms prepared again and resubmitted to the IRS and/or FTB. Enough people have lost too much. It is time to start planning and preparing for a better future for our families and especially for our children.

## The National Community Development Institute has closed its doors

Greetings NCDI Friends and Supporters:

It is with great regret that we must announce that the journey for the National Community Development Institute (NCDI) has come to an end. After over 11 years of working hard to build capacity for social change in communities of color and other marginalized communities across the country, NCDI will sunset during the second quarter of 2012, because of unyielding economic challenges.

Although it is hard to think about the social justice movement without NCDI as an organization in the trenches, we are encouraged that over the years, we have trained more than 500 social justice practitioners across the country through the Professional De-

velopment for Consultants (PDC) training program and the Community Builders Leadership Institute (CBLI). It was exciting for us to be able to use the foot print of these programs to also train hundreds of residents and community leaders to work effectively to sustain social change in their neighborhoods. Additionally, we have had the privilege to work as a partner with highly respected foundations across the country to help co-design and implement community change initiatives that are now making a great impact for individuals, organizations, and communities. We believe that although NCDI is dissolving, the work continues.

Yes, the work continues through the grassroots leaders and residents that have been



Kelley D. Gulley,  
NCDI's MBA President & CEO

trained. The work continues through the consultants who partnered with NCDI and are still in the trenches. The work continues through former NCDI staff who continue to work diligently to build a just society through their independent firms and other organizations for which they now work.

The work of building capacity for social change continues.

We would like to thank you for your friendship, partnership, and support. We are indebted to those of you who helped us build and sustain this organization for over 11 years. We are hopeful that as you read this letter, you will reflect on the good times, the great work, and the sustained impact that we collectively were able to make in communities of color and other marginalized communities. We are also hopeful that you will continue to commit yourself to the social justice movement in this country.

Our Board of Directors is committed to ending well and is working closely with our President, Kelley Gulley, to dissolve NCDI with dignity. We

thank our funders for being supportive thought partners with us in this process. We look forward to sharing our lessons learned and best practices with you upon the completion of our dissolution. We believe that we must inform the field of our journey, which is our parting contribution.

Sincerely yours,  
Carole M. Watson, Board Chair

Kelley D. Gulley,  
MBA President & CEO

[Editor's note. The Community Development Institute, which was founded in 1979 in East Palo Alto, closed its doors last year.]

## Ikea's East Palo Alto store hosts an electrical vehicle charging station

By Alba Sanchez  
East Palo Alto Today

Drivers of electrical vehicles (EV) in East Palo Alto now have the opportunity to charge their cars in their own city.

Ikea, the home furnishings retailer, plugged-in two Blink electric vehicle charging stations at its East Palo Alto store. At this time, this might be the first EV charging station in a commercial location in East Palo Alto.

Drivers who want to charge an EV at Ikea East Palo Alto, can pull into a designated parking spot on the ground floor of Ikea's parking lot, swipe their Blink InCard, and then plug the charger into the EV.

Drivers can get a Blink InCard by going online to

Photo courtesy of Alba Sanchez Vanessa Garcia, Ikea Local Marketing Specialist, shows the EV charger

work.com and become a member. There are different memberships that allow drivers to pay \$1.00 an hour to charge their vehicle with a membership fee of \$30 a year or they can pay \$2.00 an hour to charge their car

with no membership fee.

Vanessa Garcia, Ikea's local marketing specialist, said that EV drivers who come to Ikea can make the most of their time by doing two things at once: They can charge their vehicles while they shop and eat at the store.

Garcia emphasized that Ikea wants all of its operations to minimize the impact on the environment. So, some of its sustainable efforts are involved in the use of recycled construction materials, the installation of solar panels on top of its building that generate electricity for its facility, and the recycling of waste materials and food.

The EV charging station operates in partnership with ECOTALITY, the project manager of The

EV Project, a public-private partnership funded in part by a federal stimulus grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to provide the necessary infrastructure to support the deployment of EVs. Ikea has also installed electric vehicle charging stations at eight of its stores in the United States.

In this area, those who drive electric vehicles can also charge their cars for free in public locations such as downtown garages and at city libraries in Palo Alto and Redwood City or in commercial locations such as the Stanford Shopping Center.

Drivers can also install an EV home charger. Installing an Electric Vehicle charging system often requires changes to building wiring and utility electric

services to meet the needs of this specialized equipment that is required.

In Palo Alto, for instance, it is necessary to get a permit from the city before installing an EV home charger, because, while an individual EV charger may have a negligible impact on the utility electric system, the combined effect of several chargers in the same area could result in overloads on utility wires and transformers.

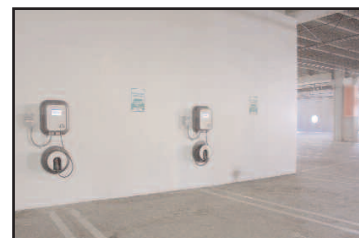


Photo by Alba Sanchez Ikea's EV charging system

# Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recologize

By Erin McNichol  
East Palo Alto Today



Recology San Mateo County began providing collection services for recycling, compost and garbage on January 1, 2011 to residents and businesses throughout San Mateo County, from East Palo Alto to Burlingame. The new Recology program features a convenient color-coded system: blue for recycling, green for compost and black for garbage. It is important to use your containers correctly so that we can reduce contamination levels and so we can recycle and compost all that we can.

Did you know recycling is now single-stream? This means you can place all recyclables in one convenient container, including:

plastics containers #1-7; aluminum cans, aluminum foil, and steel and tin cans; glass bottles and glass jars; paper, newspaper, magazines and cardboard

We often see Styrofoam, black plastic and plastic bags in the recycling. These are not accepted in the recycling program. You can reduce the use of non-recyclable plastics by bringing your own bag to the grocery store, buying items with less packaging or buying items in recyclable plastics. Many stores now offer a 10 cent discount just for using your own reusable bag!

Wondering where to put that banana peel? Well look no further than the green cart or bin. All residential homes in East Palo Alto have access to a green cart...and it's not just for yard debris anymore! You can throw all types of food scraps and food soiled paper in your green cart, including:

Fruits, vegetables and other food products; Dairy, like expired milk and cheese; Meat products and bones; Grains, like bread and rice;

Paper take-out containers; Food soiled paper products, paper towels and pizza boxes; Waxed cardboard

Basically, anything that was once alive can go in your green compost bin! Compost services are also offered for apartment buildings and businesses at a discounted rate. Please contact us through our website at [RecologySanMateoCounty.com](http://RecologySanMateoCounty.com) for more information or call us at 650-595-3900.

There are other items that can be recycled, but do not belong in your recycle or garbage container. TVs, household batteries, cell phones, computers and cleaning products are considered HHW and can be disposed of at no charge through the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection program offered by At Your Door Special Collection. If you live in a single family home in East Palo Alto you can call them at 800-HHW-PKUP. They will send you a "Collection Kit" within a few days with instructions on how to prepare your materials for collection. If you live in an apartment building you can contact them to set-up a collection time. If you own a business that needs to dispose of HHW waste please check our website for more information

or visit the San Mateo County website at [RecycleWorks.Org](http://RecycleWorks.Org).

## Why recycle? Why compost?

There are many reasons to do so! Below is a list of just some of the reasons it is important to divert as much as we can from our landfill:

Save much needed space in our landfills. Waste less natural resources and energy. Did you know an aluminum can will become a new aluminum can in as little as 60 days, saving 95% of the energy it takes to make a can from new materials.

Landfills are anaerobic environments, meaning they are mostly without air. Air is needed for materials to breakdown, so without air our trash is literally mummified in landfills.

Reduces green house gases! Methane gas, one of the leading causes of global climate change, is generated in landfills from food scraps and paper.

Food scraps, food soiled paper and cardboard is composted into a great soil amendment in as little as 60 days.

This past year East Palo Alto increased their curbside recycling by 80.47%, the largest increase in residential recycling rates of all the areas Recology San Mateo County services!

So you see, by using your blue cart to recycle and your green cart to compost correctly and as much as possible you are doing your part to decrease contamination, save space in our landfills, preserve our natural resources and combat global climate change!

**Erin McNichol is the waste Zero specialist for Recology San Mateo County**

## Community News Briefs

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tion of East Palo Alto's Pocket Park on February 25, 2012.

The park, which is located at the corner of Newbridge and Bay Road, was long known as

It will be remembered as the place where the late Wangari Maathai, the first African woman to win a Nobel Prize, planted trees when she visited East Palo Alto in 2006.

When the city staff under Gordon's leadership and encouragement renovated the park, it was with the intent of making the park "a bright spot in the community."

### Cooley Landing Park will have a formal opening

The long awaited opening of Cooley Landing Park is near. The major work on the park has been completed.

For Shannon Alford, the Cooley Landing project man-

ager, the park is already "a gorgeous sight."

The \$5 million grant the Cooley Landing project received last March will go along way towards turning the park into the city treasure that many East Palo Alto residents envisioned when they voted to turn Cooley Landing into a public park.

Read more about the grant on the EPA Today website at: [http://www.epatoday.org/news/2012/april\\_2012/a\\_dream\\_gets\\_closer\\_to\\_reality\\_1465.html](http://www.epatoday.org/news/2012/april_2012/a_dream_gets_closer_to_reality_1465.html)

Expect a formal opening date to be announced soon.

### City Manager Recruitment

The East Palo Alto City council will begin the process of narrowing the 79 applications it received for the position of city manager to identify 5 to 10 candidates. Interview panels will soon be selected.

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Cul-de-sac Site  
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# From the Editor's Desk

## Portraying reality accurately

Several weeks ago, I received an email which stated an interesting fact about 9/11. In the email, the writer pointed out that the first officer of the United Airlines Flight 93 that crashed in Shanksville, PA was an African American. His name was LeRoy Wilton Homer, Jr.

Yet, the author of the email went on to say that the actors who played both the pilot and the first officer in the movie were white. Well, now why was that? There is something called poetic license in art, but what was the necessity of hiring a white actor to play the part of someone considered a hero who was an African American?



Henrietta J. Burroughs

wanted to play opposite Whitney, but the producers and the power brokers connected with the movie thought it might be better to have a white co-star. Those who did not want Whitney were concerned that America would not accept a black co-star. Well, the Bodyguard was a memorable success.

So, who determines what Americans will accept? In saying that they will not accept black co-stars is the same as saying that Americans will not accept truthful portrayals. Is one saying that only stereotypes are acceptable?

The latest statistics show that there are less African Americans and other people of color with starring roles in Hollywood. This downward trend is also reflected in newsrooms across America.

Yes, we do have an African American president. But, at the same time, President Obama has had more threats made against his life than any other president in this country's history.

Our country is making giant strides, but we still have a long journey before us.

It is still very obvious that the articles that feature the crime in communities of color, like East Palo Alto, hit the news much faster and far more frequently than the news about the many good things that are taking place in the community.

The news featured in the East Palo Alto Today newspaper is the exception.

America is a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi diverse country and future trends show that by 2022, people of color will be in the majority. So, this whole issue might soon take care of itself.

But, in the meantime, it's time that America's media and movies portray and reflect reality more often. If racism is going to become a thing of the past, if we are going to have less Trayvon Martin-like murders, then our press and our entertainment industry must stop portraying people of color as one dimensional. Everyone is multi-dimensional and it's time that all people are portrayed as such. It is sad and it is somewhat painful to realize that historical distortions continue to take place on a large scale.

Perhaps, one day, we can all accept and live with the truth, without the misrepresentations, the lies and the distortions that still take place.



Photo by Henrietta J Burroughs

The second annual East Palo Alto Easter Family Fun Day took place at Bell Street Park in East Palo Alto on Saturday, April 7, 2012 from 12-4 p.m. The event attracted hundreds of children. According to it's sponsors, the purpose of the event was to foster community-building, educate and provide a well-deserved day of amusement for families of various ethnicities.

## Letters in East Palo Alto Today

### What is the Drew Medical Foundation doing?

Dear Editor,

The property of the Drew Medical Foundation, the largest employer in East Palo Alto in 70's and 80's and a good part of the 90's, was recently sold to Sobrato Corporation for the sum of \$4,300,000.

One question that needs to be asked of the Drew Board of Directors is: "What happened to all the patient's medical records?"

Oftentimes, business deals are made without accountability, of course, in the private sector. But these are public funds. The Drew sale proceeds are not private funds.

Profits cannot be made at the expense of the public for the sake of private interest. The Drew Board *must* provide an explanation to the community as to why this property was sold and what is going to happen to that \$4,300,000 profit.

Drew being a nonprofit organization means, if it were to be sold, theoretically, it should have been sold to another nonprofit organization not to a private company.

The fact is, Drew should not have been sold at all as a nonprofit organization. Many people are hurting in this economy, especially in East Palo Alto.

What is the Drew Board going to do with the \$4,300,000 it just profited by selling the Drew Medical Foundation?

East Palo Alto resident who prefers to remain anonymous

### Educational Access Equals Economic Growth

Dear Editor,

A recent study conducted by Stanford University discusses the increasing gap between high-income and low-income families in

the United States. There is a spatial relation to this disparity. Communities of higher-income levels are becoming more isolated from lower-income communities creating "residential segregation." As the gap widens, the middle-class is diminishing. Other key findings include that in higher-income communities there is more access to public goods and resources such as health care and education. Another correlation within these communities is the level of income and percentage of residents with college degrees.

There is no argument that college graduates start at higher salaries than those without a college degree. If we are to change the landscape of our communities in regards to income, we must address education. Most specifically, we must discuss access to college and the path towards completion of college. Access to college begins early, but becomes of essence when students are in high-school. Currently, there are still high-schools whose curriculums to graduate from high-school do not align with a curriculum that is college preparatory. Here in California, that curriculum would be A-G.

A-G is a 15 course sequence that covers seven subject areas and is the minimum entrance requirement of the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems. It is a combination of rigorous courses and classes that offer foundational knowledge necessary to developing cognitive skills needed to succeed in college. Yet, only a small percentage of students actually graduate from high school completing the UC/CSU requirements. In California, only 36% of the graduating high-school class of 2011 fulfilled A-G requirements. "College for the few" is not a slo-

gan our state let alone our nation should become known for. Of particular concern is how this affects students of color. Not only are they disproportionately represented on college campuses, they are disproportionately represented in college-preparatory classrooms. These students are likely to be tracked into low-rigor courses in high-school and some do not gain access to take A-G courses because of this tracking system. College should be an option made available to every student.

In 1973, 72% of the nation's workforce had a high-school diploma or less. By 2007, only 41% of the workforce had no post-secondary education. The Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University estimate that by the year 2018, nearly two-thirds of the jobs available will require that workers have some post-secondary education. At the rate we are going, we are failing our children miserably.

If we are to invest in the economic viability and sustainability of our future, we must invest in our students all across the board regardless of race or class. Adopting A-G curriculum as the standard high-school graduation requirement is a step towards the right direction. It will not only raise standards but raise expectations for every student. Students who have high expectations are more likely to succeed than students whom others, especially school administrators/teachers have low expectations of. Preparing our students for college prepares them to become full participants in society.

'Amelia Kolokihakaufisi  
East Palo Alto resident and activist

### East Palo Alto Today

**Publisher:** East Palo Alto Center for Community Media  
**Editor-in-chief:** Henrietta J. Burroughs

East Palo Alto Today is published bimonthly;

East Palo Alto Today  
2111 University Avenue, #160  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303  
(650) 289-9699

www.epatoday.org email: epatoday@epatoday.org

# Opinion

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

## It's time for "The discussion"

By Shaw Alexander  
East Palo Alto Today



Shaw Alexander

As we watch the Trayvon Martin tragedy unfold, now is the time to have "the discussion" with our young male children, teens and young adults. You may be a mother, father, sister, brother, grandparent or even the friend of a young black male. If so, you should discuss with him the realities of being a black male and being seen as a threat because of the color of his skin.

Our children are growing up in a more diverse and integrated society. They are often too young to remember the civil rights struggle and expect (as they should) to be treated in the same manner as their peers. My own teenage son is perplexed when I insist that he take precautions when walking to the corner to get a burger with his friends. It is not safe for him in our middle-class neighborhood to wait

outside of his friend's home until he or she arrives because some may find him "suspicious."

We teach our children to be proud of who they are, to stand-up for what they believe and to speak out, especially if they feel they are being treated unfairly. Initially, it may seem to be a contradiction to them to also be told to adjust their behavior so that they can de-escalate a situation and exit from it alive and unharmed. Using language that teenagers will understand, "It's complicated!"

We need not insist that our children dress differently from their peers. At the end of the day, they

cannot slip into and out of dark skin so we must teach them how to live life safely as young black men.

I have included some discussion points that I have found beneficial when having "the discussion" with my teenage son who is currently working towards getting his driver's license. It should be made clear that these tools can and should be if confronted by anyone with the ability to cause them harm.

The BLUF: Bottom Line Up Front: Stay alive!

If stopped by police:

1. Be respectful ("Yes officer. No officer.") and follow the directions provided by the police. While we all have rights, we do not have power over the police. It is important to behave in a manner that conveys understanding of the power differential.

2. If in a car, all in the car need to keep their hands where the police can see them with no suspicious movements. Keep quiet unless

asked a question.

3. Remember that you cannot win a street battle with the police. Period. Do not run from the police. Be humble, feel "punked" or whatever, but get out of the situation without being arrested, hurt or killed.

4. If you feel that you are being treated unfairly by the police, do not ask for a badge number. Simply notice the number on the cruiser. Once you escape the situation safely, get to an adult for help. Charges can be filed and the battle can be waged in a court room.

If confronted or threatened by others:

1. Stay calm and try to avoid being in a place where you are alone - get to where there are other children or adults.

2. If you cannot avoid being alone with someone threatening to harm you and you have a cell phone call 911, hold up the cell phone in plain sight and speak

clearly and calmly, "Please send HELP." State your name, location and a description of the perpetrator(s). Keep your eyes open and do not hang up!

It is impossible to predict every scenario that our young men may face in a racially unjust society. The most important lesson that we can teach them is to be aware of the reality of being a black male. They must think strategically with the ultimate goal of avoiding threatening situations. When these situations cannot be avoided, they must be equipped with the knowledge to help them stay alive.

**Shaw Alexander** is married and the mother of a teenage son and daughter.

She is the president of the San Jose Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc., a leadership organization for children ages kindergarten to twelfth grade. She lives in San Jose, CA.

## With mixed feelings

I did something today that I have very mixed feelings about, and I'm writing to describe the situation and my thinking about it, in hopes that it might provoke some discussion on these pages about the expectations of community.

I was driving away from my child's school, on my way to do some errands, and encountered along the way three youths who were walking down the street. Nothing extraordinary, nothing frightening, nothing dangerous was going on. Except: one was carrying a bottle, opened, covered mostly in a paper bag except for the Coppola logo sticking halfway out. I associate Coppola on bottles with wine. These guys looked like teenagers. Since I left teenage years a while ago, I don't really

trust myself in judging other people's ages - maybe they were in their early 20s. Either way, I felt distinctly uncomfortable seeing 3 young men with an open bottle of alcohol walking down the street in the middle of the day. This is the way my daughter walks home, when she walks, which is far from frequent since I got a call from the EPA police department advising me that letting her walk home alone was, well, inadvisable.

So I called the EPA police and reported what I had seen. I told the dispatcher, at least 3 times, that the young men weren't doing anything to be worried about, but I simply felt uncomfortable seeing young men walking the streets with an open bottle of alcohol. They promised to send a



car out to investigate.

Was I wrong? I have no idea how the police handle situations such as this. Would they arrest the young men? I hope not, assuming they don't have a record of violence. If they do, then I wouldn't worry about the consequences for them; if they might be dangerous to others, alerting the police about behavior (drinking in public) that could lead to worse

outcomes would have been the appropriate thing to do. In that case, I have no moral qualms about what I did.

What worries me is that they may have been just kids, innocent of any wrong-doing other than underage drinking. I was a teenager once, and I know we don't always make the best decisions at that age. If they got a warning, then maybe all is well and they'll think twice next time. If they got in more serious trouble, however, then maybe that is as it should be or maybe not. Sometimes the punishment does more harm than good. I have a friend who got in trouble with the law for something that, like this, may have been a situation with more gray than black or white - because

someone called the police rather than expressing their concerns directly to the person involved.

In this case, I wasn't in a position to easily approach those guys, since I was in my car going one direction and they were walking in another. Yet if I had been walking, alone, I'm not sure I would have felt comfortable approaching them directly to express my concerns.

Here's the thing: a community is safer when people feel free to speak up, even when they're wrong. I wish now that I had been able to talk directly to those guys, instead of asking the police to do it for me. Maybe then I could have told them that I have no problem with them drinking, or walking the continued on page 14

## Looking at the world as a poet

**Editor's note - The poems below were written by tenth graders in a two-week poetry class taught by Emily Lee at Menlo Atherton High School. Lee's students live in East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Redwood City. The students were exposed to the work of Tupac Shakur, Nikki Giovanni, Pablo Neruda, Li Young-Lee, James Reeves, Naomi Shihab Nye, John Mayer, Ludacris, Jay-Z, Robert Service, Nine Inch Nails, and Johnny Cash. In some cases, they used the work of these artists as their inspiration.**

### Titanic

by Enzo Santos

I used to do poems, it was a talent  
A talent that sunk call it titanic  
8th grade poems were usually about girls  
I never really talked to them cause some were out of my world  
Back then some of my poems were pretty raw  
Raw like sushi  
I hate sushi  
But that's how I roll  
I never used big words in my poems  
It's either I didn't know 'em or



Tenth graders in Emily Lee's third period class at Menlo Atherton High School in Menlo Park, CA

liked to keep things simple  
That's how they stood out like a really ugly pimple  
But all those pimples soon were gone by high school  
And when they were gone my talent had sunk  
Titanic

### Sun

by Carlos Betancourt

It burns me down  
whenever I see you like this  
I hate seeing you like this, every time you're heated it hurts me for looking at you.

### It burns me down

You're the person that brightens my day, you help me get through the day, by my side all the time.

You're like a star that helps me through the night and smiles by my side.

### How much I love my mom

by Graciela Alvarez  
This is a poem for my mom  
So it has to be beautiful like her  
it has to be funny  
it has to interest her

This is a poem for my mom  
So it must make her happy  
it must make her feel wanted  
it has to have sunshine

This is a poem for my mom  
So if it smells then it smells with me  
if it cries then it cries with me  
if it hugs me then I hug it back

This is a poem for my mom  
So let's be sure it's very colorful  
let's be sure it's life  
let's make certain it laughs

This is my mom's poem  
let's let it dance

continued on page 12

# Lifecycles

## Chronicles of Hope gives hope

By Alba Sanchez  
East Palo Alto Today

Many people are all too familiar with the statistics that show the educational gap between students from low income communities and those from affluent communities. *Chronicles of Hope* is an inspiring documentary film which gives viewers some insight into the statistics.

In the film, three East Palo Alto students: Alofagia Sakalia, Miari Scott and Berenice Vargas show how, with effort, commitment and parental support, they graduated from high school. In addition to telling their stories, *Chronicles of Hope* also gives insight into the challenges and difficulties that many students in East Palo Alto and Belle Haven have to face when they enter high school. After seeing *Chronicles of Hope*, it is easy for viewers to understand why it is seldom easy for students from low income families to get access to higher education.

*Chronicles of Hope* had its premiere showing at the Eastside Preparatory School before a large receptive audience on January 25. Many in the audience were students who seemed all too familiar with the themes and ideas the film presented. The film explained why many students from low-income communities have difficulties competing with students from more affluent communities.

In sharing the stories of Sakalia, Scott and Vargas, the film showed why many East Palo Alto students realize, once they reach high school, that they are not at the same academic level as their more



From left: Julio Garcia, Berenice Vargas and Alofagia Sakala

affluent peers and they sometimes have difficulty keeping up with their classwork.

The difference that she saw between herself and some of her classmates were very apparent to Scott who said that her transition to high school was very frustrating because, while she wanted to graduate and go to college, she realized that her elementary school had not prepared her properly.

The same thing happened to , who felt that his classmates were more advanced than he was, especially in math. His teachers could only suggest that he seek after school help. Both Scott's mother and 's parents did everything they could to help them with their homework but sometimes their help was not enough.

It's widely understood that students must devote time to their studies to get good grades but, as the film showed, many students also have to spend time helping their families, which sometimes limits the time that they can spend on school work. In the documentary, Vargas explained how taking care of her little sister and helping her mom with housework left her little time for homework. Situations such as Vargas' show how more ef-

fort is required from students who must take time to study anywhere they can, even if it means staying up late or giving up the time they might have to hang out with their friends.

Vargas' situation also showed why parental support is crucial to a student's success. In explaining her story, Vargas told how she used to hang out with kids who were not interested in school and why she got into a lot of trouble. She told why her mother decided to send her to Mexico, which was her home country.

Once in Mexico, Vargas became aware of the few opportunities that many youth living there have, and she realized how lucky she was to have the chance she had to study. So, she pleaded with her mother to bring her back to California. Once back in

school, she decided to take what she described as a "second chance." She changed her behavior and focused on her studies. He changed attitude made it possible for her to graduate from high school and have the chance to go to college.

While Scott proudly told how she is her grandfather's first grandchild to go to college, Sakalia described the day of his graduation as "one of the happiest moments of my life."

In *Chronicles of Hope* we could easily see how the students' hard work and determination along with the support received from their families provided the winning combination that enabled them to successfully deal with the challenges that they faced.

The stories of Scott, Sakalia and Vargas are inspirational and they can be a model for many high school students

who dream of graduating from college someday.

The *Chronicles of Hope* documentary was directed by Kevin Gordon and commissioned by the community organization Nuestra Casa with funding from a grant given by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. Nuestra Casa is now working to distribute *Chronicles of Hope* throughout the East Palo Alto community.

The documentary is being translated into Spanish and will soon have Tongan and Samoan subtitles. Nuestra Casa is also preparing a conversational tool kit to accompany the film. The kit will be used in parent discussion groups that the organization wants to start in schools in East Palo Alto and in nearby communities to talk about the problems reflected in the documentary.



Photos courtesy of Nuestra Casa  
Photo of the audience attending the *Chronicles of Hope* presentation at the Eastside Preparatory School.

## New Executive Director for CLS

By Alba Sanchez  
East Palo Alto Today

Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (CLSEPA) welcomed Philip Hwang as its new executive director on March 1 of this year.

Prior to taking his new position at CLSEPA, Hwang served as the director of policy and programs at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area.

There, he oversaw the organization's programmatic and policy work, supervised a pro bono project serving low-income refugees, and litigated impact cases in the area of immigrant and refugee rights.

Hwang also clerked for

Judge Susan Illston of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California

He has also worked as a staff attorney at Bay Area Legal Aid in San Jose, where he represented low-income clients in the areas of housing, disability, and benefits law.

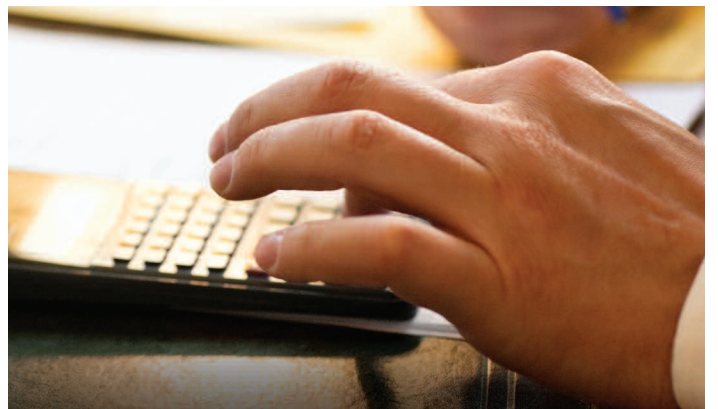
Hwang received his undergraduate degree from Stanford University and his law degree from Harvard Law School.

As CLSEPA's new executive director, he succeeds Candice Greenberg, CLSEPA former executive director, who left the organization last December after holding the position for six years.

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# Lifecycles

## Celebrating its first ten years: A collaborative achievement

By Kathleen Alexander  
East Palo Alto Today

Ravenswood Family Health Center (RFHC) came to life ten years ago, opening on December 4, 2001 with a staff of 12 and a modest modular clinic on the site of what was once a dumping ground for old tires. Today that site is one of the busiest and most dynamic in the city. RFHC now has a staff of 144 and operates four sites: the main clinic on Bay Road, a satellite clinic in Belle Haven, and as of April 2010, a state-of-the-art dental clinic and next door to that, the Center for Health Promotion.

On Friday, March 16th Ravenswood Family Health Center (RFHC) celebrated its first decade of service, marking the 10-year milestone with an awards ceremony at the Four Seasons Silicon Valley. As CEO Luisa Buada opened the ceremony, she said, "We want to honor the organizations and individuals that have been our core supporters, the foundation of our success, and have provided continuous support over ten years."

### Founding Partners

"San Mateo County Health Department and San Mateo Medical Center were the midwives who delivered the birth of Ravenswood Family Health Center, managing the three-year process of creating the health clinic." Receiving the



This photo shows from left, Sherri Sager, Melieni Talakai and Julio Garcia-- three board members who have served on the RFHC board since it started.

award, Jean Fraser, Chief of San Mateo County Health System, acknowledged the mutual benefit of its partnership with Ravenswood.

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital was also honored for its role in founding the clinic. Chris Dawes, CEO of Lucile Packard, remarked, "Ravenswood is truly a jewel of the community." David & Lucile Packard Foundation and Silicon Valley Community Foundation were awarded for their foundational support. Packard provided capital funding to build the clinic and subsequently Ravenswood's state-of-the-art dental clinic.

Silicon Valley Community Foundation and its donors provided the funding for the Non-Profit Resources Center and then funding that allowed RFHC to purchase land for a future permanent clinic.

The City of East Palo Alto

was recognized as a founding partner that provided the land upon which the clinic was built and leased it for a \$1 a year for the past ten years. Receiving the award, Mayor Laura Martinez commented, "They have touched and changed lives . . . Together we're building a stronger and healthier East Palo Alto."

### People who were recognized

Two women were recognized for Inspirational Advocacy for Healthcare Services. Congresswoman Anna Eshoo was honored for her 10 years of advocacy for federal funding for access to community health centers in her district and San Mateo County Board of Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson was honored for her role in spearheading County efforts to ensure health care access. In receiving the award, Supervisor Gibson ac-

knowledged the ability and drive of its leader and its Board "in meeting the needs of those who would otherwise not be served."

Dr. Fernando Mendoza, MD, MPH of Stanford Medical Center received the Outstanding Leadership Award for his tireless efforts to ensure community pediatric services in the East Palo Alto Community for many years.

Three of Ravenswood board members were honored for ten years of service on the board.

Melieni Talakai, current Board chair, Julio Garcia, Vice Chair, and Sherri Sager, Board Liaison and Chief Government Relations Officer for Lucile Packard. In accepting the award, Sherri Sager acknowledged Margaret Taylor, former director of San Mateo County Health Department, Dr. Fernando Mendoza of Stanford Hospital and Clinics, and Maya Altman of the Health Plan of San Mateo for playing a key role in establishing the clinic.

Finally, Juanita Duncan, Julie Brody, Julie Merk and Bob Henderson were honored for their years of creative volunteer support.

Ravenswood Family Health Center, its Board, its staff and its partners have wrapped themselves around the needs of the community. Thanks to its partners and contributors, RFHC has expanded its scope

of services to include not only medical care, but dental and behavioral health services as well. The cumulative total of services over ten years is impressive.

Registered 30,449 unduplicated patients in our 1st ten years; provided 217,462 medical visits; 16,082 dental visits since April 2010

17,112 behavioral health visits  
As for its future, Ravenswood plans to construct an elegant two-story permanent health-care center next door to its current clinic. It will be a major asset at the heart of the city's development of the Ravenswood Business District on Bay Road.

**Kathleen Alexander** is the director of communications and marketing for the Ravenswood Family Health Center. To contact her, call (650)330-7418 or email: [kalexander@ravenswoodfhc.org](mailto:kalexander@ravenswoodfhc.org)



Mayor Laura Martinez holds award that was presented to the City of East Palo Alto.

# My tooth doesn't hurt, why do I need a filling?

By Dr. Virginia Humphrey  
East Palo Alto Today

Tooth decay occurs very slowly through the enamel from the acid by-product in the bacterial plaque on your teeth, which forms everyday. Sugar and refined foods feed the plaque increasing its growth and acid secretion.

Once through the enamel into the dentin, which is softer, the process accelerates. Most often no pain is associated with this process.

Sometimes when the cavity gets large enough, you may feel sensitivity to sweets, or other chemicals. By the time you feel cold or hot pain, the caries is very close or already in the nerve, usually requiring root canal therapy. That is why it is important to get regular exams to catch caries when they are small.

At the examination appointment, the dentist will check your X-rays, and feel for soft spots in your teeth. Since radiographs are two dimensional, dentists are not able to

see exactly how much decay is present, only that it is there.

You always have the choice to wait and keep an eye on smaller areas using fluoride to slow it down. However the standard of care is to remove the decay and place a filling to allow as much healthy tooth to remain.

If a cavity is already very deep, the dentist may try to place a large filling or crown, but sometimes the nerve is already damaged and pain will occur after the procedure.

Large fillings weaken the tooth leading to fractures, root canal treatment, crowns, and possibly tooth loss. A simple small filling is a great preventative solution to keep your teeth healthy, and breath fresh. Dentists will replace old fillings that are leaking before they hurt, in order to preserve your tooth structure.

Alternatively, when cavities or older fillings are borderline in how severe the need for replacement is, and since a dentist doesn't know for sure how

much decay is present before getting in there and cleaning out the problem, differences in opinion of treatment plans exist.

When in doubt get a couple of opinions, and go with the one that makes the most sense to you. No dentist gets

rich off of fillings, and most providers honestly just want to help people. Great communication avoids unnecessary confusion.

As our life expectancy increases, we want our teeth to be healthy and strong, so they will last as well.

**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 which is directly beside this article.

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# Recycle making worm composting

By Alba Sanchez  
East Palo Alto Today

The Belle Haven Child Development Center has hosted a Warm Composting workshop held by Collective Roots. This was one of the five workshops that the nonprofit organization has been offering about this topic for the residents of East Palo Alto and Belle Haven during February.

Did you know that worms can eat half of their weight a day? To create compost through feeding worms is also a way to give a use to your food waste. You could reduce your waste half a pound a day! The attendees of the Worm Composting workshop learned about how to create rich organic compost to increase their garden's yield and at the same time they



Photo courtesy of Alba Sanchez  
The instructor Neha Bazaj teaches the attendees how to collect the compost from under the worm's box

were learning how to recycle most of their food scraps.

Neha Bazaj, member of Collective Roots and who instructed the workshop, use a plastic storage

full of worms to give some tips about how to assemble the storage and how to feed the worms to make them comfortable and get the best compost. To give an ex-

ample, she told to the attendees that worms don't like light, so their environment has to be as dark as possible. About the food they can eat, Bazaj said "worms are very healthy" so keep them away from oil, fat and meat. On the other hand, worms really enjoy eating greens, cereal and fruit among other things.

The attendees took advices like keep the worms in a well ventilated place inside the house and monitor their eating to know if they are too much or too little fed.

They also discovered what the "compost tea" is: the liquid left from the composting process is also good for the plants, so it is recommended to use it for water them.

The environment of the workshop was very friendly. Besides learning tips to create their own

natural compost, people who joined the workshop was participating asking a lot of questions to the instructor and sharing their own gardening experiences and tricks.

Collective Roots is a nonprofit organization in East Palo Alto and Belle Haven that focuses on "garden-based learning" and "food system change". Among their programs we can find that each month they offer workshops about different topics. The topic on March will be succession planting and crop rotation.

Those interested in finding out more about Collective Roots can check its web site at [www.collectiveroots.org](http://www.collectiveroots.org).

# Mayor, Defense Attorney, Supermom: Always makes time for what matters most

By Kail Lubarsky  
East Palo Alto Today

Despite the constraints of leading weekly city council meetings, working as a lawyer, vying for a seat on the San Mateo County Board of Directors and raising two children; Menlo Park Mayor Kirsten Keith always makes time for her constituents.

Recently the Mayor visited JobTrain and spent quality time at our preschool. If only you could've seen the children's faces beam with joy when Keith entered their classroom with an armful of toys. The kids looked up at Keith with an inquisitive expression seemingly conveying, "Is it Christmas time already?"

Keith didn't give a second thought about wrinkling her suit or getting dirty by sitting on the floor. Rather, she simply and immediately immersed herself in the sea of smiley faces. After reading them a



Photo courtesy of Kail Lubarsky  
Menlo Park Mayor Kirsten Keith with JobTrain preschool students

story, Keith played with them and shared accounts of what her own children loved to play when they were their age.

When it came time for Keith to leave, without any prodding from their teacher, the preschoolers thanked the mayor for their new toys,

hugged her like she was part of their family and made sure she knew that they wanted her to come back again real soon.

Kail Lubarsky is Director of Marketing and PR JobTrain in Menlo Park.

# Easter Family Fun Day a "Hopping" Event

By Brenda Berys  
East Palo Alto Today

**Com-mu-ni-ty** [kə'myoʊnɪtē] a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.

Saturday April 7th was a day filled with joy and laughter as nearly 1,000 people from East Palo Alto gathered at Bell Street Park in celebration of Easter, family, and most importantly: Community Collectiveness.

Countless memorable moments occurred throughout the day. Some of the most distinguished highlights were Chief Rocha and Pastor Paul Bains leading the children in hoola hoop challenges, golf demos by P.A.L., target basketball shots with Coach T, sack races, face painting by



Photo courtesy Brenda Berys  
Children during the park event

Kathy of Community Legal Services and the Bains daughters, and a lively arts and crafts booth by EHP.

Hundreds of children were in a state of awed admiration when they got the opportunity to hug the life sized Easter Bunny. Around 600 kids registered and participated in the most anticipated event of the day, the Easter Egg

Hunt! Once the ribbon was cut, a flood of children rushed in with glee and enthusiasm to pick up as many candy filled eggs as possible, hoping to find the coveted Golden Egg.

Participating families were provided with information from organizations such as Police Activities League (PAL) Ecumenical Hunger Program (EHP), Live In Peace, American Red-Cross, EPA Library, Project WE Hope, EPA Community Legal Services (CSL), The 1-800 JC Project, Second Harvest Food Bank, and Citibank. A very warm Thank You to all of these organizations for participating in the event. An extra large Thank You to the event sponsors: P.A.L., Menlo Park Presbyterian

continued on page 15



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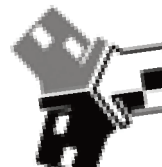
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# Nuestra Casa's Promotoras Comunitarias

By Alba Sanchez  
East Palo Alto Today

Mónica Muñoz, a resident of East Palo Alto, has been working as a promoter at Nuestra Casa since December 2011. Her primary job is to provide the community with the type of useful information that will meet its needs.

Nuestra Casa is a community education organization that is dedicated to increasing civic participation and promoting the economic self-sustainability of the Latino immigrant population of East Palo Alto. It serves the same area served by the Ravenswood City School District.

The Promotoras Comuni-



Mónica Muñoz,  
Promotora Comunitaria

tarias program (Community



Promoters program) is one of the free services the organization provides to the community.

The program is designed to train women to bring street-level information about the resources that exist in the community and to connect people in need with agencies that can assist them.

How does the Promotoras Comunitarias program work? Muñoz explains how she approaches people waiting outside local clinics and she tells them about the programs and activities offered at Nuestra Casa. Then she encourages them to attend the programs offered.

She also distributes information among relatives, friends and neighbors and sometimes

sets up a stand with information outside the local supermarkets and Latinos shops.

According to Julio García, Nuestra Casa's leadership development and support program organizer, this program goes beyond other health promotion program, since Nuestra Casa's community promoters also offer information about other community issues such as financial education, and other free courses offered by Nuestra Casa, like the Secure Futures course.

In the Secure Futures course, attendees can get advice on how to manage their money and on how to improve their credit. They can even get information about agencies that offer free help preparing taxes.

García said the Promotoras

Comunitarias program recognizes that everyone should have access to resources and the right information. He believes this right can be fulfilled by establishing community networks that connect people who have specific needs to the agencies that can help them meet their needs.

Muñoz agreed. "We are not informed," she said. "Most people do not know how much help there is in the community if you really know how to look for it." She said that before being a community promoter she didn't know anything about the health system or about food stamps, for example.

The idea of holding a Promotoras Comunitarias program came up in the Forum of la Iniciativa de las Américas at the University of California at Berkeley. There, the participants created a curriculum of topics to prepare women to become promotoras. For 6 weeks, 18 women were trained according to the curriculum, which includes such topics as the development of interpersonal communication skills, the coordination of serv-

ices and basic knowledge of health issues.

At Nuestra Casa' eight promotoras meet weekly with Matilde Muñoz, the Promotoras coordinator, and with García to share and information and the requests that people ask of them.

Matilde Muñoz has over 20 years of community work experience. In fact she says that everyone knows her and people approach her in the street to make inquires. She coordinates the work of the promotoras, collects the questions that are asked and finds agencies that offer resources.

Mónica Muñoz said she likes being a promotora because she can help many people around her. She said that she cannot solve their needs personally, but she can bring them to places where they can find help: not only help with food, but with legal counselors, psychologists and support for victims of child abuse and domestic violence, etc.

Those interested in finding out more about community service programs offered by Nuestra Casa can check its web site at [www.nuestracasa.org](http://www.nuestracasa.org).

## Promotoras Comunitarias de Nuestra Casa

By Alba Sanchez  
East Palo Alto Today

Desde el pasado Diciembre, Mónica Muñoz, residente de East Palo Alto, trabaja como promotora en Nuestra Casa. Su tarea es acercar a la comunidad información que puede serles de gran utilidad para cubrir sus necesidades.

Nuestra Casa es una organización comunitaria sin ánimo de lucro dedicada a fomentar la participación cívica y a promover la sostenibilidad económica de los miembros de la población latina de East Palo Alto. Entre los servicios gratuitos que la organización ofrece para la comunidad se encuentra el programa Promotoras Comunitarias que consiste en formar a mujeres que lleven a pie de calle la información sobre los recursos que existen en la comunidad y conecten a las personas que los necesitan con las agencias que los proveen.

¿Cómo lo hacen? Muñoz explica que ella se acerca a las personas que están esperando fuera de una clínica por ejemplo, les explica los programas y las actividades que se están ofreciendo en Nuestra Casa y les anima a asistir. También reparte información entre sus familiares, amigos y vecinos y puntualmente monta un stand con información a la salida de los supermercados y tiendas latinos.



Según Julio García, Organizador de Programas de Desarrollo Comunitario de Nuestra Casa, este programa va más allá del modelo de promotoras de salud puesto que las promotoras comunitarias de Nuestra Casa también ofrecen información sobre otros temas que son de interés comunitario como por ejemplo la educación financiera, informan desde los cursos gratuitos que ofrece Nuestra Casa como el programa Futuros Seguros en el que en el que se aconseja a la gente sobre cómo gestionar su dinero, cómo utilizar los bancos y como mejorar su crédito, hasta de agencias que ofrecen servicios de ayuda gratuita para preparar los impuestos. García destaca que el objetivo de las promotoras es que todo el mundo tenga acceso a los recursos y la información correcta y esto se puede conseguir estableciendo redes comunitarias que conecten a las personas que tienen una necesidad con la agencia que puede ayudar-

les a resolverla.

"No estamos muy informados. La mayoría de la gente no sabe la cantidad de ayuda que hay dentro de la comunidad si realmente la sabes buscar", dice Muñoz. Ella afirma que antes de ser promotora comunitaria no sabía nada sobre el sistema de salud o sobre las estampillas de comida, por ejemplo.

La idea del programa Promotoras Comunitarias surgió en el foro de La iniciativa de las Américas en la Universidad de California en Berkeley. Allí se elaboró un currículo con el que preparar a las mujeres que harían de promotoras. Durante 6 semanas se formó 18 mujeres en base a este currículo que incluía por ejemplo el desarrollo de habili-

dades comunicativas interpersonales y de coordinación de servicios, así como conocimientos básicos en temas de salud.

Las ocho promotoras de Nuestra Casa se reúnen cada semana con Matilde Muñoz, coordinadora de las promotoras, y Julio García para que planteen sus dudas y soliciten información que la gente les ha pedido. Matilde Muñoz tiene más de 20 años de experiencia en trabajo comunitario, de hecho cuenta que todo el mundo la conoce y la paran por la callen para hacerle consultas. Su tarea consiste en coordinar el trabajo de las promotoras, recoger las cuestiones que la gente les ha transmitido e investigar con las agencias los recursos

disponibles.

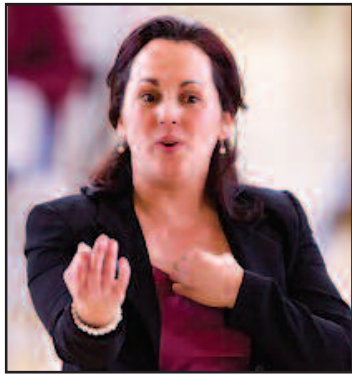
Mónica Muñoz afirma que le gusta ser promotora porque puede ayudar a mucha gente: "ves la necesidad del que está enfrente, probablemente tu no la puedas suplir personalmente, pero sí puedes llevar a esa persona a lugares donde le pueden ayudar. No solamente de comida, puede ser algo legal, referencia de consejeros, de psicólogos, ayuda para niños víctimas de violencia doméstica, clases de nutrición..."

Si quieren más información sobre Nuestra Casa y los programas de servicios comunitarios que ofrece visiten su página web [www.nuestracasa.org](http://www.nuestracasa.org).

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# Teaching music in the schools

By Virginia Fruchterman  
East Palo Alto Today



Soraya Lugo

For 17 years, Music in the Schools Foundation ("MIS") has been providing general music classes in the Ravenswood City School District. It has grown steadily for the past several years and serves well over 1,000 children every week at Green Oaks Academy (grades K-5), Willow Oaks School (grades K-5) and the Child Development Center pre-school.

MIS also funds an after-school chorus for grades 3-5 at Green Oaks and a new after school violin ensemble program at Willow Oaks, also grades 3-5. All of these programs are offered at no cost to the RCSD.

Music in the Schools delivers a weekly music curriculum which reflects the California State Standards for music education at each grade level. In weekly thirty-minute classes, experienced teachers coordinate with the classroom teachers to use materials complimentary to the current

tor of the Palo Alto Chamber (Youth) Orchestra ("PACO"), approached MIS to begin a partnership to bring instrumental music to children in East Palo Alto.

In March, PACO gave a fund raising concert which featured our newly formed Green Oaks Singers in two songs. One of those songs was written by teacher/director Soraya Lugo for the occasion and the other was accompanied by the orchestra!

This was a thrill not only for the young musicians and their families, but for MIS board members and PACO families and organizers as well. Discount tickets were made available to RCSD students and their families.

In November, with the help of Ben Simon, MIS hired an experienced violin teacher to begin teaching an after school string ensemble program at Willow Oaks. Student volunteers from PACO attend the twice-weekly 90-minute after school class to assist the students when necessary, offering individual tutoring and

encouragement as well. These high school students have made a commitment for the year to assist with this program.

Offered for a maximum of 10 students, MIS had to turn some away for several reasons. First, an instrumental program like that must start small so that each student gets lots of personal attention. Second, there was a limited number of donated instruments and MIS must raise funds or be given more instruments in good condition in order to teach more students. MIS hopes to have two levels next fall: a more advanced group and a new beginner group. Their goal is to follow these students into after school programs at the middle school level.

On Sunday, March 25, 2012, Music in the Schools and The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra PACO gave another family concert at Costaño School/49ers Academy to benefit the Music in the Schools program. Once again, the Green Oaks Singers were featured.

MIS also had the excitement of presenting the first performance of its new string ensemble.

Music in the Schools is actively seeking volunteers from the East Palo Alto/East Menlo Park community who would like to help in a number of ways.

Currently MIS has no paid administrative staff, but is run by an all-volunteer board of directors. Nearly all of our funding goes directly into the classroom to pay teachers and provide educational materials.

For more information contact Virginia Fruchterman at [virginia@fruchterman.net](mailto:virginia@fruchterman.net).

**Virginia Fruchterman** is the chair of Music in the Schools Foundation.



A photo of students in last year's program

# Looking at the world

continued from page 7

let's let it be free  
and please please please call it  
yours

This is my mom's poem  
so it is  
full of love  
full of her  
and full of happiness

(inspired by "Ann's Poem" by Nikki Giovanni)

**Just Because**  
by Brisa Arroyo

Just because I'm fifteen  
Doesn't mean I'm not mature  
Doesn't mean I don't know what  
I'm doing  
And doesn't mean I'm not ready to  
be me.

Just because I'm not sure what I  
want in  
my life.  
Doesn't mean I won't be successful  
Doesn't mean I will drop out of high  
school  
Doesn't mean I am going to make  
Bad choices  
And doesn't mean I will bring down  
my family.

Just because my family doesn't  
have money  
doesn't mean I won't have a happy  
life  
doesn't mean we suffer because  
we can't pay things  
doesn't mean I want things I can't  
have.  
And doesn't mean I need things I  
don't  
need.

**Poem**  
by Santos Valle

Champions are the ones who  
our grandchildren will see as  
hero.

Champions are the ones who  
their son/daughter will have a role  
model.

Champions are the ones  
who inspire others to reach their  
dreams  
and to never give up.

Champions are the ones who  
fought most of their life  
to become what they always  
wanted to be.

Champions are like stars in  
space.

Champions are like fireworks  
On the 4th of July.

**Learning to be the Light**  
by Langi Ngalu

I fall on my knees and beg for for-  
giveness  
for thy name is hollow  
My mind rots with temptations but  
my  
faith still follows  
My eyes are cursed and I can  
never see  
But my father guides me, raised  
me to be  
a warrior for his majesty  
The darkness is my heart and  
where my  
heart lives in  
But my father in heaven once told  
me I AM THE LIGHT OF THE  
WORLD  
and I can never be hidden.—**My  
mom's poem**  
by Ruby Aragon

This is a poem for my mom  
so it has to be cute  
it has to be Funny  
it has to be important.

This is a poem for my mom  
so it must have happiness  
it must be wonderful  
it has to have love.

This is a poem for my mom  
so if it reflects love then it's happi-  
ness  
if it despairs then it was never there  
if it is beautiful then it means you  
loved it.

This is a poem for my mom  
so Let's be sure it looks colorful  
Let's be sure it's perfect  
Let's make certain it has perfect  
memories.

This is my mom's poem  
Let's let it talk  
Let's let it cry  
And also let it laugh.

This is my mom's poem  
so it is  
full of happiness  
full of happiness  
full of happiness  
(inspired by "Ann's Poem" by Nikki  
Giovanni)

Somebody Special  
By Elvis A.

Now tell me do I wish to  
much?  
Is it because I kick it and drink too  
much?  
but the truth is I wanna give too  
much and you're the type of girl I'd  
love to give too much  
now tell me if I'm close to your  
type? not cute? but I know  
what's right! Not sweet but I know  
what's nice! and I can make you

smile  
and laugh all night  
I know I'm not book smart but I am  
smart enough to protect your heart  
now let's hook up and get on  
a jump start, so throw your past  
away it belongs in the junkyard,  
and I tend to say wrong things  
all the time but even with these  
flaws I'm not the wrong guy.

I wish I was  
somebody special in your eyes  
in your eyes, in your eyes  
I wish I was somebody special in  
your eyes.

—  
Being ignored by someone that

made you feel special. Being hated  
by someone that made you loved.  
24 hours ago we seemed so  
happy and by hours went by the  
love went to hate and  
Ignorance. It feels like you don't exit  
and don't matter. I ask myself why  
you ignored me? What did I do? I  
will probably get no answer from  
you.  
It's like the ocean with no sea  
animals and like  
A tree with no leaves. There's  
nothing special.  
Everything is useless like my at-  
tempts to ask talk to  
you again.

Jimmy Martinez

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# Every child will have full access to a quality education

By Amika Guillaume  
East Palo Alto Today

On February, 23rd, 2012 the Ravenswood City School District approved the Green Oaks Dual Immersion Magnet Academy.

The boardroom was packed with the bi-literate, bi-cultural and bilingual students, and their families. For over 10 years the program was offered as a subsidiary of Green Oaks Academy.

This year marks its first year with a fully developed, research-based program, finally approved and recognized by the Ravenswood City School Board as its own magnet for grades K-6th, with the promise of adding 7th and 8th in the years to come. Every child will have full access to a high quality curriculum; graduating from our public school with mastery of the core curriculum both in Spanish and English.

The presentation to the



Photo courtesy of Green Oaks Students are shown in one of the school's classrooms

school board was a combined effort by the students, their families, the teachers and RCSD Dual Immersion and English Language Coordinator, Beatrice Martinez and Principal, Amika Guillaume. The families and school board were enthusiastic about the program presentation; explicitly promoting college-readiness, knowledge and skills for productive workforce participation, communication and literacy skills in more than one language, informational and

technological literacy, active involvement in their community for full civic engagement, & cross-cultural skills and knowledge.

At Green Oaks Dual Immersion Magnet Academy we believe that bridging the diversity of our community & of our students is a matter of equity; it breaks down social & linguistic barriers. Equity is crucial in the two-way immersion program model with its emphasis on integrating students of different ethnic, language, and social class backgrounds (Cloud et al., 2000).

The English speaker is not at risk of losing the English language. English is spoken at home, in the community, and in the media. Dual Immersion programs are NOT replacing English with another language, but provide the students the opportunity to acquire a second language. Dual Immersion programs are additive programs in that a

second language is acquired while maintaining the first language of the students.

"Every child keeps their first language & learns one more"  
- Joan Wink, CSU Stanislaus

This vision of bilingualism and multiculturalism for a dual language program necessitates the concept of additive bilingualism—that all students are provided the opportunity to acquire a second language at no cost to their home language (Cloud et al., 2000).

**Enrollment for kindergarten and first grade begins today!** For more information, please call our school at (650) 329-2800 ext.67100 . We are located at 2450 Ralmar Ave., East Palo Alto.

**Dual Immersion Information:** Nights at 6:00-8:00 P.M. at the Green Oaks Academy Library Thursday, May 24th.

**Coffee with Dual Immersion Parents:** at 9:00-10:00 A.M. at the Green Oaks Academy Library Thursday, May 24.

**School Tour & Classroom Visits:** Tuesday, May 22 and Thursday, May 24 at 9:00-10:15 A.M.

"I am so proud of all that my daughter has learned at Green Oaks Dual Immersion Magnet Academy. The confidence and mental agility of being raised multi-cultural and multilingual will serve her well in a world that continues to grow smaller, with every passing minute. This is a school that ensures her a place of success in the 21st Century."  
- Amika M. Guillaume, Principal – Harvard University M.Ed.

*Amika Guillaume is the Principal of Green Oaks Dual Immersion Magnet Academy*

## Lawsuit filed

the public at the intersection because of other "pedestrian injury collisions," which occurred there and "knew that there were conditions present at the intersection "that created an unreasonably dangerous condition...."

The lawsuit charged that the city "failed to take reasonable measures to ensure that traffic would enter the subject intersection safely... failed to install barriers, speed bumps or other devices along Bay Road leading up to Gloria Way to prevent vehicles ... from traveling at unsafe

rates of speed for the conditions."

Since the accident, the city has installed speed bumps, street signs and other markings to make the intersection safer than it was at the time of the accident.

At the city council meeting that was held on April 3, 2012, Kathleen Kane, the city attorney, reported that the city was denying the claim on the recommendation of the city's insurer, the Association of Bay Area Governments. Kane said that the city's rejection of the

continued from page 1

claim "does not address the merits of the claim."

Sorieli's family now has six months to file an action against the city in court.

[Editor's note: The 6-year-old child's name was spelled different ways by different agencies. She was Soriela, as in this article and as Siorela at other times. It was difficult as of this writing to ascertain the correct spelling.]

## The Sequoia Union High School District Board of Trustees

...is seeking applicants to serve on the District's Construction Bond Oversight Committee



This committee will meet four times per year to monitor expenditures for the building projects of the recently approved Measure J school construction bond. Periodically, the committee will report bond expenditures to the community.

### Applications


Applications may be downloaded from the Sequoia District web site at [www.seq.org](http://www.seq.org) or may be requested from the district office by calling Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services Enrique Navas at 650-369-1411, ext. 2218.

Send completed applications to  
**Enrique Navas**  
Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services  
Sequoia Union High School District  
480 James Avenue  
Redwood City, CA 94062

### Timeline

- Application filing period – **May 1, to May 18, 2012, 4:30 p.m.**
- Committee membership announced by the Board of Trustees on May 30, 2012

For further information, contact Enrique Navas at 650-369-1411, ext. 2218.



**Jones Mortuary, Inc.**  
FD1298  
**Charles A. Jones**  
Funeral Director  
FDR 723

660 DONOHUE ST. (650) 323-2481  
E. PALO ALTO, CA 94303 FAX (650) 323-1581

**Are you pregnant?  
Do you know someone who is pregnant?**

**Prenatal Advantage Black Infant Health Project**  
provides services to help African American women improve birth outcomes.

FREE classes starting now!

- ✘ **Prenatal Group (Sessions 1-10)**  
Health education and group discussion regarding pregnancy, labor and delivery, women's health, community resources, and infant care. Activities include personal goal setting, stress management and hospital tour (tentative).
- ✘ **Postpartum Group (Sessions 11-20)**  
Information and group discussion on postpartum care. Parenting information on infant health, stages of development, SIDS prevention, discipline, and healthy family relationships. Activities include personal goal setting and development of a life plan.





Our Prenatal and Postpartum Classes provide lots of information, fun and energizing activities, incentives, nutritional refreshments, and peer support.

- ✘ **Social Service Referrals**
- ✘ **Public Health Nursing Support**
- ✘ **Incentives**  
Stork's Boutique Shopping points, gifts cards at graduation, First Five Kits, Touchpoint & Raising a Reader Bags.

Who is eligible? African American women ages 18 and older who are pregnant or postpartum with a child age 0-3 months.

**Where:** Prenatal Advantage Offices — East Palo Alto and Daly City  
**When:** For exact class schedule and location, call the Prenatal Advantage Office at (650) 363-7850

Prenatal Advantage Black Infant Health Project  
2415 University Avenue, 2nd Floor, East Palo Alto, CA  
Email: [prenataladvantage@smcgov.org](mailto:prenataladvantage@smcgov.org)  
Website: [www.smchealth.org/bih](http://www.smchealth.org/bih)



Services funded by San Mateo County Health System/Family Health Services, First 5 San Mateo County & California Department of Public Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program

## Giving back to the community: JobTrain brings spirit of Mardi Gras to children and their families

By Kail Lubarsky  
East Palo Alto Today

Happy Fat Tuesday! Although we celebrated the occasion a day early...

In case you can't tell, those masked individuals pictured include JobTrain board member Isaiah Vi; Culinary Arts student Tracey Duncan and staff: Kizzy Carter, Sasha Gourevitch, Kail Lubarsky, Ana Gomez, Ilya Benjamin and C2 Vea.

We spent President's Day, working at the Ronald McDonald House sharing smiles, making memories and serving a delicious and authentic New Orleans feast of "Kizzy's AMAZING Crescent City Gumbo," Sweet French Bread, potato salad, fried chicken and Southern Banana Pudding! It was a terrific teambuilding exercise.

Patients and their families absolutely LOVED the food and were sincerely grateful that JobTrain was there. However, we didn't just provide an amazing meal – but an experience – a temporary "reality



respite" that these families so desperately need. I wish that you could have seen the smiles on the kids' faces as we placed beads around their necks and gave them masks to wear. This indelible memory will be with me always.

After we served second and third portions (yes, they liked it that much), we then joined the families and patients for dinner. Connections were made with parents about our vocational training programs and there was genuine interest about the work that we do and the services we offer. JobTrain

informational packets will now be part of the resources provided to families with an extended stay at RMDH.

The Ronald McDonald House at Stanford is a phenomenal organization. For nearly half a century, JobTrain has thrived in Silicon Valley because of the kindness and generosity of community members. We recognize how fortunate we've been and it's our privilege to serve our community as well. JobTrain is definitely looking forward to our next Meals for Munchkins event!

## Join SF 49ers Coach Jim Harbaugh at the Breakfast of Champions

By Kail Lubarsky  
East Palo Alto Today

Silicon Valley's premiere nonprofit event is back! The 28th annual Breakfast of Champions presented by Facebook, is on Friday, May 4th is a special occasion that you simply cannot afford to miss.

And with guests that include NFL Coach of the Year Jim Harbaugh, Stanford women's basketball coach Tara VanDerveer, comedian Mike Pritchard, Warriors legend Al Attles, KTVU's Rita Williams and organic restaurateur Jesse Cool – why would you?

There's no other event quite like JobTrain's Breakfast. This year we're celebrating our local heroes that have risen above challenges, defied the odds and are making opportunities for others to follow in their footsteps.

DJ Bowcutt graduated from OICW ten years ago. Despite many challenges, he never lost hope, continued to persevere and gained valuable tools that have sustained him

and his family. Now Bowcutt is an employee at Zappos.com – ranked as one of the best companies to work for – and is earning a six figure salary.

Bowcutt is the happiest he's ever been and credits the quality education he received at OICW as much as the amazing staff for equipping him with the training and tools to last a lifetime.

Bowcutt's story will inspire you as will the other testimonials of current JobTrain students. We all hope you join us for this incredible event. Individual tickets are just \$60 and table sponsorship opportunities are still available. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.jobtrainworks.org](http://www.jobtrainworks.org).

If you'd like to learn more about the Breakfast or about sponsorship levels, please contact Kail Lubarsky at 640.330.6569.

**Kail Lubarsky** is Director of Marketing and PR at JobTrain in Menlo Park.

She can be reached at [klubarsky@jobtrainworks.org](mailto:klubarsky@jobtrainworks.org)

## Mixed feelings

continued from page 7

streets, as long as I know they respect our community and won't do anything to harm anyone. I could have asked them to take their bottle somewhere more private, so they could have fun without getting anyone else involved. I could have let them know that, as a parent, it concerns me to see people carrying alcohol openly on the streets where my young daughter might walk.

Instead, sadly, I left the message to the police to deliver for me, and can only hope that it was delivered with respect, compassion, and understanding. What I really wish is that we lived in a world where we could talk to each other that way without fear of reprisal. For all I know, had I tried that, I would have gotten a bullet in the head in response. Still, I want those young men to know this: I would do the same to protect their younger brothers or sisters, or children, as I did to protect my own.

Anonymous

## Easter family fun day

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Church, 6 to 9 Dental, San Mateo Credit Union, and Citibank.

The over all purpose of the event was to foster community building, while educating families about the availability of local non-profit programs and to provide the children a well deserved day of traditional and wholesome fun. All of which were executed to perfection and could not have been done without the help of the wonderful volunteers from organizations and businesses such as the Razorbacks, Stanford, Four Seasons Hotel, St. Samuel Church members, and various community members and leaders. These volunteers had a meaningful, positive impact on the lives of the children of our community. The smiling faces and priceless moments made it an unforgettable day for all involved!

Brenda Berys is active with the 1-800JesusChrist Project. She can be reached at [brenda@1800jc.org](mailto:brenda@1800jc.org).



## EAST PALO ALTO SANITARY DISTRICT

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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East Palo Alto, CA 94303  
Phone: (650) 325-9021  
Fax: (650) 325-5173  
[www.epasd.com](http://www.epasd.com)

### Request for Proposal: Certified Public Accountant Firm

The East Palo Alto Sanitary District is requesting proposals from licensed certified public accountant firms to audit its financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, including the required federal/state reporting. The District received federal stimulus funding during the year and expects to perform the appropriate audit required of agencies receiving these funds. The District will look favorably on proposals submitted with experience auditing special district agencies similar to us and experience auditing federal funded projects. Your proposal must include a copy of the most recent peer review. Interested accounting firms should submit proposals to Lee Hawkins, General Manager, East Palo Alto Sanitary District, 901 Weeks Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303 or e-mail [lhawkins@epasd.com](mailto:lhawkins@epasd.com), 650-325-9021 the deadline for receiving proposal is May 31, 2012

# Community Calendar

**Breakfast of Champions - May 04, 2012- 7:30a.m.-9:00 a.m.**

The 28th Annual Breakfast of Champions benefitting Job-Train is Silicon Valley's premiere non-profit event. WHERE: Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA

**Cinco De Mayo Parade and Latino Festival Sunday, May 6, 2012**

The parade will start at 10:30 a.m. at the Brentwood Academy and finish at Cesar Chavez Academy.

The Latino Festival at Cesar Chavez Academy will start right after the parade at noon. For more information, call (650)321-4001.

**Change Lives Through Literacy - May 8, 2012 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.**

For the past twenty seven years, Project Read-Menlo Park has been helping adults improve their reading and writing so they can be more effective at home, at work, and in the community. Registration is underway for the Project

Read-Menlo Park's May Tutor-Training, designed to show volunteers how they can help eager local residents learn to read better and attain their personal, education and vocational goals. The sessions are held at the Menlo Park Library (800 Alma Street)

owners facing foreclosure who have been victimized by fraud or want to assess the options available to save their homes. An advance appointment is required to be seen at the clinic. Please call CLSEPA at 650-326-6440 to set up an appointment.

**Tenant and Homeowner Housing Law Clinic - May 10, 2012**

Free legal advice clinic for tenants having difficulties with their landlords, and for home-

See more community calendar events at the website for the East Palo Alto Today newspaper [www.epatoday.org](http://www.epatoday.org)

## Residents demand benefits



officials discussed the 'Development Agreement' that the City of Menlo Park had negotiated with Facebook.

The agreement lays out the benefits the City of Menlo Park will receive as long as Facebook occupies its current Menlo Park campus, the benefits the community would get, Facebook's environmental commitments, the mutual benefits that would be shared between Menlo Park and Facebook and the general terms under which the Facebook campus in Menlo Park would operate.

The agreement also stipulates that Facebook will give Menlo Park \$800,000 in each of the first 5 years, \$900,000 in years 6-10 and \$1,000,000 in years 11-15. After that the annual payment amount would be adjusted annually based on changes to the Consumer Price Index.

The agreement was discussed at the community meeting, which included presentations from Justin Murphy, the development services manager for the City of Menlo Park, and several

Facebook representatives: Susan Gonzales, who is in charge of the company's community outreach, and John Tenanes, who negotiated the agreement for Facebook to buy the site where the company's Menlo Park campus is located.

Many questions surfaced about the community outreach programs that Facebook is planning and the community fund that the company is establishing to administer the \$500,000 that it will contribute to the community fund.

During the meeting it was stated that East Palo Alto city officials are working with Facebook on an agreement that contains some provisions that are similar to the ones in the agreement signed with Menlo Park.

As the meeting came to a close, the frustrations that some audience members felt following the presentations became apparent in several questions that were asked.

One Menlo Park resident wanted to know how much of the money Facebook pledged to the City of Menlo Park would be invested in the Belle Haven community. She expressed the prevailing fear within the group that Belle Haven would be short-changed by the city. In answering the question, Murphy said that the money would be put into the general fund and it would be up to the Menlo Park City Council to decide how much it wanted to

continued from page 1

allot to Belle Haven. He encouraged the residents at the meeting to make their wishes known to the Menlo Park City Council.

After this sticky point, one of the community participants, Michelle Tate, questioned why much of the emphasis at the meeting was placed on reaching out into the community to train residents on how to apply for jobs at Facebook in entry level positions.

Tate made it clear that she already knew how to apply for jobs, that she already had marketable skills and was an experienced professional. Another audience member, Larry Owens, said that he was a professional with sales and marketing experience and had applied on the Facebook website five different times, but had not heard from anyone.

Both Tate and Owens wanted to know what professionals in the community needed to do to be considered for jobs at the company and they stressed that Facebook's representatives needed a plan for those who were experienced professionals as well as for those who would be trained for entry level jobs.

In responding to the sense of frustration that was expressed, Tucker Bonds, Facebook's manager of policy communications said, "Facebook is in the community to grow and to improve the community."

The meeting ended on this

## Talking with Henrietta Targeting Major Areas of Concern



Photo courtesy of Talking with Henrietta  
On this edition of Talking with Henrietta, California State Assemblymember Jerry Hill and Santa Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss discuss the pressing issues that they think merit the most concern.

This edition of the show will air until Saturday, May 12, 2012.

This show can be seen on Sundays at 5 p.m., Tuesdays at 8 p.m., Wednesdays at 3 a.m. and 11 a.m., Thursdays at 8 p.m., and Fridays at 3 a.m. and

11 a.m. This show streams on the web at the above days and times at [www.midpenmedia.org](http://www.midpenmedia.org) and on Channel 27 on Comcast on the Midpeninsula.

See an excerpt at: <http://youtu.be/vRxZVce0H68>

## Creating East Palo Alto's Destiny

the film.

The event started with the speech of some of the project's masterminds: Michael Kahan, from the Urban Studies Program, the well-known local filmmaker Michael Levin and the musician Keith Cross. They talked about the hard work of the youth in the making of the project and they pointed out that they were pleasantly amazed because of the big amount of attendees and thanked all of them for being there supporting and recognizing their efforts.

Ron Davis, the interim city manager emphasized that this project was really important and useful because he

said, "Knowing the history is necessary to change the future."

After Davis' words, MMAP members played and sang some hip hop and all the attendees stood up and danced. Once the music stopped, some of the teenagers from the HHH Program came to present the music video Takin' It Back. They pointed out that it's important for them to be a part of MMAP and that their voices can encourage a positive change in the community.

One of the messages that Takin' It Back sends is that all the city's residents -- no matter gender, age or race -- must work together and take control

of the city's destiny.

In talking about the project, some of the students from Stanford's Urban Studies course, East Palo Alto: Reading Urban Change, "Although the city changes, the spirit of EPA is still there." One of them also pointed out that "The assets of EPA are not their buildings but their people."

The music video/documentary combines footage captured in the 1990's by Michael Levin about the city's urban renewal, with footage from the music video Takin' It Back. In the video we can see different opinions from EPA residents and politicians about the demolition of Whiskey

continued from page 1

Gulch and the redevelopment of the area with a luxury hotel and office park now known as University Circle.

One of the politicians who was involved in the decision to demolish Whiskey Gulch was the former mayor Sharifa Wilson, who during the event's Q&A session explained how difficult but necessary it is to make the kind of decisions that will benefit everyone.

During the Q&A session, the youth involved in the project asked questions like "What is it like to know that your words matter?" or "How do you stay in the right path?" Regarding the last question, one boy said that what keeps them

on the right path is "the love that we have for each other and for the community." Another boy said that young people will want to stay on the right path, so that they will not disappoint the people who support them. Some attendees praised the good job done by the youth and said that they were really moved by their videos.

The night's event was one where rhythm and emotion were ever present and where the passion and strength of the city's youth were reflected in their videos and in the words that they expressed. Many believe that the youth are the future of the city.



**EAST PALO ALTO SANITARY DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

EAST PALO ALTO SANITARY DISTRICT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE  
EAST PALO ALTO SANITARY DISTRICT

REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF THE 2012-2013  
PROPOSED BUDGET, ADOPTION OF A  
REPORT ON PROPOSED SEWER CHARGES  
AND ELECTION TO COLLECT SEWER CHARGES ON THE TAX ROLL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on June 7, 2012, at 7:00 p.m., the Board of Directors of the East Palo Alto Sanitary District ("District") will hold a public hearing to receive oral and written comments regarding the 2012-2013 proposed budget. The public hearing will be held at the District Office located at 901 Weeks Street, East Palo Alto, California. The proposed budget is available for public review at the District Office. Written comments may be filed with the District Manager at the District Office at any time prior to the conclusion of the public hearing. Those persons desiring to orally comment may do so during the hearing. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Board shall consider adoption of the proposed budget.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN pursuant to Section 5473, et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code that the District Board of Directors is proposing to adopt an ordinance to impose charges for sewerage services in Fiscal year 2012-2013, in the same amount approved by adoption of Ordinance No. 56 on June 5, 2008 for Fiscal year 2012-2013, and has elected to collect such charges on the tax roll in the same manner as general taxes. The District has prepared a written report containing a description of each parcel of real property receiving sanitary sewerage service from the District and the amount of the charge for each parcel. A copy of the written report is available at the District Office, and may be reviewed there by any interested person.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that on June 7, 2012, at 7:00 p.m., the Board of Directors of the District will hold a public hearing on the report containing a description of each parcel of real property receiving sanitary sewerage service from the District and the amount of the charge for each parcel, and any delinquencies due and owing for such charge for each parcel, at the District Office at 901 Weeks Street, East Palo Alto, California. At the hearing, the Board will hear and consider all evidence, testimony, objections or protests, if any, to said report. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Board shall consider (1) adopting the report; (2) and, if the report is adopted, directing the District Manager to file a copy of the report with the Auditor of the County of San Mateo; and (3) requesting the Auditor to place the Fiscal Year 2012-2013 sanitary sewerage service charges and any delinquencies on the tax roll.

Dated: May 23, 2012

Leroy Hawkins

General Manager

Approved as to Form:

Malathy Subramanian, District Legal Counsel

# Support the East Palo Alto Today newspaper

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](http://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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_ \$2001 to \$5,000 \_\_\_\_ \$5,000 and above \_\_\_\_ In-kind \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Please check back with me about becoming a donor.

\*The East Palo Alto Center for Community Media is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation.

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Please check the appropriate box: if you would like to  volunteer at the center, if you would like to  advertise in East Palo Alto Today, if you are interested in  writing an article, opinion piece or letter to the editor. Also let us know if your agency or business would like to be  a distribution site for East Palo Alto Today. Call (650)327-5846, ext. 311 or send us an email at [epamedia@aol.com](mailto:epamedia@aol.com).